



The newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of America Chapters in New Mexico

WIRED FOR SOUND

Vol. 26, No.2 October, 2011

New drug may cure tinnitus

..... completely eliminated behavioral evidence of tinnitus in animals with drug-induced tinnitus.

While various therapies can help some sufferers, there is currently no medically approved standard treatment and no cure for tinnitus [the perception of sound without any acoustic stimulus] but recent research shows a cure may be in the offing.

University of Buffalo researchers presented their findings on a promising new tinnitus drug at the Fifth Tinnitus Research Initiative Conference, sponsored by the University of Buffalo's Center for Hearing and Deafness in August. Edward Lobarinas, PhD, assistant research professor of communicative disorders and sciences, presented work he and colleagues at UB have done showing that two potassium ion channel modulators, called Maxipost and R-Maxipost, completely eliminated behavioral evidence of tinnitus in animals with drug-induced tinnitus. Further research is called for to determine if these compounds suppress other forms of tinnitus.

Top tinnitus researchers and clinicians from the U.S., Europe, Canada and Asia attended the conference where UB researchers also presented work on how hearing loss early in life affects sound tolerance, how the amygdala in the brain may influence the generation of tinnitus and how the auditory cortex in the brain of animal models is affected by the disorder. Other topics covered include evaluating effective strategies for assessing tinnitus; various treatments such as cochlear implants, electric acoustic stimulation, and sound therapy; how light affects tinnitus; as well as scientific advances on the physiological, neurochemical, and biological mechanisms that cause tinnitus.

Tinnitus affects 10-14 percent of Americans and is especially prevalent among Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. Learn more about tinnitus at the web site of the American Tinnitus Association - www.ATA.org. (SOURCE: UB News release)

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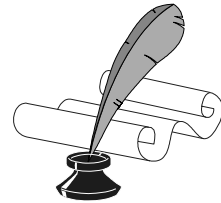
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FUTURE MEETINGS

Sat, Nov. 19
Albuquerque: TBA
Las Cruces: Pending

Sat. Dec. 3
Santa Fe - to be announced

Albuquerque chapter news



.....by *Mary Clark*

This month's meeting: Hearing Loss 101

*...or what you always wanted to know
but were afraid to ask*

Many people are not in tune to what they are missing in regard to hearing. Ever wonder...

- Why you have a hearing loss?
- How did this come about, was it sudden or gradual?
- Why am I hearing these noises?
- Why did your doctor order a Vestibular test, an MRI or even a CT scan?
- Isn't it just a simple case of "I lost my hearing"?
- Isn't a hearing aid just like glasses, and will correct my hearing just like glasses correct my vision?
- What can I expect if I need to get a hearing aid, and what are the steps involved in success?
- I only have a mild hearing loss, I don't have a problem....or do I?



Come and hear from Ferri Irime AuD who is a Clinical Audiologist at UNMH. For those who have a hearing loss for some time, this will be a great refresher, and for those new to the world of hearing loss, this will be a great introduction to the basics.

Dr. Irime received her degree from A.T. Still University with a Clinical Doctorate in Audiology. She also served in the U.S. Air Force.

What have you got to lose? Come and get a good refresher, or come and get some good insight from a professional. This is a good time to bring a friend, who might benefit from learning what your world is like, and hear from someone who is not trying to sell you anything.

Message from the President

Our chapter was the recipient of a mini-grant from the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons. We received a grant of \$10,000 to be used towards captioning, outreach, and supporting

the Loop New Mexico initiative. Stay tuned for announcements of exhibit and events where you can volunteer to share your experiences with being a member of HLAA Albuquerque.

I have a hearing loss.

I used to say "I'm hard of hearing" or "I have a hearing problem" or sometimes, I'd preface either statement with "I'm sorry, I'm hard of hearing" when I encountered someone who I couldn't understand. I later was encouraged to say it differently, and say "I have a hearing loss" and then, follow up with something I needed them to do to help me hear them better. I found that simple change in phrase got rather different results when I tried it. People were more open to being accommodating,

I'd like to challenge everyone to join me in helping raise awareness of hearing loss by identifying ourselves by saying "I have a hearing loss" along with something like "can you repeat that" and we should never say "I'm sorry".

I find that at the grocery store, or at work, it helps defuse the frustration of missing something. If I say "I have a hearing loss" there are no assumptions, and we can follow with what we would like the other person to do...e.g. face me, repeat that, speak more slowly change position so they are not in front of the window. We, as individuals can help change the image of our invisible disability one person at a time. Won't you join me?

At our September meeting, we distributed a questionnaire asking about who our members are. We're anxious to understand your needs, so we can plan adequately for programs that will be of interest to you. If you would like to make any suggestions about our meetings, our programs and speakers, or time and location of meetings, please contact us as: hlaabq@gmail.com, or by calling 505-554-7186, or mailing to P.O. Box 36792 Albuquerque NM 87176 The chapter is here for you, so your interests are important to us.





Hearing Loss Association of Las Cruces

By **Bert Heger, HLA-Las Cruces Chapter President**
hlalascruces@yahoo.com or (575) 532-0413
 October 2011 HLA - Las Cruces News

September Activities

The Las Cruces chapter is beginning a full and exciting season. We began the year on September 17 with a chapter meeting at the Munson Senior Center. The meeting was devoted to a discussion of the affects of hearing loss on spouses and the adjustments spouses need to make to help their partner.

Since hearing loss affects the entire family, this topic produced a lively discussion. Jack Switzer talked about his wife Ann's rapid hearing loss and her experiences with a cochlear implant. Bill Clark discussed how his wife, Bettie, lost hearing as a result of routine surgery, but has been able to continue playing the flute in the Mesilla Valley Concert band, which Bill conducts. And, Reba Johnson described John Johnson's war related hearing loss and the coping stages they have been through. The audience participated eagerly and all agreed that one must actively move ahead with life and coping adjustments. Hearing loss requires more than a passive response.

Whole Enchilada Fiesta

On September 24, the Las Cruces Chapter of HLA walked with their float in the Whole Enchilada Fiesta parade as part of the new Disability Coalition from Southern New Mexico. The float featured four launching rockets, one for each of the major disability category: Cognitive, Hearing, Mobility, and Sight.

Participants included members of the National Association of the Deaf, the National Federation of the Blind, the Blind Veterans Association, students from the New Mexico School for the Blind, the Wheelchair Alliance, staff members from Tresco, Inc, a non profit employer of the disabled, staff from the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and members of the City of Las Cruces Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee. More than 70 participants celebrated the 31st annual enchilada event by demonstrating active community involvement.

October Activities

On **Saturday, October 15 at 1:30** the regular monthly meeting, at the Munson Senior Center, will be devoted to a discussion of chapter goals and special projects we might want to undertake.

A very special event

Saturday October 22 - 1:30 p.m.
Munson Senior Center

Nationally known expert Dr. Pat Kricos will speak on a topic which is too important to miss:

50 Plus and Counting? Why your hearing needs are different and what help is available

*The unique listening challenges of the 50+ person with hearing loss
 Hearing aid fitting considerations and other sources of help.*

During her presentation she will discuss factors that impact hearing such as temporal processing, reallocation of cognitive resources, vision's affect on hearing, manual dexterity, and what is available to enhance and supplement the benefits of their hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Dr. Kricos is the Immediate past President of the American Academy of Audiology and professor at the University of Florida. Her research interests are in mental processing of sound, aging, and hearing loss. Dr. Kricos is able to come to Las Cruces because she will be in El Paso receiving the University of Texas at El Paso Golden Nugget Outstanding Alumnus Award.



**Chapter meetings are held at 1:30 Saturday afternoons at Munson Senior Center
 975 S. Mesquite Street, Las Cruces.**

The Munson Center is just south and east of downtown. From Main Street and Lohman, go east, toward the mountains, about three blocks and turn right onto Mesquite.

Proud supporter of



The **Santa Fe Committee** of the
Hearing Loss Association
of America



Come learn about assistive devices to supplement hearing aids

Today's digital hearing aids are remarkable devices but sometimes there are situations where they just can't provide the hearing or other assistance called for. When that happens, there is a multitude of assistive devices that will help you.

Sally Schwartz of ATS Resources in Albuquerque will do a "show and tell" presentation featuring items ranging from the "pocket talker" to bed shakers, sonic boom alarm clocks, amplified telephones, hearing loops for TV viewing and more. Among the devices to be demonstrated will be the new CaptionCall telephone that, at your option, provides written text of exactly what the caller is saying to you on the telephone.

Find out how you can sign up for a FREE CaptionCall telephone

WHEN: Saturday, November 12 - 2 P.M.

Free refreshment will be served prior to the presentation

WHERE: Odd Fellows Hall

1125 Cerrillos Road - on the corner of Cerrillos Road and Flagman Way, across from the NM Dept. of Transportation and east [towards downtown] of Baca Street.

<p>For the presentation, a hearing loop will be in operation to send sound directly to the telecoils in hearing aids and cochlear implants equipped with telecoils.</p>	<p>Here are just a few examples of devices to be demonstrated:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Bed shaker clock</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>TV Viewer</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Personal FM</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Door bell flasher/pager</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Text telephone</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Amplified phone</p> </div> </div>	<p>There will be CART (captions projected onto a movie screen) being demonstrated at this meeting to provide enhanced communication access.</p>
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For additional information on this meeting or on the Santa Fe Organizing Committee, contact Tom Dillon by email at TomDillonIII@msn.com or call 982-7788

Refreshments, the hearing loop and CART are being provided courtesy of the Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque.

Can I buy hearing aids online?

That was the headline in a recent email newsletter from *Healthy Hearing* which is an online publication of the hearing aid manufacturer Oticon.

Because there are numerous online retailers of hearing aids, the headline should probably more properly been "Should I buy hearing aids online?"

Oticon points out that the Internet is a great resource to learn more about hearing loss and possibly for researching hearing aids, but they warn that consumers should "proceed with caution" when it comes to purchasing hearing aids online.

People often list cost as the main reason they have not invested in hearing aids despite their inability to hear and understand well and the knowledge that hearing aids might help them hear better.

As we know, most medical insurance does not cover hearing aids so the consumer has to foot the whole bill. So, says Oticon, people often shop for the best (defined as cheapest) deal. You don't, however, want to practice the old maxim of being "penny wise, pound foolish."

Oticon says, "Purchasing hearing aids online may possibly save you a few hundred dollars up front, but keep in mind that you may be sacrificing listening experience, wearing satisfaction and, yes, hearing safety. In fact, the money you saved by purchasing online will more than likely end up being spent (and then some) when you are in need of reprogramming and follow-up care from a hearing professional in order to get satisfaction from your aids." Of course, if you're not dealing with a hearing care professional, you probably won't know you even need reprogramming.

Hearing Aid Manufacturers Caution

Oticon and some other major manufacturers don't sell their hearing aids to Internet retailers and some have recently placed notices on their websites warning consumers to purchase hearing aids only from qualified, trained professionals. Oticon cautions you that hearing aids purchased online may not be appropriate for your particular hearing loss and consequently will not provide the maximum improvement in hearing that properly prescribed hearing aids will.

A conscientious hearing care provider will recommend the hearing aid he or she feels will best relate to your loss and your lifestyle. An online retailer

will sell you whatever your order. Oticon says a successful fitting of hearing aids is dependent on many factors beyond simply buying the right hearing aids for you and your hearing loss and they list the following examples:

- **A hearing professional will evaluate your hearing loss through simple, painless testing** - This is a critical aspect of any hearing aid purchase and unfortunately, when you buy hearing aids online, there's no professional there between you, the buyer, and your purchase. So, the chances are pretty good that you'll buy the wrong hearing aids for your needs and lifestyle.
- **Hearing aids should be programmed by a hearing professional based on hearing loss and verification testing.** A hearing test is the first step in choosing and programming hearing aids; however, hearing loss alone cannot predict accurate hearing aid settings. The hearing professional often performs additional subjective and objective testing to fine-tune the hearing aids.
- **Properly fit hearing aids equal healthy hearing.** When hearing aids are purchased online, safety can become a concern. How do you know how the hearing aids are programmed when they arrive in the mail? You don't. You will only know once you have turned them on and listen, putting your remaining hearing at risk.
- **After-purchase care** - Just like eyeglasses hearing aids often need adjusting through the years. A hearing aid professional is there to answer questions, make fine-tuning adjustments and monitor your hearing over the years. Expect to establish a long-term friendship with a good hearing aid professional. You'll be seeing each other regularly.
- **Trial periods, returns and guarantees** - Most hearing professionals offer a trial period on newly purchased hearing aids - which is often a requirement of the state in which you live. They were with you one-on-one throughout the trial period to ensure the hearing aids are the right fit for you. With an online retailer you just don't get that kind of follow-up service or guarantee.

Today's hearing aids are complex digital electronic devices that can be adjusted to mirror your hearing loss and "tuned" to satisfy your hearing needs. Only a trained hearing aid professional can make those adjustments and provide the fine tuning to give you the very best performance.

The logo features a stylized sun with rays in orange and yellow, surrounding a central globe with blue and green segments. To the right of the sun, the words "Coordinator's" and "Comments" are stacked vertically in a bold, purple, sans-serif font.

Coordinator's Comments

By Steve Frazier, NM HLAA State Coordinator

Complain on Facebook

Judy Martin, the Florida State Chapter Coordinator Hearing Loss Association of America, recently posted an idea on the HLAA leaders Yahoo list that I want to share with all of you. Judy wrote:

"Many, if not most of us, have run into rude and uncaring employees in our travels so will identify with this story completely.

One of our chapter leaders wrote to me asking for advice in dealing with inadequate or non-existent devices and/or ignorant, rude employees. Specifically, the leader planned to write letters to the Coca-Cola Company and the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta detailing his experiences there while taking tours.

We are always instructed to write letters and that continues to be important. However, if you are on Facebook, here's a different option.

Nearly every company or entertainment entity has a Facebook presence. You can search out the ones you want, "Like" them and then write on their wall. The World of Coca-Cola has more than 29,000 members while the Georgia Aquarium has 72,000.

I'm nearly positive that advising members that these places are not very hearing loss-friendly will guarantee a response from a staff member. Who knows? Maybe it will inspire others to write as well which could culminate in employee sensitivity training and ALDs that work!"

With what seems like every company now having a Facebook page, what better way to get their attention regarding any aspect of their business that is not friendly to those of us with hearing loss. They won't want negative comments about them on their Facebook page will probably take action to address them.

Were you to post a comment at their page about the loud music at a restaurant driving you away and a suggesting that they either turn it down or create a "quite" area, they might just actually respond.

If they didn't have a printed copy of their daily

"specials" either posted at the entrance or available at the table, remind them that the ADA requires that they do so.

If it's a place that could benefit from installing a loop system, tell them so. Some grocery stores have dedicated one check-out lane to a small area loop to serve the hard of hearing.

Many theaters, churches and other venues have looped their auditorium/sanctuary. If you visit one that's not looped, tell them to visit our LoopNM page [www.HLAAbq.com/LoopNM.html] to learn about hearing loops.

Give email a try

I was being called a dinosaur at the HLAA national convention because I'm not on Facebook and I don't Tweet on Twitter but I would never be without my email. With recent news reports about the U.S. Postal Service, it just could be that snail mail's going to become a Pterodactyl so it may behoove you to check out email.

You can buy a perfectly good used computer at a thrift store for just a few bucks and dialup Internet service can be had for as little as \$5 a year. Try it..... you'll like it !

I know so many hard of hearing and other people who say email has gotten them back in touch with friends and relatives across town and across the country including an 85 year old friend who had never touched a computer previously.

Just a few years ago only about 1/3 of Albuquerque HLAA members had email addresses but that figure has now passed 2/3 and it continues to grow.

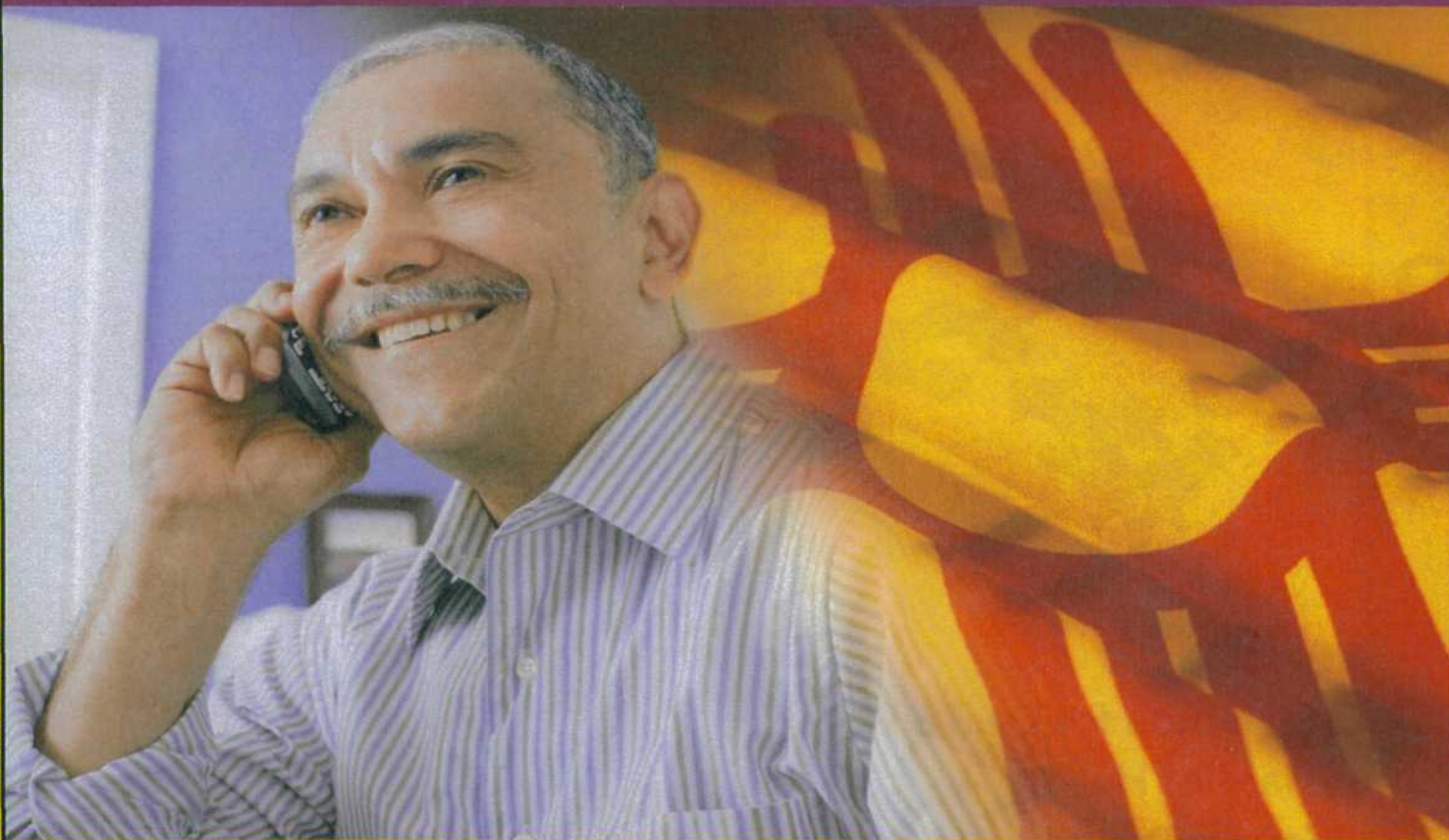
If you decide to be adventurous and explore the Internet, the HLAA web site is just the newest example of the benefits of being connected beyond just using email. There's a wealth of information out there just waiting for you to access it.

Sometimes it's the only place you're going to find answers to your questions. For example if you're in the market for a hearing aid compatible (HAC) cell phone you'll find the sales staff in most showrooms have no idea what you're talking about let alone where to look for the answer. You can find the answer though - it's online.

The Better Hearing Institute has posted what they believe to be a complete list of all currently HAC rated cellular phones at:

http://www.betterhearing.org/hearing_loss_treatment/cellphones.cfm

FRUSTRATED with your phone?



If you have problems making or receiving phone calls, or trouble hearing conversations over the phone, you may be eligible for a FREE easy-to-use amplified phone from the State of New Mexico.



Visit <http://www.cdhh.state.nm.us/TEDP.aspx> to learn more and see if you or someone you know qualifies for a FREE phone. To request an application for a FREE phone, please call 1.800.489.8536

NEW MEXICO COMMISSION FOR DEAF & HARD OF HEARING
2012 CONFERENCE ON HEARING LOSS

SAVE THE DATE

New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing
2012 Conference on Hearing Loss

April 25th & April 26th, 2012
Registration at 7:00am
Workshops from 8:00am – 4:00pm

Albuquerque Marriott
2101 Louisiana NE
Albuquerque, NM

**Attendee registration will be
available after October 1st, 2011 at
the NMCDHH website.**

Please visit
www.cdhh.state.nm.us/COHL/COHL2012
for additional details or call
1.800.489.8536.



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*Positive Impact & Empowerment***