AURAL REHABILITATION AT UW EAR 2016
By Cathy Tashiro, Associate Professor Emerita, UW Tacoma

My husband and I attended the University of Washington’s Experience Aural Rehabilitation conference (UW EAR) February 22-25, 2016 at the Talaris Conference Center. The intensive four-day conference was designed to provide a unique opportunity for adults living with hearing loss, and their communication partners, to learn strategies for more successful communication.

UW EAR was meticulously organized by Dr. Kelly Tremblay, of UW’s Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, and her team of dedicated Doctor of Audiology graduate students. A total of 15 participants joined the conference, with the size of the group tailored to permit extensive individual interactions with student “coaches,” as well as with Dr. Tremblay and other faculty, and with technology and aural rehabilitation experts invited to participate in many of the sessions over the four days.

Before the conference began, we met with our assigned student coaches, who helped us define our communication needs and plan a personalized curriculum.

continued on page 10
In This Issue

Seattle Rep Theatre Looping ..........1
The Rep has completed installation of induction loops, and the result is excellent.

Medicaid and Hearing Devices ..........1
Despite advocacy efforts by HLAA-WA and others, Medicaid still does not cover hearing hardware for adults.

UW EAR 2016 ........................................1
The latest version of UW’s excellent aural rehabilitation conference.

Washington’s Alzheimer’s Plan.........2
How hearing loss is included in the recently-announced plan to manage Alzheimer’s and other dementias in Washington State.

Seen and Heard.................................3
Local news and notes.

Chapter and Support Group News 5
Find out when and where our chapters meet.

Policy and Regulatory Updates ..........11
HLAA in the news.

HLAA-WA Board of Trustees 11

HLAA Convention 2016 .....................12

Washington’s Alzheimer’s Plan and Hearing Loss
By Diana Thompson, HLAA-WA Legislative Liaison

I reported on development of an Alzheimer’s Disease Plan (ADP) for Washington State in the Summer 2015 issue of Sound Waves. I am pleased to provide an update regarding the outcome of HLAA-WA efforts to have hearing loss be recognized as an important factor in the conclusions and recommendations of the ADP.

A first draft of the ADP was published by the Alzheimer’s Disease Working Group (ADWG) in September 2015 and public hearings were held. The final plan, entitled, “Washington State Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and other Dementias” was presented to Governor Inslee on February 12, 2016 and is available at https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/legislative/documents/2016%20WA%20Alzheimer%20State%20Plan%20-2016%20Full%20Report%20Final.pdf.

According to Governor Inslee’s foreword to the ADP, currently more than 107,000 persons in Washington State have Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias, and the number is expected to double in the next 25 years. Because of research showing an association between hearing loss, dementia, and cognitive decline, I attended meetings of the ADWG during 2014 and 2015. I addressed the ADWG during public comment periods, and drafted and submitted two papers to the ADWG on behalf of HLAA-WA: “The Relation Between Hearing Loss, Dementia, Brain Atrophy and Cognitive Decline” and “Recommendations to Include Hearing Loss in the Alzheimer’s Plan.”

The impact of hearing loss is recognized under several of the seven goals of the ADP:

- Goal 1, Increase Public Awareness, Engagement and Education recommends that the public be informed about the importance of recognizing and addressing the causes of social isolation, including hearing loss.

- Goal 2, Prepare Communities for Significant Growth in the Dementia Population, proposes analysis of data on dementia regarding “prevalence of complications and coexisting conditions such as falling, accidents, over-medication, hearing or vision loss...”

- Goal 4, Ensure Access to Comprehensive Supports for Family Caregivers, emphasizes the need to “[i]ncrease availability and delivery systems of education for family members about dementia communication skills... addressing hearing loss and other sensory deficits...”

- Goal 5, Identify Dementia Early and Provide Dementia-Capable Evidence-Based Health Care, states, “…the high prevalence of hearing loss in older adults may complicate identification and/or treatment as cognitive testing and follow up often relies heavily on a person’s ability to hear and respond to questions and instructions.” Goal 5 also recommends that the clinical community be educated on “...how sensory loss such as hearing...impacts the diagnosis and/or treatment of the cognitively-impaired patient.”

continued on page 3
Alzheimer’s Plan cont. from page 2

- Goal 6, **Ensure Dementia Capable Long-Term Services and Supports Are Available in the Setting of Choice**, proposes including more information in the training for case management staff on assessing and addressing hearing loss. Goal 6 also stresses the need to identify and promote technology that assists people with independence, safety and aging in place, such as assistive listening devices or hearing aids.

Washington State currently is forming a state-wide working group to provide leadership for and to monitor progress on implementation of the ADP, its recommendations and legislative actions, and has asked Cheri Perazzoli, HLAA-WA Director of Advocacy, to participate in this group.

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### Seen and Heard

**HLAA-WA has partnered with Disability Rights Washington (DRW) to send a letter to Washington’s Secretary of State Kim Wyman asking that the Video Voters’ Guide be produced with captions in 2016 and in the future. The Video Voters’ Guide is produced for Washington State elections by TVW, Washington State’s public affairs network, in partnership with the office of the Secretary of State.**

DRW, founded in 1965, is a non-profit organization that protects the rights of people with disabilities statewide.

Captioning the Video Voter’s Guide would benefit not only people with hearing loss and people who are deaf, but also people who are not fluent in the language of the video.

HLAA member Wanda Pelayo of Seattle commented, “I was born in Argentina and came to Seattle in 1963. Even after so many years, it helps me greatly, as a hard of hearing person, to use closed captioning.” Wanda added, “So much more has to be done for hard of hearing people and for people whose native language isn’t English.”

HLAA-WA and DRW also plan to urge TVW to provide captioning for all of its programming. TVW, founded in 1995, is a non-profit entity (not a government agency) dedicated to providing coverage of state government deliberations and to producing other public affairs programming.

**HLAA-WA Board members, Chapter leaders and other leaders gathered for a day of training and discussion at the Everett Main Library on March 5. The full-day session, organized by HLAA-WA Vice President Kimberly Parker, was oriented to discussing key strategy issues related to HLAA-WA’s activities, and to refreshing knowledge of leaders with regard to HLAA-WA policies and procedures.**

Richard Einhorn, a member of HLAA’s national Board of Trustees, joined HLAA-WA leaders for the day. Richard, a well-known composer and record producer, added his valuable perspective to the strategy discussion. He also talked about his very interesting personal hearing loss journey and provided extensive insight into his experiences with communication access and assistive listening devices.

A dozen HLAA members attended **“Crimes of the Heart”** at the recently looped Village Theatre in Everett on March 4, prior to the HLAA-WA training and discussion session mentioned above. Unfortunately, most of the HLAA group found it very difficult to comprehend the play’s dialogue, even with the loop.

HLAA-WA Director of Advocacy Cheri Perazzoli, who was part of the HLAA group, commented, “Hearing loops can create an excellent assistive listening experience. In this case, our comprehension of dialogue was poor due primarily to the microphone placement on the stage, combined with the rapid dialogue of the play.”

Cheri reports she shared comments with the Village Theatre’s Sherrill Dryden, and adds, “Each play presents different acoustic challenges and Ms. Dryden assured HLAA-WA that the Village Theatre’s goal is to solve microphone issues associated with each production.” Ms. Dryden would like the HLAA group to take advantage of complimentary tickets for a future Village production.

**East Jefferson County HLAA chapter leader Emily Mandelbaum reports a good experience in Port Townsend. Emily says, “I recently saw ‘The Big Short’ in the Starlight Room at the Rose Theater. Because it was open-captioned, I could relax and enjoy the device-free treat of a film on a big screen.”**

Emily says that people can join the mailing list for the Rose Theatre’s weekly newsletter, which will provide information on upcoming captioned showings (usually at 4:00 pm on a weekday), by going to [www.rosetheatre.com](http://www.rosetheatre.com) and clicking on the newsletter option at the top of the screen.

The Rose Theatre currently does not have equipment for providing closed continued on page 5
Local HLAA Chapters and Support Groups

Information, Education, Advocacy, and Support

Meeting times may change. Visitors, friends, family members and healthcare professionals are always welcome at any of our meetings. Please note that some of the groups do not meet during July and August. We suggest sending an e-mail to be sure the group is meeting when you plan to visit. See www.hearingloss-wa.org for more information.

BELLEVUE—2nd Saturday 1:00pm (sign in at 12:45 pm)
Lake Sammamish Foursquare Church,
Rm. 104, 14434 NE 8th St., Bellevue
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM system, induction loop, CART (real-time captioning).
Steve: SPettijohn@msn.com or 360-668-3180

COLUMBIA BASIN—(Newly forming HLAA group in the Tri-Cities area/Kennewick)
Sue: baha2hear@gmail.com

EAST JEFFERSON CO.—4th Monday 2:00 pm (sign in at 1:45 pm) Port Townsend Community Center,
620 Tyler St., Port Townsend
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM system.
Emily: 360-531-2247 or mandelbaum@olympus.net.
Meetings are held Sept—Oct and Jan—May

RENTON—2nd Friday 12:30 pm
Renton Senior Activity Center,
211 Burnett Ave. N., Renton
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM system, CART (real-time captioning, most meetings).
Glenda: philloffam@gmail.com or 253-631-2345 (evenings).

SEATTLE—2nd Tuesday 6:45 pm
Aljoya Conference Room
450 NE 100th St., Seattle
Hearing assistance: amplification, induction loop, CART (real-time captioning).
Karen: 206-817-3213 or SeattleHLA@gmail.com.

SPOKANE—2nd Saturday 9:30 am
Nexus Center, 1206 N. Howard, Spokane
Hearing assistance: amplification, induction loop, CART (real-time captioning).
Margaret 509-893-1472 or hlaspokane@gmail.com.

TACOMA—2nd Saturday 9:30 am
(alternates with CI Support Group)

HLAA CHAPTER meets in Sept, Nov, Dec, Feb, Apr and Jun.
TACID, 6315 S. 19th St., Tacoma
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM system, CART (real-time captioning).
Jerry: 253-686-1816 or Penny: pennyallen@q.com

SOUTH SOUND COCHLEAR IMPLANT SUPPORT GROUP—
2nd Saturday, 9:30 am — (alters with Tacoma Chapter)
Meets Oct, Jan, Mar, May, Jul.
TACID, 6315 S. 19th St. Tacoma
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM system, CART (real-time captioning).
Christine: Christine@cs-dhhrs.com or 253-256-4690.

WHATCOM CO.—3rd Saturday 9:30 am
Christ the Servant Lutheran Church,
2600 Lakeway Dr., Bellingham
Hearing assistance: amplification, FM, induction loop and CART (real-time captioning).
Charlene: 360-738-3756 or charmackenzie@comcast.net

Looking for a chapter?
Please contact us directly if you are interested in attending or if you’d like to start a chapter in your area. Karen, SeattleHLA@gmail.com or info@hearingloss-wa.org

Online Resources to Keep Informed

Bookmark the HLAA-WA website at hearingloss-wa.org for resources and information.

Like the HLAA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HearingLossAssociation.

Find out which venues are looped for your entertainment at www.loopseattle.org.

Hearing Loss Magazine is available online at www.hearingloss.org/membership/hearing-loss-magazine/current-issue.

Sign up for the HLAA monthly eNewsletter at www.hearingloss.org/content/e-news-sign.
captioning of movies, but is in the process of obtaining devices that have bendable arms so the caption screen may be positioned to best suit the user’s view of the movie screen.

HLAA member Jerry Paulukonis of Seattle reports that on January 2 a group of HLAA members rang in the new year at an open-captioned performance of “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” at the Edmonds Theater.

Along with about 20 HLAA members, there were many Deaf movie-goers in the audience. Jerry said, “It was a delight to see a movie without the hassle of obtaining and using a captioning device.” Edmonds resident and President of the Washington State Communication Access Project (Wash-CAP) Dean Olson arranged the captioning in advance with the theater manager. The Edmonds Theater will continue to provide open captioning for upcoming movies. The first Sunday show for new movies will be open-captioned.

Jerry notes that a key to persuading theater managers to present open-captioned screenings is for them to see that Deaf and hard of hearing people actually attend these screenings. Jerry says, “Let’s all continue to support theaters that provide wonderfully-inclusive open captioning by attending the shows.”

HLAA member Bob Branigin of Seattle is once again taking a hearing-accessible cruise in 2016. Bob is well known as one of only two HLAA members to have attended every HLAA national convention (see the Fall 2015 issue of Sound Waves) but also has a passion for ocean cruises.

Bob notes that going on a hearing-accessible cruise means being part of a large group of people with hearing loss and means that extensive efforts are made by the ship’s crew to accommodate passengers with hearing loss. Cruise lines (Royal Caribbean in the case of Bob’s 2016 cruise) provide hearing accommodations as a standard practice (see Royal Caribbean’s web page on hearing disabilities at http://www.royalcaribbean.com/allaboutcruising/accessiblesecs/hearingImpairment.do), but joining a group of passengers with hearing loss means a greater focus on the needs of those passengers.

In November 2016, Bob will be sailing from Ft. Lauderdale, Fl, aboard the “Freedom of the Seas” for an eight-day Eastern Caribbean adventure. He would be glad to receive emails at bobcats46@comcast.net from anyone interested in more information about hearing-accessible cruises.

The April 24 performance will also be captioned.
their hearing aids or cochlear implants, many people with hearing loss can clearly hear and understand sound captured by on-stage microphones. Minimal venue staff assistance is needed for this user-friendly hearing access solution. People without telecoils in their hearing devices can use a hearing loop receiver and headphones to hear the sound transmitted through a loop.

“Luna Gale” is the first show at The Rep performed after the installation of the loops. After attending a looped performance on March 6, Kimberly Parker, HLAA-WA Board member and a stage performer herself, commented, “The hearing loop worked beautifully. I simply changed the program on my cochlear implant processor to telecoil, and could hear and understand all the performers. What a thrill to hear so well and so easily!”

Richard Einhorn, a member of the national Board of HLAA, traveled to Seattle from New York City to participate in the launching of The Rep’s loops. Einhorn, a well-known composer and record producer, lost much of his hearing suddenly in 2010 and has since become a strong advocate for hearing access and support. He is an active proponent of the use of induction loops, and provided information to The Rep about how to achieve a sound mix tailored specifically to people with hearing loss. Einhorn said, “At the performance of ‘Luna Gale’ that I saw on March 6, The Rep’s loop system worked perfectly and sounded great. It is one of the finest loop installations I’ve heard anywhere, and I applaud Seattle Rep for their passionate commitment to providing such a great listening experience for those of us with hearing loss.”

The loops at The Rep were installed by DRS Sound Inc., a Wisconsin-based company with extensive experience installing induction loops in all sorts of venues. Spencer Norby of HearingLoop NW collaborated with DRS. The installation was funded by a grant from 4Culture, the cultural services agency for King County, by individual donations, and through an online power2give.com fundraising campaign.

“Our patrons were telling us our assistive listening systems needed an upgrade, and we’re pleased to introduce this to the Seattle arts community. We hope other theatres will follow,” said Jeffrey Herrmann, Managing Director at The Rep. Terri Olson Miller, Chairperson of The Rep’s Board of Trustees said, “It’s all about building an inclusive continued on page 7
community, with people coming together and making good things happen."

Many people with hearing loss are unaware of technologies that can enable them to enjoy the arts, but the use of these tools is growing. Karen Utter, President of HLAA-WA, commented, “The arts community has been committed for some time to making theatres accessible to people who are Deaf. But most people with hearing loss don’t know sign language, so a parallel commitment to assistive technology—hearing loops, FM and infrared listening systems, and captioning—is needed to enable people with hearing loss to fully enjoy a performance.”

Plays are particularly difficult because dialogue can be rapid, or because of accents and the pitch of certain voices, or because music and other sounds may be part of the production and can interfere with comprehension of dialogue. These factors make hearing access tailored to the needs of people with hearing loss essential to enabling them to comprehend dialogue and to fully enjoy performances.

Induction loop technology is prevalent in theaters and opera houses throughout the UK and Scandinavia, countries where most hearing aids are telecoil-enabled. But widespread use of loops in the U.S. has begun to occur only in recent years. Town Hall Seattle, the Bellevue City Council chambers, and the Seattle City Council chambers also are among prominent venues recently looped in the Puget Sound area. The Rep, by implementing induction loops, is now in the forefront of breaking down communication barriers for people with hearing loss.

The Rep plans a public launch and celebration of the induction loops in conjunction with the world premiere of "Sherlock Holmes and The American Problem” on April 24, 2016. A presentation about the new induction loops will precede the play. Captions will be available for this performance, as well.

The May 5 performance of “Sherlock Holmes and The American Problem” also will be captioned. The May 14 performance will include interpretation with American Sign Language (ASL).

For tickets to The Rep’s productions or for more information, visit [https://www.seattlerep.org/](https://www.seattlerep.org/). For more information about hearing loops and about looped venues in the Seattle area, visit [www.loopseattle.org](http://www.loopseattle.org).
Energetic advocacy led to budget provisos submitted by Senator Cyrus Habib and Representative Joan McBride to fund Medicaid coverage of adult hearing hardware.

Unfortunately, neither the House nor Senate budget ultimately included such coverage, despite the efforts of Senator Habib and Representative McBride, the HLAA-WA Board, and the many persons and organizations with which we joined forces.


HLAA-WA Director of Advocacy Cheri Perazzoli said, “We were disappointed, of course, that efforts to fund Medicaid coverage of hearing hardware failed to win legislative approval in the supplemental operating budget; but we were not surprised at this result, given that in a supplemental budget it is difficult to obtain funding for new programs.” Cheri added, “Our strong advocacy efforts, in coordination with numerous other organizations, did increase knowledge among legislators about the lack of Medicaid coverage of hearing aids and the need for this coverage. This increased awareness, and the active support of Senator Habib, Representative McBride and other legislators, is a foundation upon which to build when the legislature meets in 2017 to enact a biennial budget and when there will be a greater possibility of adding new programs.”

As of January 2015, 26 states, but not Washington, covered hearing aids for adult Medicaid recipients. Hearing aids typically have a useful life of about five years, and the components and software of cochlear implants (CIs) are regularly improved by their manufacturers as technology evolves. Without financial assistance from Medicaid, maintaining, upgrading and replacing existing devices is...
Medicaid Coverage cont. from page 8

Beyond the reach of most Medicaid recipients. Audiology exams and medical treatment of the ear for people age 21 and older are still covered by Washington State’s Medicaid program. In addition, there is coverage of designated hearing hardware for persons under age 21, as well as for persons 21 and older who are developmentally disabled.

Hearing aids and CIs improve the ability of people with hearing loss to hear and understand. At a minimum, individuals are more productive and have better quality of life if they can manage or overcome hearing challenges by using hearing aids or receiving CIs. Numerous assistive listening devices, such as remote microphones, are now available and are increasingly effective if paired with hearing aids or cochlear implants. Researchers are investigating whether hearing treatment can do more than increase our ability to hear and understand. Some recent research gives support to the theory that treatment of hearing loss can reduce or delay cognitive decline.

High cost prevents many persons from acquiring hearing aids or cochlear implants, and particularly impacts low-income individuals. The lack of coverage of hearing aids through Medicaid and Medicare leaves a significant segment of the population exposed to the severe consequences of untreated hearing loss. While Medicare does not cover hearing aids, it does cover cochlear implants.

HLAA-WA will continue advocating for Medicaid coverage of hearing hardware for all financially-eligible adults. We will urge our partner organizations to continue to emphasize this issue in their contacts with legislators and the Governor’s office. A key objective will be to have the Governor include Medicaid coverage of adult hearing hardware when proposing a 2017-2019 budget.

If you would like up-to-date information on Medicaid coverage of hearing devices in Washington State, please contact Diana Thompson at dianafort21@yahoo.com.

Moving on?

Each returned newsletter costs us $1.20!

Please help keep our costs down by letting us know when you move on or change your mailing address.
UW EAR 2016  cont. from page 1

UW EAR featured group classes on a wide range of subjects and one-on-one learning opportunities to focus on improving listening success in difficult real-world settings. From experts and others with hearing loss, we learned to repair communication breakdowns in a supportive environment and shared thoughts about the emotional impact of hearing loss on ourselves and our partners.

I’ve struggled with hearing loss for almost ten years since I had my first episode of sensorineural hearing loss of unknown origin, which left me with very limited hearing in one ear and diminished hearing in the other. Yet I hadn’t felt there was much to be done, and I assumed that I had to settle for the limited benefits provided by my hearing aid. UW EAR helped me notice what I have accepted too readily, such as just zoning out of conversations when I can’t hear in environments like noisy restaurants. It was liberating to be with others with hearing loss and to be at the center of attention and caring.

It thoroughly impressed me that each speaker made sure EVERYONE could hear before starting their talk. When adjustments were needed, there was no sign of impatience. On the contrary, this was treated as the norm.

I also can’t say enough about the student coaches—I know mine seemed to know what I needed even before I did! Real-world strategies were emphasized by knowledgeable speakers. Advocacy, both for ourselves and for others with hearing loss, was a frequent topic, and we had opportunities to practice advocating assertively, as opposed to aggressively.

An outing to a local pizza restaurant gave us the chance to successfully advocate for turning off the TV sets and brightening the lights. It was fun, and the pizza was delicious! I tried a streamer and microphone in this setting, and my tablemates and I were able to have a good conversation despite having one microphone that speakers had to pass to each other. This slowed down the conversation, but maybe that wasn’t such a bad thing, as people weren’t able to talk over each other. I did find the technological adjustments a bit daunting, and realized that I would need practice to handle the device without the able assistance of my student coach.

By the end of the conference, I felt like I was with family. Great speakers, wonderful students, and an incredibly supportive atmosphere made this a very special four days that will have a lasting impact on my quality of life.

The Seattle Foundation’s GiveBIG 2016 annual online giving event is May 3, 2016
WE ONLY ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT ONCE A YEAR

HLAA-WA will be participating in Give BIG 2016. Please give generously to HLAA-WA and to other non-profit organizations which make our region a stronger, more vibrant community for all. Every contribution will be partially matched with funds provided by The Seattle Foundation and GiveBIG 2016 sponsors.

In 2015, GiveBIG contributions supported our outreach and programs for people with hearing loss, our advocacy efforts seeking better-funded hearing healthcare, and greater hearing access in civic spaces and entertainment venues. If you regularly read this newsletter, you know we are making progress. In 2016, we need your support again as we continue to work for you and for all who are hard of hearing.

Please look for upcoming communications about supporting HLAA-WA, or go to GiveBIG 2016.

HLAA and other groups originally filed comments in January 2016 in response to the FCC’s NPRM regarding hearing aid-compatible (HAC) wireless phones, urging the FCC to adopt the consensus agreement drafted by consumer groups and the wireless industry. Adopting that agreement would mean the FCC would set new benchmarks that would result in 66 percent of all wireless phones becoming HAC in two years, 85 percent in five years, and that the FCC will consider requiring 100 percent hearing aid compatibility in eight years.

Apple filed comments related to the same NPRM asking the FCC to rule that Apple’s proprietary wireless technology is an acceptable, and superior, alternative to the FCC’s HAC requirements.

HLAA and other groups replied to Apple’s comments noting, “The issue of proprietary solutions poses very real and basic accessibility and usability concerns.” HLAA further commented, “A proprietary system that excludes telecoils is accessible and usable only if the consumer uses that one brand of phone that they are locked into.”

HLAA and the other groups highlighted that Apple’s comments, if accepted, would imply piecemeal solutions to HAC. HLAA said, “It is not clear how 100% compliance could be reached if compatibility is not universal and devices are not interoperable. The importance of solutions based on open standards in the case of HAC and accessibility in general cannot be overstated.”

**2016 HLAA-WA Board of Trustees**

*We are an extension of HLAA. In an effort to make hearing loss an issue of concern within our state, we promote the HLAA philosophy of self-help, while specifically addressing the issues of awareness, education, access and employment among people who are hard of hearing.*

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We welcome articles, letters, and notices of coming events. We may abbreviate submissions due to space constraints. Any content may be reprinted or disseminated, as long as the author or this publication is credited. We encourage health and service professionals to make copies available to their clients. Submission deadlines are April 1, July 1, October 1 and February 1.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of HLAA-WA or HLAA. Mention of goods or services does not mean endorsement; nor does exclusion suggest disapproval.

Please contact us about advertising opportunities and rates. Questions about this newsletter may be addressed to editor@hearingloss-wa.org.
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Hearing Loss Association of America, Washington State Association

Mission Statement:
To open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

REGISTER NOW FOR HLAA CONVENTION 2016

Registration for HLAA’s Convention 2016 is OPEN! The 2016 Convention will be a joint event with the Congress of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People. Come to Washington, D.C. to learn about hearing loss, meet new friends and share experiences.

June 23-26
Washington Hilton Hotel
Washington, DC

Review the registration options carefully to choose the right one for you. Click here for the registration page online, and find a convention schedule and other Convention details at http://www.hearingloss.org/content/convention.

For $10 per year, you can subscribe to the print version of Sound Waves and receive four quarterly issues by mail. An application form and more information are available online at http://hearingloss-wa.org/sound-waves-newsletter/.