



A PUBLICATION OF THE ADULT LOSS OF HEARING ASSOCIATION

# Hear & Now

July 2010

## Announcements

**ALOHA Golf Event:**  
Friday, September 24th  
At Arizona National Golf Course. This event is in conjunction with Downtown Sertoma Club.

**Needed:** Golfers & sponsors. Ask for a brochure! Tell your friends! Let's make this a success that will provide services for hard of hearing people!  
*(See Page 6)*

## **Living Well with Hearing Loss Workshops:**

Two free workshops in the fall: First will be about hearing technology, and the second will deal with medical and surgical issues.

Dates, locations and times will be announced.

You may e-mail or call to be notified, and to place your name on the workshop list.

795-9887  
Info&alohaaz.org



**Hamilton Relay Names Lou Touchette Hard of Hearing Leader in Arizona. (Pictured: Lou Touchette from ALOHA and Lisa Furr from Hamilton Relay.)**

From the Hamilton Relay Press Release: "Lou surmises that he lost his hearing through a 40 year career working around jet engines. What he has learned in helping himself through his own hearing loss, he readily passes on to others and strives to make communicating easier for people who are hard of hearing. Arizona is fortunate to have such an individual and we congratulate him for his efforts and accomplishments in Arizona."

Of course, around ALOHA, he is known as "Loopin' Lou". That is, he is head of the ALOHA Let's Loop Tucson project. He also is a member of the board. He takes this volunteer position very seriously, and helps countless folks achieve the best hearing they can, given their amount and type of hearing difficulty.

**CLASSES, ETC.**  
**Beginning & Intermediate Sign Language Classes and Speech Reading Class:**

\$50 Member  
 \$75 non-Member

**Taking Requests 795-9887**

**Assistive Device Demos: *by appointment only.***  
 Listening and signaling devices demonstrated. None for sale, but a vendor list is available. Also, loop demos.

**Peer Support Meetings:**  
 Weekly, on Tuesdays, 1 to 2 PM. Loop amplification. Friendly discussions and info shared about hearing aids, assistive devices, inductive looping, etc.

**Office Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tue, Wed & Thur**

## **Changed your Email?**

Please let us know.

## **MEETINGS**

Desert Cochlear Connections Group  
**At ALOHA 4001 E. Fort Lowell**

Taking a break for the summer! Meetings will resume in September. Lalita Doughman from Advanced Bionics — September 18th 11:00 – 1:00. If you need information about cochlear implant, DVD's, etc. can be borrowed from ALOHA .

Contact ALOHA: info@alohaaz.org. or phone 795-9887. You can also leave your contact information to be notified about upcoming meetings.

Tuesday Support Group

Learning how to cope with hearing loss. Valuable information is shared around the table in an informal setting. If you have never been to a support meeting, we invite you to give it a try. The meetings are open to the public **every Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Free!**

*You will be surprised how much you learn at these meetings—and have fun at the same time.*

Amplification via inductive loop is provided. Also, Beth Appleton transcribes what is said so we can read it on a screen.

*Hearing Aid Bank Needs Donations*

The Hearing Aid Bank provides refurbished hearing aids to low-income people whose income is less than \$712 per month. Used hearing aids can be donated at ALOHA, or by calling U of A Speech and Hearing Clinic at 621-7070

Get your **old** hearing aids out of the drawer and donate them!

## **GREEN VALLEY** **ALOHA SUPPORT** **GROUP:**

On summer sojourn, and will resume in October. Contact Mary Simmie 648-1266 or Ben Cleveland 399-2219 if you need help with hearing issues in the interim. The meetings are held at La Posada.

Green Valley Meeting Dates 10 am

**October 4th— John Cobb**, Au.D. (doctor of audiology) will speak on early identification of hearing loss, treatment, and how to maintain healthy hearing.

**November 1st—Jon C. Richins**, audiologist at Tucson Ear, Nose & Throat will talk about “acoustics”. He will offer suggestions that should help people hear better in various situations.

**December 6th—Christmas Potluck and White Elephant gift exchange.**



**Does your TV require a new digital box? (usually older model analog TV)**

Both Comcast and Cox are changing to digital, and certain customers will be required to have a digital box installed. The box is free, installation extra if you need that service.

*Make sure the box is a model that allows closed captioning to show through on all the channels!*

**Corrections:** In the May newsletter it was Elizabeth Ohm who made a donation in memory of Julius Barthoff.

One news item was printed twice!

March 1, 2010, Green Valley ALOHA Presentation

“Common social/emotional factors with seniors experiencing hearing loss and memory loss”, presented by Ronald Brill, author and emotional health educator

The presentation first explained how human stress arises when different parts of our brain are in conflict. Our brains were designed primarily for survival first and reasoning secondarily. All humans have two primal brain capabilities that operate using “automatic” impulses that inform our thinking brain if we are safe or in danger. Our reptilian and mammalian brain are instinctive functions that often cause humans to misinterpret and act on primitive brain impulses that confuse *emotional* with *physical* pain, as though our emotional wounds are “life threatening.” This leads to stress reactions such as “attack or hide” responses—anger or aggressive behavior on one hand, or hiding (social withdrawal and depression) for self-protection. Despite its intelligence, our brain fools us into believing others cause our feelings of distress. This is why we often fail to take responsibility for our feelings, blame others, or shame ourselves for what we feel.

Brill conducted a survey of ALOHA members and summarized the results (see below). The survey focused on the hearing loss individual’s experiences and opinions related to stress and possible later life memory problems. The survey included written, anonymous responses to three questions:

1. **What are the 3 most difficult kinds of social or emotional problems related to your hearing loss?** The most frequent responses were:
  - A. Social isolation problems (mentioned by—33% respondents)
  - B. Frustration/irritation problems—(24%)
  - C. Leisure related stress—(20%)
  - D. Communication problems—(16%)
  - E. General fear/apprehension problems (social phobia) - (7%)
  
2. **Do you believe there is any connection between senior hearing loss and later life memory problems?**
  - A. 23% responded “No”
  - B. 39% responded “Yes”
  - C. 39% responded “Don’t know”
  - D. A combination of “No” and “Don’t know” represented 61% of responses
  
3. **What are your most helpful strategies for maintaining emotional well-being with your hearing loss?**

The most frequently mentioned strategies are:

  - A. Self-isolation
  - B. Physical adaptation/adjustment
  - C. Pretending I can hear when I can’t
  - D. Developing self-control and remaining calm
  - E. Increasing my social engagement

*Continued on page 4...*

*Continued from page 3...hearing & memory loss...*

**Conclusion:** Based on studies of those experiencing later life hearing loss, and experiences of seniors with early stage cognitive/memory decline, there appears to be significant similarities between the two in their social and emotional responses. *Emotional and behavioral responses to stress issues are both characterized by self-imposed social isolation related to social stigma.* Both hearing and memory loss are highly stressful experiences that affect one's sense of self. Neuroscience research shows that prolonged stress causes atrophy and impairment to regions of our brain responsible for learning, attention and memory.

*Ronald Brill is founder of the Brain Works Project and Green Valley Senior Brain Club. He has developed education programs and a website ([www.copingskill4kids.net](http://www.copingskill4kids.net)). See his website for more information.*



### **Further Opinion on the above article**

Two members of ALOHA, after taking Ronald Brill's survey had an e-mail discussion about the survey. They consented to have their comments published here.

**From Lou Touchette:** I noticed most folks marked either "No" or "I don't know" on question #2 of the survey. (*Do you believe there is any connection between senior hearing loss and later life memory problems?*) I've been thinking about this and have concluded that if I have spent most of my life not being sure what it was that I heard, how can specific facts remain detailed in my brain. I'm often not clear on various things and my wife says I have a *bad memory*. I choose to think it's not that I don't remember, but rather that the episode in question or whatever, was never clearly registered in my brain back when. It's like an engraver striking a hard impression vs one who only strikes a barely recognizable one. I think the brain is much the same way. Forgetting may be due to things never being "learned" and registered in the brain in the first place. This means there could be memory problems with brain functions related to 1) Acquisition; 2) Storage/cataloging; or 3) Retrieval. What do you think, Randy?

**From Randy Collins:** I completely agree with you, Lou. It's my opinion that when we hear we underline and bookmark information in our brains to retrieve later. Problem is, people with hearing loss spend not a small amount of time focusing on the conversation. As the conversation continues we encounter things that aren't clear, don't make sense, or don't seem relevant. We then underline some of those things *while* the conversation continues, not knowing at that point if the underlined or bookmarked conversation that is confusing will make sense later, or not. We just know that we need to try and remember key points so that hopefully we will get something later in the conversation to hook it to that will all make sense. In the meantime there is the information we do understand (we think, but of course we are never certain) that we purposely underline and bookmark in our brain because we believe it will be important information to have in the future. All this is going on at once!

At some point in the future someone will say don't you remember "yada yada"? Immediately you reference the event and conversation in the bookmarks in your brain. WHICH BOOKMARK? You have a billion of them and many are related to trying to keep up with the conversation at the time and others were related to things you thought would be important in the future. How could you possibly retrieve ALL the information, tell which bookmark is related to trying to connect the conversation back at the time it happened and which are related to things at the time you thought would be important in the future? And then here's the kicker. Sometimes you get the right bookmark in your brain, but when your brain says "Aha! Yes, I remember the bookmark" you begin to retrieve that page in your brain only to discover that 10 sentences are underlined! Which of the ten underlined sentences is the correct one for the question you were just asked? LOL! All this happens in split seconds!

*Continued...page 5*

*Continued from page 4, Randy Collins....*

We can throw in all kinds of factors that make it more difficult...like time of day. People with hearing loss are more tired at the end of the day because we've had to work extra hard to understand all day long. It is work! Give us a lot of information in the afternoon, especially late afternoon when we are tired and, man, are we going to miss a lot. We're exhausted.

There's actually research and large published hunks of information on all this. Sam Trychin (*author and public speaker — <http://trychin.com>*) has addressed it from time to time as well.

Hearing people have no way of understanding how we don't hear and what that means. I have often said that the physical aspect of not hearing, the part that most audiologists and hearing healthcare providers address, is just the tip of the iceberg. Hearing loss is much more than not being able to hear. Not being able to hear simply sets off a cascade of things we must deal with as a consequence of hearing loss. As you know it is a deceptively complex disability. And because hearing people can't see or touch it, it is very difficult for them to empathize.

Another factor is that HOH people take more mental breaks *during* conversations, lectures etc. It's built in self defense to keep us from going stark raving nuts. When we are having difficulty hearing something that is said we begin to tune out, especially if what we are hearing isn't making a lot of sense. Our brain flies off to something that does make sense. We daydream. It's self preservation. When we take mental breaks we aren't listening, and it is understandable then that we won't remember.

When hearing people "half listen" there will be words that bring them back to the conversation. We have less chance of hearing those words, so we stay "out there" longer and more often. I always tell hearing people that if we dropped them, one at time in Lithuania tomorrow and said they had to stay there for a year with no other English speakers, how long would they stand and listen to Lithuanian conversations that they don't understand before their mind starts to wander off to things they do understand?

That is in essence what hard of hearing people do, every day, day in and day out, except that we are in it for life, not just a year.

**Editor: We would love to have feedback about this topic. You may e-mail or snail mail your comments to ALOHA.**

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### **Loops&Telecoils Meeting at the HLAA Convention: June, 2010**

Loop technology advocates, and industry vendors, met privately with Brenda Battat, Executive Director of Hearing Loss Association of America and Pat Kricos from the American Academy of Audiology. Member George Ghorpade represented ALOHA. It was a coming together to discuss how best to promote installations of inductive loop systems across the U.S. This kicks off a one-year campaign promoting better communication for people who are hard of hearing. A loop conference will be held at the next HLAA convention in June of 2011 in Washington DC.

**You can help promote loops in Arizona by letting key people at facilities know you need this help to participate at events, lectures, services, etc. Just ask ALOHA how!**



ALOHA First Annual Golf Tournament in  
Conjunction with Tucson Downtown Sertoma Club

**When: Friday, September 24th, 7:30 a.m. shotgun start.**

**Where: Arizona National Golf Course**

**Cost: \$99 per golfer, or package deal with Four-Some**

*(Please Request a brochure for details 795-9887)*

**Wanted: Golfers and Sponsors**

Major Sponsorships: \$1,500	Food Sponsor \$500
Beverage Cart \$500	Hole Sponsor \$100

Lunch will follow the tournament, along with prizes, awards and raffle.

***Please help any way you can to make this a success! It benefits hard of hearing people in Southern Arizona.***

**Board Note:** We welcome **Kathryn (Kasey) Hope** to the ALOHA board of directors. She is an audiology student at UA Speech & Hearing Sciences. She replaces **Kimberly Dale** who left to continue her studies in Alaska. Kim was given a certificate of appreciation for her volunteer work.

Welcome To New Members Since March, 2010

Hearing Solutions, Janiece Dickenson	Ruth Gorski	Thomas Miller
Richard & Margaret Golombek	Janice Sennewald	Kelly Quinn
Ingrid Sulich	Elizabeth Ohm	Mary Anna Welch
John & Dorothy Lohr	Charles Spencer	
Glenn & Marilyn Back	Luis & Maria Gonzalez	

Thank You for the Donations!

John & Dorothy Lohr	Mary Ayer	Sue Vardon
Tucson Rincon Lions Club	Maryella Fetzer	Irving Silverman
Sue Tretter	Pat Clinch	Anonymous (Donation box)
Oro Valley United Church of Christ Ladies Club		

Radio Program—"Hearing Matters" Every Sunday from 2:00 to 3:00 pm, Janice Gasch, Doctor of Audiology, covers hearing loss issues. She talks with guests, and takes phone call questions on the air. The station is **KVOI 1030 on the AM dial**. ALOHA members Lou and Linda Touchette were guests in June.

Looping 101 Class: This is a free class. You will learn how to install a loop in your home, or other small area such as a small office space. Previous students raved about the class. Lou Touchette, ALOHA board member and Loop Tucson advocate teaches the class. Date and Time to be announced. The place will be ALOHA, but also can hold another class in Green Valley. Contact ALOHA 795-9887 or e-mail [info@alohaaz.org](mailto:info@alohaaz.org) to get on the list.

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- Loretta Butler, Office Director

**Office Hours: 10 AM to 5 PM, Tues. - Thurs.**

**Please call in advance to confirm hours.  
Thanks!**

*Combined Fed. Campaign #68532*

**You can reach us at:**

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**Non-profit Tax ID# 86-0554154**

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**Let's Loop Tucson**