



**Hearing Loss
Association**
of America

Chapter Manual

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Foreword

“Welcome to the growing group that wants improvements for people with hearing loss enough to *work* for them. *You* and your counterparts around the country are the bedrock of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH). It is on the foundation *you* lay that the organization will be built. Let us build to last.

“Many people dream. Few are able to bring their dreams to reality. By working together, by helping one another, we are bringing a shared dream of SHHH to fruition. This manual is designed to enhance your efforts, to give examples of "how to" and to share with you everything we can to help SHHH grow.

“Let me describe to you my dream for SHHH. I see us as an organization of people whose spirit is unquenchable. Those of us who are hard of hearing want to learn more about hearing loss and how to handle it. We want to develop options for ourselves and to open doors for others. We want to share our knowledge with our family and friends so that our mutual strengths can be developed in relation to each other.

“As we grow within ourselves and establish better communication with the hearing world, we must organize on a national level. Few things happen automatically. We must *work* for change. In our society it is necessary to communicate from a broad and solid base - to have a large constituency. Only then will government, corporate and professional leaders listen to what we have to say. SHHH national provides the structure and has the means to represent you all. By belonging to SHHH you ensure that your local activity will find itself reflected many times on the national scene.

“Use this manual to suit your circumstances. It is a guide - not gospel. It is intended as a reference for your use throughout the year. It will be necessary to add and delete material at various times to keep it current and pertinent. Be sure to turn the manual over to your successor when your term of office ends.

“And now, let us begin!”

Rocky Stone
Founder
Executive Director
(1979-1993)

Background

History

In 1977, Howard E. "Rocky" Stone began to investigate the status of people with hearing loss. What he discovered led him to found Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH) in late 1979. For more than 15 years, he devoted his life to improving awareness, developing access, equalizing opportunities, and educating people about hearing loss. Rocky nurtured SHHH for more than 13 years as the full-time volunteer executive director. Throughout the years, countless individuals have given of their time, spirit, and resources to help Rocky's vision become reality.

“I established SHHH as a membership organization run by people with hearing loss. We provide information necessary for them to make choices, but emphasize the choice must be theirs. The challenge is to develop togetherness within diversity.” -Rocky Stone

Description

On November 4, 2005, Self Help for Hard of Hearing People changed its name to Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Hearing Loss Association of America is a volunteer, international organization of people with hearing loss, and their relatives and friends. Hearing Loss Association of America is based on the belief that education is the key toward combating the profound ignorance that views hearing loss as a sign of mental or physical incompetence. Little progress can be made until those who cannot hear well - and those who can hear - better understand the nature, causes, complications, and possible remedies of hearing loss. Hearing Loss Association of America seeks out people with hearing loss for involvement in local meetings and activities; education on the problems of hearing loss; and instruction on the detection, management, and possible prevention of further hearing loss. Hearing Loss Association of America works to develop public and professional acceptance of the needs of people with hearing loss, fostering a climate in which they can seek appropriate alternative communication skills. Hearing Loss Association of America urges representation at government levels to rectify existing inequities usually faced by most people with hearing loss.

Our Goal

Our goal is the empowerment of people with hearing loss so they feel in control of their lives and can continue to participate successfully in society. Hearing Loss Association of America is committed to *Making Hearing Loss an Issue of National Concern*.

Constitution

I. Preamble

We are people who do not hear well. We tend, increasingly, to be isolated. The existing pattern of community life lacks both means of communication and institutions for us to solve our special problems and live normal lives. For too long, too many of us have accepted a loneliness we are unable to explain to our friends or even to our families.

We do not believe this situation is inevitable. We believe we can help one another, be helped, and live active, healthy lives. We need to show each other, our relatives and friends, how. And, because our hearing loss affects those close to us, we as well as they must do everything possible to improve communication. Our primary purpose then, is to educate ourselves, our relatives and our friends about the causes, nature, complications and possible remedies of hearing loss.

We believe that joy in sharing; strength in association; empathy and fellowship with peers; and a chance to help others who are in the same situation, is a way to begin.

Therefore, in the conviction that by working together we can develop the realization that we are not alone, we have established "Hearing Loss Association of America" to further our common welfare with the following purposes.

II. Articles

1. To develop general and concrete policies to allow people with hearing loss to be better integrated into all aspects of society.
2. To come together in fellowship, empathy, and concern based on common experience.
3. To share our experiences, develop awareness, and learn better to cope with our problems.
4. To educate ourselves, our relatives and friends about the nature, complications and possible remedies of hearing loss.
5. To increase awareness among relatives and friends of the uniqueness of hearing loss. To examine their role in the situation, revealing both positive and negative aspects.
6. To print, publish and distribute periodicals, newsletters, articles, and other material that will enable people with hearing loss, their relatives and friends, to increase the understanding, education, mutual welfare and happiness of themselves, and facilitate participation in rewarding activities within the community.
7. To establish advisory services for assistance and guidance to people with hearing loss.
8. To work toward the social enrichment of the lives of people with hearing loss through activities that will provide suitable ways for them to participate.
9. To establish chapters or other units of this organization as will enable it to serve most effectively the welfare of people with hearing loss in those communities where there is a need.
10. To cooperate with other organizations and institutions on matters of mutual concern.
11. To encourage medical research into all aspects of hearing loss and technical research into all aspects of remedial aids.
12. To work toward means of reducing the cost of remedial aids to the people with hearing loss.
13. To carry out the foregoing through discussion groups, lectures, group and recreational activities, advisory services, scientific studies, collection, publication and dissemination of studies and information, and other activities incidental to the foregoing purposes.

14. The post office address of the principal office of the Corporation is 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, Maryland 20814. The principal office of the Corporation shall be located in Maryland or at such location as the board of trustees shall, from time to time, deem appropriate and in the corporate interest. The address of the initial registered office of the Corporation in the County of Montgomery is 8203 Lilly Stone Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20817, and the name of its initial resident agent at such address is Howard E. Stone. Said resident agent was a citizen of Maryland and actually resided therein.
15. The Corporation shall not be authorized to issue capital stock. The number of trustees of the Corporation shall be three, which number may be increased or decreased pursuant to the bylaws of the Corporation, and so long as there are less than three members, the numbers of trustees may be less than three but no less than the number of members. The names of the trustees who shall act until the first meeting or until their successors are duly chosen and qualified are: Howard E. Stone, Alice Marie Stone, and Michael Howard Stone.
16. The internal affairs of the Corporation shall be regulated by the bylaws, and the business and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed and conducted by the trustees in accordance with the bylaws. The initial bylaws shall be adopted by the initial board of trustees hereinafter named. The power to alter, amend, or repeal the bylaws shall be vested in the trustees of the Corporation. The provisions of the bylaws and the management of the Corporation in accordance therewith shall be subject to the following:
 - a) The Corporation shall not be conducted for profit.
 - b) The Corporation shall not exercise any power nor engage in any activity that would prevent it from obtaining exemption from Federal income taxation as a corporation described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law) or cause it to lose its exempt status under such section.
 - c) No part of any gift to, or of the net earnings or assets of, the Corporation shall accrue to the benefit of or be distributed to trustees, officers or other private persons, provided that nothing herein shall preclude the Corporation from paying

reasonable compensation for services rendered and making payments and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article THIRD hereof.

- d) No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation.
- e) The Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- f) In the event of dissolution or final liquidation of the Corporation, the board of trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner as the trustees shall determine or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or scientific purposes as shall at the time be exempt or qualified for exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the directors shall determine, provided that none of the assets shall be distributed to any corporation, fund or foundation any part of whose net earning inures to the benefit of or is distributable to any individual or any corporation for profit.

17. The duration of the Corporation shall be perpetual

Hearing Loss Association of America National Bylaws

ARTICLE I. NAME

This corporation shall utilize the name the “Hearing Loss Association of America” also sometimes referred to as “HLAA” or as corporation in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE II. OFFICES

The corporation shall have and continuously maintain within the State of Maryland a registered office and a registered agent, whose business office is identical with such registered office, and may have other offices within or without the State of Maryland as the board of trustees (“Board of Trustees” or “Board”) may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSES

3.01. The purpose of HLAA is to:

- A. Enable people with hearing loss and their families to meet the challenge of hearing loss and to participate in the mainstream of an enlightened society through information, education, advocacy, and support, in furtherance of the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation of this corporation.
- B. To receive and maintain a fund or funds of real or personal property, or both, and, subject to the restrictions and limitations hereinafter set forth, to use and apply the whole or any part of the income therefrom and the principal thereof exclusively for the purposes set forth above in paragraph (A) of this Article III.
- C. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any director, or officer of the corporation, or to any other private individual, except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation in carrying out its purposes. No director, or officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the corporation. Except as authorized by Section 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (“the Code”) and a proper election filed thereunder, no substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall consist of carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, whether by the publication or distribution of statements or otherwise. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by an organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, or by an organization contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Code, nor shall the corporation engage in any year in which it may be a “private foundation”, as defined in Section 509 of the Code, in any act prohibited by Section 4941(d) and 4943(c) of the Code, or do any act, or fail to do any acts which will result in the imposition of tax on the corporation under Sections 4942, 4944, or 4945 of the Code. Upon dissolution of the corporation or the winding up of its affairs, the assets of the corporation shall be distributed exclusively to charitable, religious, scientific, literary, or educational organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

- D. The corporation shall have such powers as are now or may hereafter be granted by the not for profit laws of the State of Maryland, but shall exercise such powers only within the restrictions set out above.

ARTICLE IV. FUNCTIONS

- 4.01.** The functions of the corporation shall be to:
 - A. Establish and promote an organization having a shared goal of supporting people with hearing loss to enhance their ability to function independently.
 - B. Provide information that will enable people with hearing loss, their families, friends and associates, to understand and manage effectively the difficulties manifested in such condition.
 - C. Represent the interests of all people with hearing loss before public and private entities on matters pertaining to hearing health care and remediation of hearing loss.
 - D. Provide leadership and education on the federal, state, and local levels to impact the communities where individuals with hearing loss reside.
 - E. Promote public and private programs that provide accommodations allowing people with hearing loss to participate effectively in the mainstream of society.
 - F. Support all people with hearing loss, especially those who utilize spoken language.
 - G. Establish working relationships with professionals and professional organizations in the hearing health care field; encourage research into all aspects of hearing loss and remedial aids.
 - H. Promote diagnosis of hearing loss through infant screening and testing among all other ages in the general population.
 - I. For students with hearing loss, promote educational methods that provide options of speaking and listening that allow effective participation in classroom and extracurricular activities.
 - J. Advocate the use of cochlear implants when deemed appropriate for infants, children, youth, and adults.
 - K. Collaborate with other individuals, organizations, and institutions on matters of mutual concern as set forth in this Article IV.
 - L. Provide such other services that will further the purpose of the organization.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERS

5.01. CLASSES OF MEMBERS. The corporation shall have two classes of members: regular members who shall have voting power, and associate members who shall not have voting power. Whenever the term “members” is used, unless otherwise indicated, it shall refer to regular members.

5.02. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS. Regular membership in the corporation shall be open to all individuals, provided they complete an application and file any required application or registration form with the Executive Director and pay the current dues.

5.03. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. Entities or organizations that wish to support the activities of the corporation may become associate members pursuant to action of or standards established by the Board from time to time.

5.04. VOTING RIGHTS. Each regular member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the regular members.

5.05. DUES AND FEES. The annual minimum dues payable to the corporation by regular and associate members will be in such amounts payable at such time or times as may be determined from time to time by resolution of the Board.

5.06. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP. Membership in the corporation is not transferable or assignable.

5.07. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP. Regular membership in the corporation will terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- A. the death or resignation of a member;
- B. the failure of a member to pay his or her annual dues within 60 days after mailing of written notice that such payment is due and owing; or
- C. the affirmative vote of 2/3 of the members of the Board eligible to vote (not counting vacancies) on the grounds of a member's failure to comply with these bylaws or any act of a member which is found to be prejudicial to the purposes, objectives, or status of the corporation, after an appropriate hearing by the Board or a designated committee.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

6.01. ANNUAL MEETING. An annual meeting of the members shall be held each year in June on a date established by the Board or at the location of the annual convention of the corporation if held in the month of June for the purpose of transacting such business as may come before the meeting.

6.02. TIME, PLACE AND MANNER OF ANNUAL MEETINGS. In any year in which an annual convention is not held in June, such annual meeting of members shall be held at any place within the United States. If no designation is made, the place of the meeting shall be the registered office of the corporation in the State of Maryland. The Board may authorize participation by members at any annual meeting through the use of telecommunications devices as provided in Section 6.06 of these bylaws.

6.03. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the members may be called by either the president or the Board or 25 percent of all regular members in good standing and may be held at any time and at any place within the United States. The Board may authorize participation at any such special meeting through the use of telecommunication devices as provided in Section 6.06 of these bylaws.

6.04. WRITTEN NOTICE OF MEETINGS. Written notice stating the place, day, and hour of any meeting of the members shall be delivered or mailed to each member, by or at the direction of the president or the secretary or the officers or persons calling the meeting, as

follows: (i) except as provided in (iii), by mail not less than 10 nor more than 40 calendar days before the date of such meeting; (ii) by facsimile, electronic delivery (if permitted by law) and/or personal delivery not less than five nor more than 30 calendar days before the date of such meeting; or (iii) in the case of a removal of one or more trustees, merger, consolidation, dissolution, or sale, lease or exchange of substantially all of the assets of the corporation, not less than 20 nor more than 60 calendar days before such meeting. In the case of a special meeting or when required by statute or these bylaws, the purpose for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice. If mailed, the notice of a meeting shall be deemed mailed when deposited in the United States mail or with an overnight delivery service addressed to the member at his or her address as it appears in the records of the corporation, with postage or other delivery charges prepaid. If notice is delivered by facsimile transmission or electronic delivery (if permitted by law), notice of a meeting shall be deemed to have been delivered upon transmission of the notice by the corporation to the member at his or her facsimile or electronic address as it appears on the records of the corporation.

6.05. QUORUM. A quorum for any annual meeting or special meeting shall be the attendance of 50 or more regular members in good standing. If a quorum is not present at any meeting of the regular members, a majority of the regular members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

6.06. MANNER OF ACTING. If authorized as provided in Section 6.02 and 6.03, one or more members may participate in any annual meeting or special meeting of the members and may vote through the use of telecommunications devices including, but not limited to, conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Such participation through telecommunications devices shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. The act of the majority of the regular members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the regular members except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws.

6.07. NO PROXIES. At all meetings of the members, a regular member is entitled to vote only in person. No regular member shall be entitled to vote at any meeting by proxy.

6.08. PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS. Except to the extent inconsistent with these bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, in such edition as may be designated by the Board from time to time, shall be consulted regarding the conduct of all meetings of the members.

6.09. ATTENDANCE OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AT MEETINGS. Associate members shall be entitled to attend meetings of members, but shall not be entitled to vote or otherwise participate in meetings or be counted for the purposes of a quorum.

ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

7.01. QUALIFICATION. The business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by the Board except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws. No person shall be eligible for nomination or election as a trustee, and no person shall be eligible to hold office as a trustee unless qualified at the time as a regular member under Section 5.02.

7.02. ELECTED TRUSTEES

- A. The Board shall consist of up to 21 elected members (excluding ex-officio members), with one-third elected annually, who shall serve as the elected trustees on the Board. There shall be one representative on the Board from each of the ten geographical regions of HLAA, i.e. "Regional Representatives," for which all qualified members of HLAA residing in a region are entitled to vote for their respective representative. The remaining up to 11 Board seats shall be filled by

“At Large” members who shall be elected by two-thirds of the members of the Board at any official meeting of the Board. At least two-thirds of the trustees shall be people with hearing loss.

- B. A candidate for “Regional Representative” may (i) advise the Nominating and Board Development Committee of his or her interest in the position, (ii) be recommended to the Nominating Committee with his or her consent upon the petition of a member of HLAA residing in the region; or, (iii) be nominated with his or her consent by the Nominating and Board Development Committee. If no such candidate is available, the Board position for such Regional Representative shall remain vacant until a HLAA member residing in the region can be found to serve on the Board.
- C. Candidates for “At Large” positions on the Board shall be nominated by the Nominating and Board Development Committee. All persons who submit applications for such positions to the Nominating and Board Development Committee or who are nominated upon a petition signed by at least 25 members of HLAA and whose qualifications as a member of HLAA have been verified by the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall be considered by the Nominating and Board Development Committee.
- D. Whenever there is a vacancy on the Board, the Board, after approval of the Nominating and Board Development Committee, may appoint a person to serve on the Board for the remainder of the term of the vacant Board position.

7.03. EX-OFFICIO TRUSTEES

- A. The Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board with the right to vote. The Executive Director shall not participate in personnel matters relating to her or him.
- B. The president will appoint one member of the founding family, i.e., Howard E. Stone, Sr., Alice Marie Stone, or their children, to serve as an ex-officio member of the Board with the right to vote.
- C. For a period of one year, the immediate past president of HLAA shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board with the right to vote.
- D. The Board may appoint other persons to serve on the Board in an ex-officio capacity without voting rights.

7.04. TERMS OF TRUSTEES

- A. The terms of tenure for trustees normally shall be three years, with one-third of the total members to be elected annually. The term of a trustee shall commence at the end of the annual convention in June or at the end of the annual meeting of members if no annual convention is held in June. A trustee’s term shall expire at the annual convention in June or if no annual convention is held at the annual meeting of members. Each trustee shall hold office until a successor is duly elected and qualified
- B. No trustee may be elected for more than three consecutive terms.
- C. In the event the Board term of the president expires during his or her term in that office, the president’s term as a trustee shall be extended to the end of the term as

president to which he or she was elected.

7.05. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES. The election of At-Large trustees shall be determined by the Board as described in Section 7.02A. For Regional candidates, their election shall be determined by the highest number of votes received or the votes cast by HLAA regular members in good standing in the region in which they reside. The ballot shall be presented to the HLAA members in the March/April issue of "Hearing Loss," specifying a procedure to vote by United States mail postmarked no later than May 1st. For each election, the number of trustees to be elected shall equal the number of trustees whose terms expire plus any then unfilled vacancies.

7.06. REGULAR MEETINGS. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at times and places determined by the president, who shall cause reasonable notice thereof to be provided to the Board. The Board shall endeavor to meet in the months of October or November (the "fall" meeting); the months of March or April (the "spring" meeting) and at the annual convention in June of each year or if there is no annual convention in June, immediately following the annual meeting of members.

7.07. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the Board may be called by or at the request of the president or a majority of the trustees entitled to vote. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Board may fix any place, either within or without the State of Maryland, as the place for holding any special meeting of the Board called by them.

7.08. NOTICE. If a special or regular meeting of the Board is called by or at the request of the president, the president shall cause reasonable notice thereof to be provided to the trustees. In all other instances, notice of any special meeting of the Board shall be given at least seven (7) calendar days before the date of such meeting by written notice mailed (by U.S. mail or overnight delivery service), provided by personal delivery or sent by facsimile transmission or electronic delivery (if permitted by law) to each trustee at his or her mailing, facsimile or electronic address (if permitted by law), respectively, as such address appears in the records of the corporation. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be mailed when deposited in the United States mail or with an overnight delivery service, with first class postage or other delivery charges thereon prepaid. If notice is delivered by facsimile transmission or electronic delivery (if permitted by law), such notice shall be deemed to be delivered upon transmission of the notice by the corporation to the trustee at his or her facsimile or electronic address as it appears in the records of the corporation. Any trustee may waive notice of any meeting in writing. The attendance of a trustee at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a trustee attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting.

7.09. QUORUM. A majority of the number of trustees entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board, provided, that if less than a majority of such number of trustees is present at said meeting, a majority of the trustees present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

7.10. MANNER OF ACTING. If authorized by the president or other persons requesting a meeting of the Board, one or more trustees may participate in any regular meeting or special meeting of the Board and may vote through the usage of telecommunications devices including, but not limited to, the usage of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Such participation through telecommunications devices shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. The act of the majority of the trustees present and entitled to vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board except as otherwise provided

by law or these bylaws.

7.11. VACANCIES. Any vacancy that may occur on the Board by reason of death, resignation, or otherwise of a Board member may be filled by the Board for the unexpired term. Such candidates for vacancies shall receive approval from the Nominating and Board Development Committee.

7.12. ACTION BY TRUSTEES WITHOUT A MEETING. Unless specifically prohibited by the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws, any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Board, or any other action which may be taken at a meeting of the Board or the Executive Committee thereof, may be taken if consents, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all the trustees entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof, or by all the members of the Executive Committee, as the case may be. Any such consents signed by all the trustees or all the members of the Executive Committee shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote, and may be stated as such in any documents filed with the Secretary of State of Maryland or any other state having jurisdiction.

7.13. COMPENSATION. Trustees shall not receive any compensation for their services as trustees, but the Board may authorize reimbursement for any expenses incurred by a Trustee in the performance of his or her duties in the Board's discretion.

7.14. PRESUMPTION OF ASSENT. A trustee of the corporation who is present at a meeting of the Board at which action on any corporate matter is taken shall be conclusively presumed to have assented to the action taken unless his or her dissent or abstention shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting or unless he or she shall file his or her written dissent or abstention to such action with the person acting as the secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof or shall forward such dissent or abstention by registered or certified mail to the secretary of the corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. Such right to dissent shall not apply to a trustee who voted in favor of such action.

7.15. PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS. Except to the extent inconsistent with these bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, in such edition as may be designated by the Board from time to time, shall be consulted regarding the conduct of all meetings of the Board.

7.16. TERMINATION OF TRUSTEESHIP. A trustee may resign, be removed, or otherwise have his or her tenure terminated in the manner permitted by Maryland law.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS

8.01. NUMBER. The executive officers of the corporation shall be a president, a vice president, a treasurer, and a secretary, each of whom shall, when nominated and elected, and at all times thereafter during service as such, be qualified as a regular member and be members of the Board. Other officers (who are regular members but need not be members of the Board) may be chosen by the Board. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of president and secretary.

8.02. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE. The executive officers of the corporation shall be elected annually from the candidates nominated by the members of the Board immediately after the annual meeting of the members at which board members are elected. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting of the Board. Each executive officer shall hold office until a successor is elected and qualified or until his or her death or until he or she shall resign or cease to be a regular member or cease to be a trustee or shall have been removed in the manner hereinafter provided. Election of an officer shall not of itself create contract rights. The president and immediate past president shall serve for one (1) two-year term and the president may not run for re-election to that office. The other executive officers shall be elected for one-

year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms in that particular executive office.

8.03. REMOVAL. Any officer of the corporation may be removed with or without cause by the Board whenever in their judgment the best interests of the corporation would be served thereby.

8.04. VACANCIES. A vacancy in any office may be filled by the Board for the unexpired portion of the term. Termination of membership or as a member of the Board of an executive officer automatically renders his or her office vacant. Except for the position of president, if a proposed officer stands for election or reelection as a member of the Board and is not so elected or reelected as a Board member, there shall be declared a vacancy in that position.

8.05. THE PRESIDENT. The president shall be the principal executive officer of the corporation and shall in general supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the corporation. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board. He or she may sign, with the secretary or any other proper officer of the corporation thereunto authorized by the Board, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board or by these bylaws to some other officer or agent of the corporation, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and in general shall perform all duties incident to the office of president and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

8.06. THE VICE PRESIDENT. In the absence of the president or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, the vice president shall perform the duties of the president, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the president. The vice president shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the president or by the Board of Trustees.

8.07. THE TREASURER. If required by the Board, the treasurer shall give a bond for the faithful discharge of his or her duties in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the Board of Trustees shall determine. He or she shall: (a) have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the corporation; receive and give receipts for moneys due and payable to the corporation from any source whatsoever, and deposit or invest all such moneys in the name of the corporation; and (b) in general perform all the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the president or by the Board.

8.08. THE SECRETARY. The secretary shall: (a) keep the minutes of the members' and the Board meetings in one or more books provided for that purpose; (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law; (c) be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal of the corporation and see that the seal of the corporation is affixed to all documents, the execution of which on behalf of the corporation under its seal is duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws; (d) keep a register of the address of each member which shall be furnished to the corporation by such member; and (e) in general perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the president or by the Board.

8.09. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The administration and management of the corporation shall be a salaried staff head, employed or appointed by, and directly responsible to the Board. She or he shall have the title of executive director or such other title as the Board shall from time to time designate. She or he shall be the chief operating officer of the corporation with responsibility for the management and direction of all operations, programs, activities, and affairs of the corporation, including employment and termination of employment, and the determination of compensation of members of the staff and supporting personnel,

functioning within the framework of policy aims and programs as generally determined by the Board. She or he shall prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Finance Committee for review, and she or he may from time to time submit supplements to the current fiscal year budget to the Finance Committee for review. She or he shall have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board.

8.10. THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT. Upon completion of his or her term as president, the immediate past president shall perform those duties and functions as required by these bylaws and delegated by the president.

8.11. OTHER OFFICERS. Officers other than executive officers shall respectively, if required by the Board, give bonds for the faithful discharge of their duties in such sums and with such sureties as the Board of Trustees shall determine. They shall perform such duties as shall be assigned to them by the executive officers or by the Board.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES OF THE CORPORATION

9.01. IN GENERAL. The Board may by resolution create such committees as may be deemed by it appropriate to carry out the purposes of the corporation. The resolution or resolutions creating any such committees shall specify the duties and responsibilities thereof including (but not limited to) provisions with respect to membership of such committees, selection of committee officers, and the conduct of committee business. Any such resolution may be amended or repealed by the Board. No person shall serve as chairman of the same committee for more than three consecutive years. Only members of the Board of the corporation shall, unless so authorized otherwise by the affirmative votes of 2/3 of the Board members then in office, serve as the chair of a committee created pursuant to this article. The president shall be an ex-officio member with vote of all committees except the Nominating and Board Development Committee.

9.02. STANDING COMMITTEES. There shall be four (4) standing committees that are responsible for the regular operations of the corporation. These standing committees are the Executive Committee, the Finance and Administration Committee, the Planning Strategy Workgroup, and the Nominating and Board Development Committee.

A. Executive Committee

1. Composition. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the corporation elected by the Board, the Immediate Past President and chair of the Long Range Planning Committee appointed by the President. The President shall chair the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee with all the accompanying rights of membership, except in matters of personnel relating to her or him. At least two-thirds of the Executive Committee shall be people with hearing loss.
2. Duties. The Executive Committee shall act for and discharge the functions of the Board of Trustees between its regular meetings and may initiate any action, plans, and projects to assure the effective operation of the corporation. The Executive Committee shall keep minutes of its actions and shall report regularly to the Board.
3. Meetings. There shall be at least one scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee each year, in addition to the three meetings held in conjunction with Board meetings, at such times and places as directed by the President and subject to the approval of a majority of the Executive Committee.

Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President.

- B. **Finance and Administration Committee.** A Finance and Administration Committee shall consist of its chair and at least two other members. The Treasurer shall serve as the chair and the other members shall be appointed by the President promptly after each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to present a budget for the ensuing fiscal year to the Board at its regular meeting in November. The Finance and Administration Committee may from time to time submit supplements to the budget for the current fiscal year. In addition, it shall be the duty of this committee to oversee the investments of the corporation and the annual audit of the corporation.
- C. **Planning Strategy Workgroup.** A Planning Strategy Workgroup composed of its chair and its members who are the current chairs of all standing and select committees shall be appointed by the President promptly after each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide disciplined planning to guide the development of the corporation and to perpetuate HLAA philosophy.
- D. **Nominating and Board Development Committee.**
1. Composition. The members of the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board by June 30 of each year and their service shall begin immediately thereafter. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall consist of 7 members of whom at least 4 should be current At Large and Regional members of the Board. The remaining members of the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall be non-Board members. No person who is a candidate for election to the Board may serve on the Nominating and Board Development Committee at the time of his or her candidacy. The term of each Nominating and Board Development Committee member shall terminate at the end of the annual convention in June or if no convention is held, at the end of the annual meeting of members in June. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms on the Nominating and Board Development Committee nor more than two consecutive terms as the Committee chair. The immediate past president shall serve as the chair of the Nominating and Board Development Committee unless such individual is unavailable or unwilling to serve in which case the president shall name the chair of the Nominating and Board Development Committee.
 2. Duties with Regard to Trustees.
 - (a) The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall assist the Board in establishing the desired composition of the Board in terms of influence, diversity and talents. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall target potential trustees and attempt to fulfill the desired composition of the Board. In carrying out its duties, the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall consider the financial, demographic and skill needs of the Board in order to effectively carry out its functions, to adequately represent the diverse populations served by HLAA, and to foster the growth and development of HLAA.

- (b) The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall seek At-Large candidates and Regional Representatives from each of the HLAA regions. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall pursue potential candidates for the Board through personal contacts, written appeals, and other activities including, but not limited to, the annual convention and annual meeting of members. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall (i) solicit from state and local level leaders names of members for possible nomination as trustees (ii) invite applications for candidacy and (iii) publish an announcement for candidates in the June/July issue of "Hearing Loss."
 - (c) The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall review the performance of incumbent trustees seeking nomination for re-election through an objective set of criteria established by the Board.
 - (d) Each year (for the so-called "fall" Board meeting held in October or November unless otherwise determined), the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall (i) prepare a slate of proposed trustees for consideration by the Board, (ii) provide a report to the Board of its activities pursuant to the provisions of Subsection (a) - (c), and (iii) provide a report to the Board regarding the proposed trustees and candidates considered.
 - (e) The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall oversee the orientation and development of new trustees once they take office and the development of all trustees in office.
 - (f) The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall advise the Board on candidates to fill vacancies on the Board. All such candidates shall receive the approval of the Nominating and Board Development Committee prior to election to a Board vacancy.
3. Duties with Regard to Officers. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall invite members of the Board to submit nominations for officers by May 15 of each year after the Board election results are known. By May 31 of that year, the Nominating and Board Development Committee shall submit a slate of officers to the Board for its approval at the annual convention in June or if no annual convention is held in June, then at a Board meeting in June after the annual meeting of members. If an office is sought by more than one candidate, the candidates may address the Board after which the election shall be held.
 4. Development Activities. The Nominating and Board Development Committee shall advise the Board and the members on development initiatives on behalf of HLAA.

9.03. SELECT COMMITTEES. All other committees of the corporation shall be called select committees. Such select committees shall be appointed by the president or as the Board or the Executive Committee shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of the corporation.

ARTICLE X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST; DISCLOSURE

10.01. DEFINITION. A conflict of interest arises when any “responsible person” has a “material interest” in a “related entity.” A “responsible person” is any individual who was, at any time during the five-year period ending on the date a given transaction occurs, in a position to exercise substantial influence over the affairs of Hearing Loss Association of America (the “corporation”). The term specifically includes, without limitation, trustees and officers of the corporation. “Material interests” include the interests of the responsible person, his or her extended family (including ancestors, descendants, and siblings and their spouses and descendants), an estate or trust in which the responsible person or any member of his or her extended family has a beneficial interest, or an entity in which the responsible person or any member of his or her extended family is a director or officer or has a legal or financial interest. A “related entity” is any entity whose best interests may be impaired by the best interests of the corporation including, without limitation, those entities with whom the corporation has business interests and those entities providing services and performing activities similar to the services and activities of the corporation.

10.02. TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. If a responsible person is aware that the corporation is about to enter into any business transaction with a related entity in which he or she has a material interest, such person shall: (a) immediately inform those charged with approving the transaction on behalf of the corporation of such person’s interest or position, (b) aid the persons charged with making the decision by disclosing any material facts within such person’s knowledge that bear on the advisability of such transaction from the standpoint of the corporation if consistent with his fiduciary obligation to the organization in which he or she has a material interest, and (c) not be entitled to vote on the decision to enter into such transaction.

10.03. APPROVAL OF CONFLICTING INTEREST TRANSACTIONS. The Corporation may enter into a contract, transaction, or other financial relationship between the corporation and the responsible person, or between the corporation and a party related to the responsible person, or between the corporation and an entity in which the responsible person is a trustee or officer or has a financial interest provided the material facts to the responsible person’s relationship or interest and as to the conflicting interest transaction are disclosed to the trustees, and the conflicting interest transaction is specifically authorized, approved, or ratified in good faith by 75% of the voting members of the Board.

10.04. VOIDABLE TRANSACTION. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Article X shall render the transaction voidable at the direction of the Board.

10.05. MINUTES. The minutes shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon and, where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation.

10.06. DISCLOSURE. Trustees, officers, and management staff shall disclose any such conflict of interest, or shall attest to the absence of any such conflict of interest, in writing to the Board. The disclosure of a conflict of interest shall be made as provided in Section 10.02. Such disclosure, and attestations to the absence of any conflict of interest, shall be updated and/or submitted to the Board on a yearly basis.

ARTICLE XI. CODE OF CONDUCT

11.01. GUIDING PRINCIPLES. The members of the Board are responsible for the management and affairs of the corporation. As such, members of the Board should comply with the duties of care, loyalty, and confidentiality as required by law. They shall conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, with accountability and integrity. They are expected to provide wise and thoughtful counsel on a broad range of issues. Board members are expected to follow this

Code of Conduct, without exception.

- A. The chief responsibility of the Board and its management staff is to serve the best interests of the corporation and, hence, its membership.
- B. The individual members of the Board and the Board as a body should avoid, where possible, any conflict of interest. All members of the Board shall follow the provisions of Article X.
- C. The Board should guide management staff to act in a prudent and ethical manner.
- D. Any action taken by a Board member acting as a representative for the Board or the Board acting as a body should be guided by these precepts and a consideration of how the action will reflect on the Board and on the organization as a whole.

11.02. ETHICAL ACTIONS AND OBLIGATIONS. It is incumbent on the Board and individual members of the Board:

- A. To become familiar with and committed to the responsibilities of a governing board including selection of officers and oversight of their work, and preservation of the financial and programmatic integrity of the organization.
- B. To support the organization's fund raising efforts through personal giving in accordance with one's means, and to be willing to share in the solicitation of others.
- C. To devote time to learn how the organization functions - its uniqueness, strengths, and needs.
- D. To carefully prepare for, regularly attend, and actively participate in Board meetings and committee assignments.
- E. To accept and abide by the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the Board as specified by the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and federal and state laws.
- F. To vote according to one's view of what is prudent in the best interests of the corporation and to challenge the judgment of others when necessary; yet, to support the majority decision of the Board and work with fellow Board members in a spirit of cooperation.
- G. To maintain the confidential nature of Board deliberations and to avoid acting as a spokesperson for the entire Board unless specifically authorized to do so.
- H. To understand the role of the Board as a policymaking body and to avoid participation in administration of policy.
- I. To learn and consistently to use designated institutional channels when conducting Board business (e.g., communications between Board members and staff).
- J. To make judgments always on the basis of what is best for the organization as a whole and for the advancement of the mission of the organization rather than serving personal or special interests.

- K. Consistent with the Guiding Principles set forth in Section 11.01, no Board member shall be employed with or without compensation by the corporation except for the Executive Director. To the extent any current or former Board member desires to apply for employment by the corporation, he or she may not do so until at least two (2) years has elapsed from the date of termination of Board membership.

ARTICLE XII. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall commence on the first day of January and shall end on the last day of December.

ARTICLE XIII. SEAL

The corporation shall have a seal of such design as the Board may adopt.

ARTICLE XIV. BOOKS AND RECORDS

The corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its members, Board and committees having any of the authority of the Board, and shall keep at the registered or principal office a record giving the names and addresses of the regular members entitled to vote. All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any regular member or his or her agent or attorney for any proper purpose at any reasonable time upon reasonable notice.

ARTICLE XV. WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of these bylaws or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or under the provisions of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of the State of Maryland, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE XVI. INDEMNIFICATION

16.01. BASIC INDEMNIFICATION. The corporation shall, to the fullest extent to which it is empowered to do so by, and in accordance with the requirements of, the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of the State of Maryland or any other applicable laws, as may from time to time be in effect, indemnify any person who was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation), by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a trustee or officer of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a trustee or officer of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against all expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding.

16.02. INDEMNIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES AND AGENTS. Persons who are not covered by the foregoing provisions of this Article and who are or were employees or agents of the corporation, or are or were serving at the request of the corporation as employees or agents of another corporation, joint venture, partnership, trust or other enterprise, may be indemnified to the extent the corporation is empowered to do so by the Act or any other applicable laws, when and as authorized at any time from time to time by the Board in its sole discretion.

16.03. ADVANCE OF EXPENSES. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal

action, suit or proceeding may be paid by the corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding upon receipt of a written agreement by or on behalf of a trustee and an officer to undertake to repay such amount, unless it shall ultimately be determined that he or she is entitled to be indemnified by the corporation as authorized in this Article. The provisions of this Section shall apply to employees or agents when the Board has authorized such indemnification under the provisions of these bylaws.

16.04. OTHER RIGHTS OF INDEMNIFICATION. The indemnification provided or permitted by this Article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled by law, agreement or otherwise, and shall continue as to a person who ceased to be a trustee, officer, employee, or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of such person.

16.05. LIABILITY INSURANCE. The corporation shall have the power to purchase and maintain, on behalf of any person who is or was a trustee, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a trustee, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, insurance against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by such person in any such capacity, or arising out of such person's status as such whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE XVII. NUMBERS AND GENDER

Whenever in these bylaws the context permits, a singular pronoun includes the plural and vice versa and a masculine pronoun includes the feminine.

ARTICLE XVIII. DISSOLUTION

The corporation may be dissolved or liquidated upon a vote of the Board. Upon dissolution of the corporation or the winding up of its affairs, the assets of the corporation shall be distributed exclusively to charitable, religious, scientific, literary, or educational organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended.

ARTICLE XIX. AMENDMENTS

19.01. PROPOSAL FOR AMENDMENTS. Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed at any time by:

- A. a motion by a member of the Board;
- B. a petition signed by fifty (50) regular members in good standing; or
- C. a motion seconded by fifty (50) regular members in good standing at the convention.

19.02. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS. Proposed amendments to the bylaws may be approved and ordered implemented on the approval of two-thirds of the members of the Board at any official meeting of the Board.

ARTICLE XX. CHAPTERS

An essential part of the HLAA organization are its Chapters which are located throughout the United States. To assist in the development of new Chapters and provide guidance to the Board and the Chapters, this Article XX shall govern those relationships.

20.01. EXISTING CHAPTERS. All authorized local entities shall be Chapters governed by the provisions of this Article XX.

20.02. NEW CHAPTERS. The Board may itself or by delegation of authority enter into an agreement granting recognition as a local chapter (“Agreement”) to an entity (i) that identifies at least four members of the entity and the community(ies) or area(s) which it serves, (ii) that applies for recognition in writing signed by one of its members, (iii) which agrees to the essential ingredients of the Chapter’s relationship with HLAA set forth in Section 20.03 of this Article.

20.03. ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF CHAPTER’S RELATIONSHIP WITH HLAA. The essential ingredients of a local Chapter’s relationship with HLAA are: (i) the Chapter and HLAA mutually support the HLAA Mission Statement, (ii) the Chapter abides by HLAA policy regarding documents with regard to election of members of the Board, including nomination and election of certain members based votes of HLAA members within designated geographic regions throughout the country, (iii) the Chapter follows legal guidelines for use of “HLAA” and “Hearing Loss Association of America” and its predecessor name of “Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc.” and “SHHH” under United States trademark and copyright laws, (iv) the Chapter does not engage in lobbying for legislation, make contributions to political campaigns or take other action in a manner that jeopardizes the tax exempt status of their organization or of HLAA under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, (v) the Chapter abides by a single unified membership to include national, state and local activities, or entities, as is achieved through payment of dues to the national office, and (vi) recognition of the Chapter by HLAA is subject to revocation as provided in Section 20.04 of this Article.

20.04. REVOCATION OF RECOGNITION OF A CHAPTER BY HLAA. The recognition of a Chapter by HLAA may be revoked at the discretion of the Board for violation of or failure to comply with the requirements of Section 20.03 of this Article after notice and opportunity to be heard in accordance with the following ground rules:

- A. Written notice of possible revocation of an entity’s recognition as a Chapter shall be given by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by hand delivery or other means for which proof of receipt is established. Within 30 days of receipt, the entity shall respond in writing, addressed to the Executive Director of HLAA and transmitted by similar means. If the Executive Director in consultation with the Board deems the response to be satisfactory, the Executive Director shall so indicate in writing, addressed to the entity, and transmitted by similar means, and the matter will be closed.
- B. If the Executive Director in consultation with the Board deems the response to be unsatisfactory, the Executive Director shall refer the matter to a special committee of the Board, appointed by its President, consisting of five members on which at least two members shall be persons elected to the Board from geographic regions. The committee shall conduct an investigation of the matter which shall include providing an opportunity for the subject local entity to be heard in writing or by personal appearance before the committee should the local entity request such an appearance. The committee’s decision shall be final unless the Board elects to review it, in which event the Board’s decision shall be final.

ARTICLE XXI. STATE ORGANIZATIONS

HLAA recognizes the importance of maintaining the mission and purposes of HLAA in the states of the United States. These state organizations will provide education and advocacy on issues important to the citizens of those states.

21.01. FORMATION OF STATE ORGANIZATIONS. The HLAA Board of Trustees may sanction a state organization, permit the use of the HLAA logo, and allow state organizations to represent themselves to the public as being associated with HLAA National.

21.02. RULES GOVERNING STATE ASSOCIATIONS. The Board is empowered to promulgate rules, including reporting requirements and dues structure, governing the manner in which state organizations may be formed, use the HLAA logo, and represent themselves to the public as being associated with HLAA National or any rules it deems necessary for effective organizational administration and operation.

21.03. REVOCATION OF SANCTION. The National Board of Trustees may revoke the sanction of any state organization that fails to comply with its rules governing state organizations. Before revoking any state organization's sanction, the National Board shall give that state organization timely notice of the National Board's reason for action and grant the state organization an opportunity for a hearing before the National Board. Any motion to revoke a state organization's sanction must be approved by two-thirds of the voting members of the National Board. In the event of dissolution of the state organization, any funds remaining shall be distributed to HLAA National.

21.04. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. State organizations will be self-governing under bylaws promulgated by the state organizations themselves and approved by the Board of HLAA National. To ensure democratic principles will be observed in the governance of state organizations, these bylaws shall include provisions for grievances. Under these procedures, individual state organization members or a group or state organization members shall have the right to present signed or unsigned grievances in writing for action and decision by regular members. Written grievances shall be presented to the state organization president or a member of the grievance committee, if said committee has been established. This committee may be a special or standing committee. The matter will be included on the agenda at the next general membership meeting. If the membership agrees that the matter should be pursued, it shall be turned over to the grievance committee, and in the absence of a grievance committee, the president will appoint a committee of three to investigate the grievance and provide a written report with recommendations at the next general meeting. No state organization officer or board member may serve on the special committee of three. Approval of the special committee recommendation will be binding on the state organization officers, with the proviso that any such action may be deferred pending appeal to the National Executive Committee.

Mission Statement

Hearing Loss Association of America and our members are catalysts that make mainstream society more accessible to people with hearing loss. We strive to improve the quality of the lives of people with hearing loss through education, advocacy, and self-help.

Value Statement

We value:

- **Education:** Hearing Loss Association provides adults and children with tools for self-help; sensitizes the general population about the special needs of people with hearing loss; and promotes understanding of the nature, causes, complications, and remedies of hearing loss.
- **Advocacy:** Hearing Loss Association promotes new technology, medical research, and legislation that will alleviate the effects of hearing loss.
- **Self-Help:** Hearing Loss Association promotes self-confidence; empowers individuals with skills to improve their lives; and provides an opportunity for affiliation among people with hearing loss, their friends, families, and professionals.

Organizational Policy

Hearing Loss Association of America is an educational organization. A major objective is to provide information accurately, promptly, objectively, and honestly so that its members can choose a course of action most suitable to their needs.

Information promulgated by Hearing Loss Association does not necessarily reflect its views or policies, nor should Hearing Loss Association's mention of, or failure to mention, any services, products, or organizations be considered an endorsement or derogation of any such service, product, or organization.

Our organizational guidance and advice puts the responsibility for choice on the members. No one knows better than the individual what is needed in terms of personal circumstances, what works for that individual, what limitations personal experience and feelings place on the suggested courses of action, and the degree to which each person is willing and able to pay the price involved.

HLAA Affiliate Principles

- As Hearing Loss Association members, we gather together to serve and improve the common welfare of people with hearing loss everywhere.
- As a community resource, we engage in outreach to others, advance public awareness of hearing loss, and encourage new chapters.
- People working together are the cornerstone of Hearing Loss Association, the basis for a strong local organization and a strong national network. Therefore, active member participation is essential to individual growth and organizational strength.
- The only requirement for Hearing Loss Association membership is having an interest in the problems surrounding hearing loss.
- In fellowship we share mutual concerns as we seek solutions to the problems related to hearing loss, through improved communication techniques, education of ourselves, our families, and friends.
- Our self-help enrichment programs further the purposes of Hearing Loss Association locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Chapters shall not affiliate directly with other organizations, although they are encouraged to work in cooperation with them.
- Hearing Loss Association is a nonaligned, nonprofit, service/educational organization and does not engage in profit-making, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our purposes. We accept donations freely given but do not engage in compromising situations nor act as a vehicle for commercial interest.
- We meet regularly under national guidance and learn and practice organizational goals and philosophy. Leaders place the welfare of the organization above personal gain.
- Local chapters are democratically governed by people with hearing loss or parents of children with hearing loss.
- Hearing Loss Association neither recommends nor endorses products, people, or services. Opinions expressed are of individuals, not those of Hearing Loss Association.
- Hearing Loss Association affiliates comply with the Hearing Loss Association national bylaws and as sent to Hearing Loss Association national guidance. In governance and other developmental factors, independence is promoted so that each chapter may come to realize their maximum potential as an organization.

HLAA Affiliate Sales Guidelines

Background

Many Hearing Loss Association chapters have, as a fundraising activity, purchased or produced a wide variety of materials for resale in or through the chapter. This time-honored practice is not in challenge.

However, several chapters have considered venturing into selling or producing for profit items which fall into the category of assistive listening devices. Further, some individual members of chapters have become engaged in selling devices within the Hearing Loss Association chapter for personal profit. These developments raise entirely different problems, among which may be cited: inadequate quality control, liability assumption, competition with local commercial firms, and possible conflict of interest. There is also the potential that a commercial distributor might misuse a Hearing Loss Association membership list, the organization's name, and "goodwill" for sales purposes.

Most important is the necessity for Hearing Loss Association of America to maintain integrity as an independent organization. Toward that end, the guidelines below should be studied carefully and, if necessary, appropriate action taken to assure they are reinforced. Reprint them in your newsletters, make copies for members, and be sure a copy is kept with other important chapter papers.

Affiliate Sales Guidelines

1. Any sale of materials by a Hearing Loss Association chapter **must** be done in the name of that organization with profits accruing to Hearing Loss Association national and/or the chapter.
2. While Hearing Loss Association recognizes any individual's right to manufacture, distribute, and/or sell assistive listening devices (*), such individuals must do so independently and refrain from using Hearing Loss Association membership, the Hearing Loss Association name, logo, or stationery in order to further their business interests, whether for profit or not-for-profit. Individuals involved in for profit sales or services should not serve as chapter officers.
3. The Hearing Loss Association name should not be used in the sale or promotion of services or products. Rather than engage in direct sales of commercially available products (e.g., TTYs, TV decoders, sound systems, alarm devices, etc.), Hearing Loss Association chapters should advise purchase through local distributors or manufacturers.
4. The demand of product control, warranty, liability insurance, conflict of interest, suggests that Hearing Loss Association chapters should give serious consideration before undertaking production of any assistive listening device or system for sale, whether or not for profit. A chapter may wish instead to offer workshops to demonstrate how to assemble do-it-yourself devices as an alternative to manufacturing sets for sale.

(*) Not limited to, but inclusive of, hearing aids.

The Chapter

Self-Help

An estimated 15 million Americans participate in roughly 500,000 self-help groups across the nation. People who seek self-help recognize the limits of the professional's ability to serve all our needs. Because people constantly strive to satisfy their needs, there has been a rapid rise in the popularity of self-help groups.

Self-help begins when a person makes a personal decision to take action that they hope and believe will result in change. A resolve to reach out for help must begin with *self*. By joining a group of people with the same problem, people find that they are not alone in what they are facing. Self-help groups include people who have "walked the walk." Through sharing concerns and gaining information, especially with others who have been successful in helping themselves, better ways of looking at and dealing with individual problems are discovered. Self-help is at work.

Any time a person experiences change that is successful and positive there is inner growth. They become empowered. No one really helps another without also helping himself or herself. Most people are naturally eager to share their successes with others and deeply satisfied when they can help someone else. This is **mutual help**, a necessary ingredient of self-help.

There are self-help groups for those with physical and mental illnesses and the stress of life changes. There are reform groups to encourage change in behavior and attitude, and there are advocacy groups, which plead for a cause. In our mission to overcome hearing loss, Hearing Loss Association chapters can identify with each of these types, offering fertile ground for personal as well as organizational growth and development. As one member put it, "Hearing Loss Association is like a house with many rooms."

There is a saying well suited to self-help: "Don't *give* the man the fish, *teach* him how to fish." People who seek self-help have chosen to take charge of their own lives. Hearing Loss Association members who come together within the expansive network of self-help organizations share a common communication difficulty and reach out to others in need. Hearing Loss Association is a timely organization perfectly suited to, and needed in, today's world.

“As co-founder and president of the Suncoast HLAA chapter, I have been privileged to see our group expand from a nucleus of three to the room full of people who now come to our chapter meetings.

“The rewards of adopting HLAA's self-help philosophy have been greater than national promised. I have enjoyed four years of personal growth while working with some extraordinary and resourceful people. I've learned something valuable from every person I've had the opportunity to know, and I'm amazed at the support and dedication of many of our members. The most surprising thing I have learned is that everyone has something important that each alone can contribute.

“I am proud to be involved with a group that reaches out to others to offer them a fuller life, free of some of the pain of isolation that accompanies hearing loss.”

Jeanine Fletcher, Florida

Self-Help Mechanisms

Dr. Leonard Borman, author of *Self Help Groups for Coping with Crisis*, and the director and founder of the Self Help Center in Evanston, Illinois, identified eight mechanisms inherent to self-help groups that make them effective.

They are:

1. **Identity.** Instant identity is found in the groups. Members communicate well because they all share the same problem.
2. **Helper-therapy principle (altruism).** When you help someone else, you benefit also. You receive the good feeling of helping someone else.
3. **A belief system or ideology** exists in each group for a specific concern. This becomes the persuasive element that helps people cope with the concern.
4. **Peer network.** This is the answer to the loss of the natural support system. It is communication that takes place before and after the meetings, on the telephone, or at someone's house.
5. **Equal participation.** Nothing gets done in a self-help group unless the members participate.
6. **Hope.** The group provides inspiration for individuals who feel that there is nothing that can be done.
7. **Source of information.** Groups are a major source of knowledge for the specific problem being dealt with. They are alert to collecting information.
8. **Myth of anti-professionalism.** Professionals do become involved with self-help groups. Many of them have started groups and helped get others off the ground.

Chapter Organization

Chapter Building

Chapters are the most significant part of Hearing Loss Association. As working partners with Hearing Loss Association National, a chapter is a vital part of the overall scheme. Moreover, the larger the number of local Hearing Loss Association organizations, the more impact Hearing Loss Association can have because our voice is more powerful. As part of Hearing Loss Association, chapters, regardless of their size, are well known and respected in their communities and throughout their states.

New chapters start with four current interested Hearing Loss Association members. They receive startup materials and return a simple completed *Chapter Statement of Intent*. Once established, they become an official chapter by making a commitment to Hearing Loss Association by signing a *Chapter Recognition Agreement*. They meet regularly learning and practicing the Hearing Loss Association organizational philosophy and goals. The *Hearing Loss Association of America Chapter Standards* (which follow) were developed to guide chapters towards viable development.

Chapter building is not a job for impatient people or people who do not embrace the self-help concept. People with hearing loss will come to meetings initially to help themselves only. That's expected. Naturally, they want to know what Hearing Loss Association can do for them. Although, they do not find an instant cure, they do find that there is much to learn from others like themselves in an atmosphere of people who care and freely share. In this informational setting, individuals begin to help themselves through, and with, others. A new strength emerges, coupled with a healthy way of coping. Motivation, hope and enthusiasm surge, self-help-in-action is born! A bond begins. The focus changes. An altered attitude emerges of what can *I* do with, and for, this group? A leader's role then, is to gently kindle the desire to participate within the organization and, in time, in the community. Here is what self-help meant to one member from Texas, "I have one hand reaching out to pull myself up while the other hand pulls someone else up."

Organization leaders should not go too fast. Time is needed to develop roots. Encourage peer discussion. Sharing with each other nurtures us from the "inside out." Professional speakers feed the "outside in." Both are needed. Our emphasis on discussion meetings is to foster an environment where people can learn from each other and grow within themselves.

Hearing Loss Association is not a professional organization (although professionals are welcome as advisors and members). We are consumers working together to do what a few individuals or an

isolated group cannot accomplish. Our motto is: "*Make Hearing Loss an Issue of National Concern.*"

Hearing Loss Association of America Chapter Standards

HLAA endorses eight standards that support viable development of chapters.

- 1) Have a minimum of 10, but preferably 12 regular meetings annually. All but two of these meetings should be primarily educational in nature. (Speakers are not necessary to have an educational meeting; members can educate each other.) All programs should encourage member participation.
- 2) Strive for at least 12 committed Hearing Loss Association members who attend meetings regularly, participate as officers, committee members, or otherwise contribute to Hearing Loss Association. They must be current Hearing Loss Association members. Should the number of active persons drop below 10, effort should be made to find replacements. Adopt a policy that prospective members may attend meetings as guests, but are strongly urged to join after a specific number of times.
- 3) To guide and to manage chapter business, have either elected officers who serve predetermined terms or a planning or steering committee in place. At least two-thirds of the leaders should be people with hearing loss or relatives of children with hearing loss. (Professional people in the hearing health field who help chapters begin should not hold office more than one year. Once a chapter is able to conduct its own affairs, professional participation is encouraged in an advisory role.)
- 4) Have at least three functioning standing committees such as welcoming, membership, etc. (See Committees.) Standing committees are not the same as special committees. Family members are encouraged to serve on all committees.
- 5) Have completed Chapter Standing Rules or Bylaws.
- 6) Encourage attendance at Hearing Loss Association national conventions, and select at least one member as the official chapter delegate. All members should be familiar with national offerings and programs, and be up-to-date with current events and issues found on the Hearing Loss Association website.
- 7) Try to have a regular mailing of a meeting notice/mini-news, or newsletter. Use of the official Hearing Loss Association logo as a heading on all correspondence is encouraged.
- 8) Have definite plans for, or be involved in **some** community outreach program(s) that increases knowledge and awareness of Hearing Loss Association. This may be a one-time or annual

event such as the National Day of Hearing Screening, but an outreach program on a continuing basis is preferred. Examples are a widely circulated newsletter, alternative communication classes, speaker's bureau, institutional visitation, etc.

Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are to be held on a regular basis (at least 10 or 12 annually). Membership meetings should be primarily educational in nature and pertain to the welfare and interests of people with hearing loss and their families. Educational meetings do not necessitate a professional speaker. A member (or members) conducting the program by sharing with and learning from one another is also educational.

Except when membership decisions are required, meetings should not be structured to conduct business. That is the job of a planning or steering committee, the officers, or members who serve on the chapter's board of trustees. They should meet at least monthly to streamline and prepare business to be presented to the general membership for information or vote. (See: Chapter Officers: Board of Trustees: Suggestions for Conducting Productive Board Meetings.)

While groups need and function efficiently with structure, keeping business at a minimum allows more time for member enrichment and interaction. (See: Organizational Support: Special Concerns: Attendance.)

Membership Dues

In November 2001, the Hearing Loss Association of America Board of Trustees voted to change the membership policy. Prior to that date, Hearing Loss Association national had a membership fee and Hearing Loss Association chapters also had a membership fee. This dual membership (local and national) was a source of confusion. Many people who had joined a chapter thought they were then also members of Hearing Loss Association national, but they were not. Among other things this contributed to a “we/they” mind-set which was not conducive to the unity so important to Hearing Loss Association. People need to have a feeling of belonging at all levels of the organization.

Now, there is just one Hearing Loss Association membership cost. The term “dues” will only refer to annual dues to the Hearing Loss Association office in Bethesda. Rather than collect annual membership dues/fees from members, chapters may choose to have a support fee, a contribution or donation, free will collection, fundraisers, a newsletter subscription cost, or something the chapter decides on. So that total costs to an individual do not become excessive, please do not have a support fee that exceeds the cost of Hearing Loss Association membership. And, please be sure to make it clear that the chapter support fee is not an Hearing Loss Association membership fee.

Explain to members and to newcomers that membership in Hearing Loss Association includes membership in a chapter. The Hearing Loss Association membership cost is \$25 per person annually (2006). Couples, families, students, and professionals in hearing health are welcome and encouraged to join. (For the current fee and benefits of these membership categories, see an Hearing Loss Association membership brochure.) To join, a check, money order or credit card information is sent to Bethesda headquarters along with an application for membership. Hearing Loss Association chapters are invited to collect and forward membership applications. It is also possible to join online from the Hearing Loss Association website. www.hearingloss.org

Hearing Loss Association membership is not required for chapter participants, but it is **strongly encouraged**. Consider the following Hearing Loss Association policy: **"A major objective of Hearing Loss Association of America is to develop a constituency of people with hearing loss. This cannot be achieved without members of the organization throughout the United States. Therefore, all members of chapters should be members of Hearing Loss Association to help accomplish the goals that will benefit all people with hearing loss and, at the same time, receive the benefits of Hearing Loss Association membership. The privileges of voting, holding office, making motions, being a convention delegate, discounts, and other advantages are contingent on Hearing Loss Association membership."**

Bylaws/ Standing Rules

Bylaws or Standing Rules (*) establish the framework for an organization. While Hearing Loss Association has bylaws that cover the operation of the whole organization, and chapters embrace these bylaws, chapters may want to draft their own Standing Rules or Bylaws. They should be suitable to current and future needs, provide the working rules for the organization and be approved by the membership. Please forward a copy of your Standing Rules or Bylaws to the Hearing Loss Association office. All will be reviewed, but only those needing major correction or revision will be returned.

Legal Documents

Legal documents and other important papers should be kept in a safe place and transferred to successive leaders. The chapter recognition letter, bylaws, notification of tax exempt status, are examples of important documents. Hearing Loss Association of America is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) educational, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. The Maryland State tax-exempt number is 3101278-5: the Federal

(*) Standing Rules are informal, yet detailed guidelines that describe the procedures of the organization. Their purpose is to provide guidance regarding the procedures, expectations, and standards. Standing Rules are meant to be flexible and reflect the will of the members; and may be revised at any meeting by a majority vote.

identification number is 52-1177011. This information is given to you in case your state law demands it. Hearing Loss Association of America is an umbrella organization with a group exemption letter from the IRS. The IRS ruling allows Hearing Loss Association to receive tax-deductible contributions. Unless a chapter has tax-exempt status from the IRS, donations are not officially tax deductible to the donor.

If a chapter wants to be tax exempt, they may pursue their own 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, or be covered by the group exemption held by the national office. In order for a chapter to be covered under the Hearing Loss Association umbrella, some paperwork is required by the IRS to ensure that any entity using the Hearing Loss Association tax exempt status is soliciting funds within the framework under which the status was granted. Contact the Hearing Loss Association accountant for the papers to complete an agreement with Hearing Loss Association that confirms that...

- the local entity is soliciting or receiving funds to support activities and programs that are consistent with the Hearing Loss Association mission (i.e., not for Save the Whales.),
- the funds are not being used for efforts that are a violation of the Hearing Loss Association 501(c)(3) status (i.e., donations to a political candidate), or
- should the chapter receive more than \$25,000 in a calendar year, it must file its own 990 form with the IRS.

Organizational Structure

I. Introduction:

Hearing Loss Association is structured to enhance networking capabilities, a vehicle for disseminating information and keeping the lines of communication open throughout the organization. Our structure does not suggest a bureaucratic barrier between Hearing Loss Association chapters and national. All leaders and members are invited to contact the national office at any time; however, there are many concerns and questions that members within the structure can take care of. The structure design is a long-range plan which is begun as the need arises and people volunteer to serve. If your state has a regional and/or state coordinator, established (or designated) districts, or a state association or state office, the contact people serving in these positions are listed on contact sheets for each of the ten United States regions.

II. Hearing Loss Association of America Structure:

A. Regions

1. The United States is divided geographically into 10 Hearing Loss Association regions, each containing several contiguous states.
2. Each region has at least four, but no more than seven, states per region. Regions are defined by Roman numerals.
3. Each region shall be overseen by a regional coordinator appointed by the national office (with approval of the board of trustees) and he or she will be responsible to the national office.

B. States

1. Each state shall have a state coordinator.
2. The national office shall appoint the state coordinator with recommendations received from regional/state coordinators, previous state coordinators and the state's membership at large.
3. State coordinators work with the chapter development staff of HLAA national.

Note: Some larger states have more than one coordinator. Usually she or he coordinates a geographical portion of the state; i.e., northern and southern California coordinators.

Decisions of this nature are made by state leaders in conjunction with the chapter development staff of Hearing Loss Association national.

C. Districts

1. States may be divided into districts which is a cluster of affiliates within reasonable proximity of each other. It is suggested that a convenient one-day, round-trip drive determine the size of each district.
2. Each district will be known by its name; i.e., Upstate New York District, Downstate New York District.
3. District coordinators (or district presidents, if officers are elected by the membership) shall be overseen by the state coordinator.
4. The members in the district shall determine the number of meetings a year.

State Associations/Offices

State associations or state offices may be formed if this is the desire of the national members within a state. State associations and state offices are considered extensions of the national office and are expected to promote and facilitate chapter development. For information relating to the procedure and requisites relating to the formation of a state association or a state office, contact the director of state development at the national office.

Chapter Division

We can never grow enough in membership! Ideally, we want to reach all people with hearing loss and offer them educational information through chapter participation. Outreach is an ongoing priority for Hearing Loss Association. (Organizations that do not reach outside of themselves tend to become ingrown -- a situation which can jeopardize their existence.)

While every chapter is free to determine its own limitations on membership, in order to enhance fellowship and be sure each person's individual needs are met, 35 members is the maximum number of suggested (attending/active) members. A group may form and plan to cover a specific area -- such as a county. As membership swells, the interests of the chapter may be better served by subdividing. This may be done geographically (i.e., east and west county) or by beginning a group that will meet in the daytime if the existing one meets in the evenings, or vice versa. When division is a consideration, be sure to discuss it with the chapter staff at national.

Chapter Committees

In keeping with the self-help philosophy, Hearing Loss Association of America adopted a structure for local organizations that promotes members' involvement through participatory service on committees. A great deal can be achieved if everyone gives a little of their time and talents. (See **Committees**.)

Communicating (So All May Hear)

Communicating is the art of getting a message across. Nothing is more important to a person with hearing loss than meaningful conversation. There are few among us who have not experienced being left out and felt that horrible sinking feeling that goes with it. Some of us have limited our communication because it's "too much hassle" or "too frustrating." People with hearing loss tend to withdraw, lose confidence, use hearing loss as an excuse, risk being thought of as dense, and, possibly, become afraid or angry with those around us. Unless ways are found to overcome these difficulties, emotional problems can develop.

Although we have no way to predict the events of our lives, such as hearing loss, we are the masters of our attitude toward it. Hearing Loss Association meetings offer a positive environment where people can share ways of looking at the problem and effectively communicate with one another. The time *prior* to the meeting is the time to find out about each person's individual hearing needs. Welcomers should greet each new person, finding out what they will need to help them hear and introduce them to a "buddy."

If at all possible, meeting rooms should be equipped with an assistive listening system (ALS) or with visual help, such as computer-assisted note taking or real-time captioning. Court reporters may be able to volunteer their expertise and equipment. Acquisition of assistive technology for communication access should be a group's first project. Meeting rooms should have good acoustics and adequate lighting. Seat persons together and pay special attention to those who have more difficulty hearing than others. Seating should be arranged in a circle or theater style so that those who read lips have a good view of the speaker. Anyone who speaks to the audience should learn and follow the basic rules of communicating with people with hearing loss. (Distribute and use *HLAA Communication Tips Cards*.) Throughout the meeting, leaders must be alert to anyone who does not seem to understand. Repeatedly encourage raised hands of those who are having difficulty. (Homemade "Hearing Loss Association of America" flags to wave when not hearing or understanding can help overcome any shyness.) Unless a speaker uses a microphone,

questions, etc., from the audience should be repeated. Appoint a member to watch for indications that others cannot hear.

Our pledge is to do all we can to see that meetings are friendly and communication accessible for each and every individual. Remember that this is one place that it is okay, in fact, people are encouraged to say, "What?" "I cannot hear you," "I cannot understand you," or, "Repeat that please." Through HLAA, we can enhance individual and group communication and brighten our immediate environment. Our commitment is to provide a setting in which all may hear.

Chapter Officers

Chapter Officers

Note: Appointing or electing chapter officers is not a requirement. While a chapter may prefer to continue operating through a steering committee or planning committee, or the organizers, once a chapter is fairly mature and increasing in size, we recommend officers be in place for maximum effective administration and continued smooth development.

Young organizations need not acquire officers until the membership feels that it would be wise and timely to do so. With the possible exception of a secretary, it is preferable to have officers be people with hearing loss, or parents of children with hearing loss. All officers should be current Hearing Loss Association members. Ideally, no officer should serve more than two consecutive terms in the same capacity. Officers are the chapter leaders and are responsible for handling the affairs of the organization that do not need to be voted on by the membership. (Also see **Shared Leadership**). All action by officers should be reported to the membership.

The first step for new officers is to get together for a brainstorming session to consider the purpose and goals of Hearing Loss Association. In planning objectives, a major consideration will be to develop maximum member involvement. Hearing Loss Association chapters "act locally but think nationally." The key to the success of self-help groups is the *opportunity to help others along with realizing personal growth*.

The weak affiliate is often the one in which a few do all the work. Recruiting, developing, and replacing officers and committee chairs is a constant process. By getting to know the members well, you can ask them personally to assume jobs that you know they are capable of doing. People who have never been involved in an organization before will probably do best beginning with smaller tasks. You will need to encourage and support them. As you observe a greater degree of confidence, move them into jobs that are more challenging. In this manner, you can develop leaders who can assume greater responsibility for the organization. Involving as many members as possible in chapter work offers learning experiences while nurturing self-help and future leaders. Early on, an officer may assume a committee chair personally or guide and assist a chair. Divide responsibilities into workable and understandable parts. The officers can then determine, *depending on the current needs of the membership and the stage of development*, the number of committees and chairs needed to achieve the desired programs or provide services. A committee structure frees the president and other officers for other concerns and strengthens and unifies the group.

President

Who is this person? Congratulations! You have accepted the highest compliment an organization can pay you. The members are putting their trust in your leadership abilities. You have the courage, desire and caring sensitivity needed to lead others in self-help activities. You believe in, and are committed to Hearing Loss Association. You know that changed attitudes are needed in order to make progress. You have demonstrated an appreciation and understanding of Hearing Loss Association goals and philosophy and are aware that effective action begins at the local level. You have a challenge to explore and maximize individual and group growth, and in the process, create a dynamic team that can make a difference.

What is the president's role in a chapter? The president assumes responsibility for the morale and growth of the chapter, setting the spirit and pace of the organization, lending enthusiastic support and cooperation to a wide variety of activities, and relating warmly and openly to the membership. As a Hearing Loss Association leader, you view leadership as responsibility, rather than rank and privilege.

You are asked to develop your leadership skills to provide self-help leadership. A working familiarity with the contents of this manual, along with the supplemental support materials provided by Hearing Loss Association national, will provide you with an understanding of the self-help philosophy, our structure and procedures. You will keep members abreast of Hearing Loss Association national developments and bring the Hearing Loss Association message to members and people in your local communities. You will join others in learning about and sharing improved methods of coping and dealing with the problems of hearing loss.

Hearing Loss Association believes that we are *people* first and, second, people who happen to have a hearing loss. We are concerned for the well-being of the complete person, not just his or her hearing. Thus, a president's most significant function is to encourage each member to understand more about themselves and become as comfortable as possible with their hearing loss. The president needs to get to know each member *well*. With the membership, he or she will explore the aspirations of the group as a whole.

Self-help leaders understand that the organization does not "belong to them." Their leadership style will not create dependence, rather, it will give members the feeling that Hearing

Loss Association is *their* organization and it is *their* participation that will determine its future. Leaders must take special care to avoid inhibiting participation by members, or take actions that might be seen as controlling or running the group. (See **Committees, Hints for Leaders.**)

While the president presides over all general membership and officer's meetings, important interaction should come through e-mails, the telephone, or personal contact between meetings. How are they doing? Do they understand what is needed? Do they need suggestions or help? Will everything be done on time? Are there new ideas or problems that need to be discussed?

At the beginning of each term of office, a wise president will bring together the officers (or everyone, if the group is small) to draft a flexible yearly planning calendar of meetings, special events, and projects. (Be sure to consult the Hearing Loss Association calendar of events on the website.) Not only does this ensure a coordinated program, but it also establishes goals, which unify the group. The president will continually ask: Are we keeping to the plan that we drafted for the year? Is the membership getting involved in committee work? Are the programs meeting members' needs? Is our communication access adequate? Is the chapter growing or are we losing members? Do members feel comfortable at meetings? Are we looking outside of ourselves?

It is hoped that a close and friendly relationship between former and new leaders will exist, as that is a good way to establish strong traditions of the chapter. However, sometimes a deep sense of responsibility in office can cause problems once out of office. When chapter presidents step down, they must be careful to also step aside. They should offer support and advice to the new leader only when asked. Past presidents are valuable people who are needed to take on new challenges, such as organizing a new area group, furthering Hearing Loss Association National programs, or state level involvement. Opportunities for committed members to help Hearing Loss Association fulfill its mission are plentiful.

Suggested Materials for Officers

Each chapter receives one chapter manual. All, or portions of it, may be reproduced to provide copies or sections of copy for officers and committee members. Additional copies are also available for a fee to cover the cost. You may want to have the following items on hand for frequent use:

Agenda	Bylaws	Membership Roster	Officer Checklist
Budget	Chapter Manual	Chapter Development Support Materials (notebook)	Planning Calendars (HLAA national and local)
Parliamentary Procedure		HLAA News (an email newsletter to share)	Other:

A Checklist for the President

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide during your term in office.

- Preside at general membership meetings. (Sample agenda in Appendix.)
- Copy relevant sections of the *Chapter Manual* for other officers and committee chairs.
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.
- See that all chapter decisions and resolutions are put into effect.
- See that all Hearing Loss Association national requests are acted on.
- Recruit people to chair committees and assume other tasks. Cultivate new leaders.
- Arrange for the vice president (often the president-elect) to conduct chapter meetings at least twice a year. Assign tasks to the vice president so that he or she is not simply a figurehead.
- Write a message for publication in the chapter newsletter and suggest material to be included. (Always quote accurately and credit sources.)
- Send appropriate material for possible publication in *Hearing Loss Magazine*. Include a photo.
- Stimulate interest in new programs and projects.
- Read all national mailings and distribute development materials to appropriate officers and members in a timely manner.
- Handle *HLAA News* appropriately, so that all officers, chairpersons and members are informed.
- Be alert at meetings to anyone who may not be hearing or understanding.
- Yearly, or as the term of office is finished, send the national office a list of succeeding officers' names and addresses. Include a brief history of the year and summary of activities.

- Preside at all board meetings and share the discussion of ideas, changes, and proposals to be decided together for chapter growth. Final decisions are the responsibility of all officers and major changes are voted on by the general membership.
- With any changes of office (including the presidency), **see that all chapter materials are turned over to the successors.**
- Keep in contact with the Hearing Loss Association state coordinator(s), if there is one.

Vice President

In any chapter, especially a young chapter, the president has a tremendous job. So does the vice president, whose support and insights are needed. (Too often vice presidents function as little more than an organizational figurehead. Presidents should ensure that the talents of vice presidents are fully used.) A vice president may begin with an assortment of duties helpful to the president, such as filling in as program or publicity chair, seeking new members, providing literature, or even bringing refreshments. Hopefully, all this does not fall on one member, but there is no better way to learn the ropes. An Hearing Loss Association vice president is in a position to truly listen to the feelings and responses of the group and watch for cracks he or she and the president can seal early.

A chapter may choose to have two vice presidents. One may serve as program chair and a second may serve as membership or publicity chair. In highly organized organizations, a vice president is considered to be “in training” for the presidency.

A Checklist for the Vice President

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide during your term in office.

- Assume the president's duties in case of absence or illness.
- Keep in touch with activities and committees and assume tasks as requested by the president.
- With the president and secretary, help complete the agenda for the general meetings.
- Coordinate the planning calendar with the president and committee chairs.
- Make sure each chair knows what is expected, by providing (a) a written job description, (b) someone to discuss the job with, and (c) membership support.
- Assume the duties of an office vacancy until the vacancy is filled.
- Process all bylaw amendments.
- Plan and conduct at least two chapter meetings per year, as requested by the president.
- Serve as a liaison to other chapters in the area and beyond.
- Be alert at meetings to anyone who may not be hearing or understanding.
- Other:

Secretary

Dear Hearing Loss Association Secretary:

Please don't be intimidated by the size of the list below. An efficient secretary can organize in a jiffy! Are you not feeling organized -- or efficient? Does anyone, really? All you're asked to do is take a front seat with a sharp pencil and do the best you can. More than that is not expected. No one will care if you ask the speakers to repeat, because it gives all listeners a second time around too. You can fill in the blanks, later. Your notes will be more than adequate.

One who has been there,
“A Self-Helper”

A Checklist for the Secretary (May be a person with or without a hearing loss.)

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide during your term in office.

- Record the proceedings of meetings, both regular and board meetings, so that there can be no question as to what action was taken. If required, prepare copies for distribution.
- Have on hand at each meeting the following:
 - Chapter bylaws.
 - Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition).
 - Minutes of the previous meeting. (It is not necessary to read previous meeting minutes at regular meetings. Copies can be made available for anyone who wants them or a copy can be posted.)
 - List of officers, standing special committees and their members.
 - Paper ballots and agenda formats (should they be needed).
- Assist the president and vice president in the preparation of agendas for meetings.
- Notify special committees of appointments and duties.
- Count the standing vote when so requested by the presiding officer.
- Call the meeting to order in the absence of the president and vice president, and preside until a chair pro tem is appointed.
- Act as custodian for all records, except those assigned to others.
- Distribute minutes, agenda, and other announcements as requested.
- Be expected to attend all regular and special meetings, or locate a substitute to take minutes.
- Use the following general outline for preparing the minutes:
 - a. Kind of meeting; regular, or special.

- b. Name of assembly; i.e., regular monthly meeting of Hearing Loss Association chapter.
- c. Date, place and time of meeting, number of members present.
- d. Names of presiding officers, guests, and any presenters.
- e. Approval of minutes of previous meeting, and corrections if any.
- f. Record all motions and announcements. Do not record withdrawn motions. Include the maker of the main motion. Inclusion of the name of the seconder is optional.
- g. Correspondence received by the chapter is noted in the minutes.
- Become familiar with parliamentary procedure by reading *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- Attend to all routine correspondence of the affiliate, such as thank you letters to speakers, and other correspondence as directed by the president. Keep copies in an appropriate manner.
- Recruit a resource person (librarian) to obtain, exhibit, and distribute literature.
(See **Organizational Support, Resources**.)
- Other:

Note: An active chapter may wish to establish a separate office of corresponding secretary.

Treasurer

Once a chapter is functioning, it has an identity. If money is received or collected it is time to open a checking account. This is the most accurate method of keeping track of income and expenses. Obtain pre-numbered checks in order that each can be accounted for.

This, and other business, requires obtaining an employer identification number (EIN) from the district Internal Revenue Office. (We know you are not an employer.) Use Federal Form SS-4 available at your local IRS office or on the web. The form is simple to complete.

Organization financial records will vary in size and complexity depending on the size/activity of the chapter. All expenditures must be supported by an invoice or sales receipt. The important thing is that the records clearly and accurately reflect each transaction.

In addition to processing chapter income, treasurers may also be responsible for forwarding new and renewed membership dues to Hearing Loss Association national.

A Checklist for the Treasurer

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide during your term in office.

- Maintain complete and accurate financial records.
- Establish a local bank account as soon as funds warrant. Decide how many persons may write/sign checks and if one or two signatures will be required on each check.
- Make all deposits and withdrawals to the organization's bank account. (Balance bank statement monthly.)
- Distribute funds as decided and/or requested by the chapter officers. Expenses for more than \$____ must be approved before incurred.
- Prepare a periodic or annual financial statement of income and expense for the president and membership. Give a copy to the secretary for inclusion in the minutes, newsletter or posting at meetings -- depending on the procedure adopted. **(Sample in Appendix.)** If the chapter is under the Hearing Loss Association umbrella, work with the Hearing Loss Association accountant to complete any requirements to maintain tax exempt status.
- If necessary, prepare and mail federal and state tax forms in a timely fashion.
- Serve as chair, or a member of the chapter's finance committee. You may also serve on any special fundraising committees. (See **Committees, Budget/Finance Committee.**)
- Handle all chapter income, and forward any new or renewing membership dues to Hearing Loss Association headquarters.
- Turn all records over to incoming treasurers.
- Other:

Legalities

*Note: Most of the information in this section is for local organizations that choose **not** to be covered under the Hearing Loss Association of America group tax exemption*

The following information is from IRS publications. It covers facts that will help in making a decision as to whether or not to obtain tax-exempt status and whether or not to incorporate. If a chapter is passing the hat or otherwise raising their own funds to cover necessary expenses, it is probably not necessary to apply for tax-exempt status. But, if an affiliate has significant projects that require great amounts of money, it may be to their advantage to either apply for tax exemption or be covered by the Hearing Loss Association national coverage.

If not under the Hearing Loss Association umbrella, there is a fee attached to applying for tax-exempt status. The requirements to be met and the forms to be completed come with complete instructions.

Incorporation

Forming a nonprofit corporation and obtaining tax-exempt status are two separate and distinct matters. To apply for tax-exempt status, an organization must verify that it is formally organized by presenting a document that specifies its purposes. It is easier to apply for tax-exempt status if you are already incorporated (but doing so is not compulsory). Incorporation can either be taken care of by a lawyer or by filing your own corporate papers. Corporate papers are filed with your state. A Certificate of Incorporation issued by the state is official recognition of a formal organization. A nonprofit corporation is a legal entity offering a measure of protection where liability might be a factor. Cost is a consideration in incorporation. Attorney fees and filing fees vary from state to state. The cost is lower, of course, if the services of attorneys are not used.

Tax-Exempt Status

As a self-help educational organization, Hearing Loss Association of America, is organized as a nonprofit corporation and qualifies for exemption from federal income tax under IRS section 501(c)(3). A chapter may apply for a group exemption letter covering affiliate organizations through the national office or apply individually. The benefits of nonprofit status are: 1) exemption from most federal income taxes, 2) exemption from state and local income taxes, 3) exemption from sales tax, and 4) assurance that donors who itemize their tax returns may legally claim donations as a tax deduction. Most foundations, corporations, and individuals who make significant contributions will only give to recognized tax-exempt organizations.

To apply for exemption from federal income tax, a chapter files IRS Form 1023, *Application for Recognition of Exemption under Section 501(c)(3)* of the IRS Code. (The latest revision of this form is available from a local IRS office, or by writing to the IRS distribution center for your state or via the Internet.)

A 501(c)(3) organization normally having annual gross receipts of not more than \$25,000 is not required to file Form 1023. It is automatically exempt. A gross receipts test determines if there is a requirement to file Form 1023. This is explained in IRS Publication 557, *Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization*. To be assured that contributions will be tax deductible to donors, and to obtain certain incidental benefits, it is necessary to establish exemption with the IRS and receive a ruling or determination letter, an official record of federal tax-exempt status. The following documents are required to apply for federal tax-exempt status:

- 1) Form 1023, *Application for Recognition of Exemption under Section 501(c)(3)*
- 2) Employer Identification Number (EIN). This complies with federal income tax, social security, and unemployment insurance regulations. An EIN is obtained by completing a brief IRS Form SS-4. If not previously applied for, a completed EIN application form should be enclosed with the 1023 application. (Whether or not tax-exempt status is applied for, having an EIN can be useful in setting up bank accounts.)
- 3) Financial data. Each application must include financial statements showing receipts and expenditures for the current year and the three preceding years (or the number of years the organization has been in existence, if less than four.) For each accounting period, describe the sources of receipts and the nature of expenditures. Include a balance sheet for the most recent period. If the organization has not started, or is less than one year old, a proposed budget for two full accounting periods and a current statement of assets and liabilities (if any) will be acceptable.

- 4) Organizing Documents. Each application for exemption must be accompanied by a conformed (original) copy of your organization's Articles of Incorporation, Constitution **or** other enabling document. *Bylaws alone do not constitute an organizing instrument.* The organizing instruments must contain a proper dissolution clause.

Note: The **Hearing Loss Association of America National Constitution** includes its articles of incorporation. For IRS purposes, a constitution should contain only 1) name and object of the organization, 2) qualification of members, 3) officers and their election, 4) meetings of the organization including only what is essential, leaving details to the bylaws, 5) how to amend the constitution, and 6) a dissolution clause. Unincorporated organizations customarily operate solely under bylaws omitting the constitution.

- 5) Form 8718, *User Fee for Exempt Organization Determination Letter Request*. The fee for an initial application by an organization whose annual gross receipts have not exceeded \$10,000 averaged over the preceding four years, or new organizations which anticipate gross receipts of not more than \$10,000 during their first four years is \$150. Whether you plan to apply for tax-exempt status or not, it is wise to obtain Publication 557, *Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization*. It discusses rules and procedures for organizations that seek recognition of exemption from federal income tax and includes sample organizing instruments that satisfy the requirements of section 501(c)(3).

For Your Information: A Section 501(c)(3) organization's activities are exclusively educational, charitable, religious, and/or scientific. It may not participate, directly or indirectly in any campaign for any electoral public office, federal, state, or local. It may engage in non-partisan activity such as voter registration, voter education, and sponsorship of candidate forums and debates. The organization should not maintain a political action committee. While lobbying cannot be a substantial part of an organization's activities, the amount of lobbying must be measured against the totality of an organization's work. Generally, tax experts agree that spending less than 5 percent of an organizational budget on grassroots lobbying activities is not considered substantial.

This information could change at any time. Be sure to get the latest publication/forms and follow the instructions carefully.

State Laws: Tax-exempt status must be obtained from both the federal and state governments. To obtain state tax-exempt status, you must first obtain a federal determination letter from the IRS. Consult your state's Division of Taxation for filing procedures. State laws vary for filing tax returns. Consult your state tax office for dos and don'ts for our type of organization, particularly in regard to fundraising events, state conferences and the like.

Reporting Requirements: Filing of Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, or Form 990EZ, Short Form Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, may be required. Form 990EZ is a shortened version of Form 990 designed for use by small tax-exempt organizations. Most Hearing Loss Association affiliates meet the gross receipts test of having gross receipts in each tax year that normally are not more than \$25,000 and may use the short form. (See the instructions for Form 990 for information about what constitutes annual gross receipts that are normally not more than \$25,000.)

This form is due by the 15th day of the 5th month after your 12th month accounting period ends. Normally, fiscal years are selected to coincide with the natural operating cycle of the organization. Unless a specific fiscal year is designated, the legal assumption is a reporting period on a calendar year basis. If an organization is liquidated, dissolved, or terminated, file the return by the 15th day of the 5th month after the change. (In some states, the use of Form 990 or 990EZ will satisfy state reporting requirements.)

Bulk Mail Rate: If an organization has a minimum of 200-piece mailings, non-profit bulk rate privileges may be useful. An application to mail at special bulk rate can be obtained at post offices but must be filed with the postmaster at each post office where the organization wishes to mail at special rates. Permission is granted by issuance of a permit. A fee is paid at the time of application and required each calendar year. The application (Form 3624) must include evidence that the organization is nonprofit. A determination letter of tax-exempt status while helpful, is not required.

Helpful Organizations: There are a number of organizations that help non-profit organizations. They may just answer questions or offer free assistance. Examples are the Accountants for Public Interest, the Society for Non Profit Organizations, and the National Association of State Boards of Accounting. Your library will have reference books listing these organizations, what they do, and how to contact them. Some law firms donate time and services in the interest of the community.

Board of Trustees

Regular meetings of the administrative body, whether this is called a committee or board of directors/trustees, etc., are important. (Trustees are the term generally used for non-profits vs. directors, which is used by for-profit organizations.) Most chapters hold meetings once a month to plan details of regular meetings, take care of business, and prepare issues for presentation to the membership for decision/vote. A board includes all officers and the past president. Most boards also include a specified number of members at-large and committee chairs. **All board meetings should be open to the general membership** who should be notified of meeting details and urged to attend. The more people who are involved, the better. Personal invitations to targeted members to come is a way to stimulate involvement.

A successful board meeting requires a combination of knowledge and skill. No one is born with these. Instead, we must go through a learning process. This is usually done in one of three ways. People learn by observing others -- seeing what works and what does not. Or, a person is thrust into a position of leadership and learns by doing. A third approach is through training. The following is considered training...

Suggestions for Conducting Productive Board Meetings

These suggestions can also be applied to other meetings that need structure and organization (e.g., committee meetings). They are *not* appropriate for regular chapter meetings.

Necessary Tools

- **Start Time:** Part of the responsibility of being a board member is to be on time for meetings. Establish a time to start the meeting and adhere to it. Remember that a quorum, a majority of the board members, is necessary before business can be conducted.
- **Stop Time:** The surest way to lose board members is to have meetings that drag on forever. Establish a time to stop the meeting and keep within 15 minutes of that time.
- **Breaks:** It is easy to get caught up in the meeting and to go nonstop. Not everyone is capable of marathon meetings. We suggest a 10-minute break midway through the meeting.

- **Agenda:** This is an absolute must. It allows board members to know (preferably ahead of time) what will be covered and gives them an opportunity to think about the topics and be ready to give input. Also, it is a good way to stay on course during the meeting; otherwise, you will find it is easy to get pulled off-track. (Follow the order of business: call to order, reading and approval of the last meeting's minutes, reports of officers/committees, business of the day, unfinished business, new business, and adjournment.)
- **Robert's Rules of Order, Revised:** For a well-run meeting, some elementary parliamentary procedures are a necessity. In English-speaking countries, the preferred method is Robert's. Having a working knowledge of these Rules can assist in smooth functioning.

Leaders Obligation to the Board -- You owe them:

- Preparation
- Respect
- Responsibility

Good Leadership Techniques

- Maintain a firm, confident positive demeanor. Try to be "action oriented" -- rather than talk oriented -- so that time is not wasted.
- Maintain a constructive, collaborative mood to stimulate group discussion.
 - Do not criticize. If constructive suggestions are called for, offer them one on one in private.
 - Encourage everyone to participate.
 - Positively, but kindly, cut-off long-winded speakers.
 - Rephrase incomplete ideas from board members.
 - Compliment the board for good teamwork.
 - Be honest, good humored, and admit mistakes.
- Listen actively and summarize what you hear.
- Check for agreement, strive for closure and/or the next item.
- Follow the agenda step-by-step, and keep the others aware of it (but, be flexible).
- Keep track of time -- revise or pace the agenda as needed.

- Never allow control of the meeting to slip away. If this should happen, assert yourself and regain it immediately. But again, have flexibility here. There is a fine line to walk between running a well-organized meeting and being a dictator.
- Be aware of the tendency many people have to lose sight of one task in pursuit of another. Try to concentrate on "substance" and avoid minor details.

Final Thoughts

A chair has two basic tasks:

- 1) To organize and control the meeting in such a manner that the tasks for the board can be effectively accomplished. Your most valuable contribution comes about when you make a useful suggestion or an action that will improve the organization.
- 2) To inspire, stimulate, and encourage group participation.
 - a) Break up tasks into small parts so that there is not one overwhelming job to do.
 - b) Be sensitive to each board member's needs and motivations for participating.

Leadership Changes

Materials provided by Hearing Loss Association headquarters to presidents, other officers, and committee members belong to Hearing Loss Association! They are temporarily entrusted to members for their use and upkeep. Therefore, when it is time for a transition, all information and support materials should also be handed over to those taking on various positions. The responsibility of "paper" comes with the job -- even volunteer jobs.

Incoming officers and committee chairs should be given all material available to help them understand their roles and what has transpired in the past. It should be organized in appropriately labeled folders/notebooks. (Out-of-date materials should be discarded.) Outgoing officers and others should make it a point to meet with incoming persons to provide as much information as possible to the new person, as well as pass on records. A smooth transition gives a fresh administration obvious advantages. An administration devoid of information and tools needed to carry on is at a distinct disadvantage. It may take months to catch up. Time and progress are lost and teamwork is diminished.

Leadership changes must be reported to the Hearing Loss Association Office as soon as possible.

Sharing the Leadership

Hearing Loss Association of America endorses the concept of sharing the leadership. It offers benefits for existing chapters, and new chapters would be wise to adopt it from the onset. Sharing leadership facilitates the self-help concept, encourages participation and potential leaders, and, creates a sense of ownership of the organization among the members. Moreover, it sustains a self-help fundamental: the key to a dynamic, strong group is serving without controlling.

Neither power nor control has a place in a self-help organization; rather, each person "owns a share." As leaders, we know it can feel good when a group depends on us. We may never think about the fact that we could be fostering a group's dependency. We may not realize that this is not what is best for the organization, or for ourselves. People tend to rely on others, assuming that someone else can or will do it and perhaps do it better. In the long run, letting something go undone might just be the best choice of action for the stability and future of the organization. Dependence on one or two people can stifle initiative and intimidate potential helpers. This leads to "burnout" of those few who continue to do all the work.

Sharing the leadership begins with a belief that this chapter you are involved with can function on its own because you believe in the leadership abilities of others. Sharing leadership also means understanding that the job of cultivating new leaders begins as soon as your term as a leader begins.

In an ever-widening circle, leaders draw others into leadership functions by setting an example, by encouraging and by caring. In an environment free of reservation and restraint, individual capabilities blossom. The self-help process promotes the growth of individuals. It empowers people to assume responsibility and take control of their lives. The ideal Hearing Loss Association environment of shared fellowship provides unlimited opportunity and support for self-help practices to flourish. Believing in, and using, the concept of sharing the leadership can be a dynamic instrument.

Hearing Loss Association of America Letterhead Stationery

White stationery with the green HLAA logo is available from the National office for use by HLAA chapters. Affiliates are encouraged to use it for HLAA correspondence, flyers, meeting notices, newsletters, and other outreach. The familiar logo raises awareness and recognition of the organization -- thus, deepening our impact.

The logo is copyrighted and must always look the same everywhere it is used. It may be photocopied, or reproduced on a computer but may not be altered in any way except to enlarge or decrease its size. Nothing should be added to it, such as extending, shortening, or eliminating the "bars." A different typeface alters the logo. The logo is green with solid letters. (The green color is PMS 355.) On the stationery, our name, Hearing Loss Association of America, appears below the bottom bar. For affiliate use, "Inc." is omitted. HLAA does not provide envelopes but standard white envelopes can be used. (Refer to a current *Chapter Development Support Materials Order Form* for current price.)

Committees

Committee Structure

It is the philosophy of Hearing Loss Association to foster committee involvement, both for organizational productivity and to nurture individual growth and development. Every member on a committee is the ideal situation -- even if only a committee of one or two people. Member involvement promotes creative communication, increases regular attendance, develops leadership, and persuades members that Hearing Loss Association is their organization, and allows each member to feel responsible for its success. Newer members are more likely to become active if asked to serve on ad hoc (short-term) committees or share tasks with at least one other member, than if asked to accept jobs on a long-term basis. Generally speaking, there are two types of committees: the standing committee, which has continued existence, and the special committee (ad hoc), which terminates when its task is completed. Special committees can become standing committees. Listed below are some of the names of standing and special committees.

Accessibility	ADA	Assistive Devices
Advocacy	Budget	Bylaws
Community Outreach	Convention Delegate	Election
Employment	Family Support	Fundraising
Founder's Day	Hearing aid insurance	History
Hospital Program	Membership	Newsletter
Nominating	Parent Involvement	PALS*
Programs/Education	Publicity	Social/Sunshine
Technical	Telephone	Welcoming

(* Places with Assistive Listening Systems)

Other standing and special committees should be established as needed. In young chapters it may be feasible to combine committees for a time, such as Program/Publicity or Welcoming/Membership. Try to select one particular day of the week for meetings. For example, the general membership meeting may be on the first Wednesday of the month; the chapter officers' meeting on the second Wednesday of the month; and Welcoming/Membership committee meeting the third Wednesday of the month; and all other committee meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month. A plan such as this may take time to actualize, but it has long-term potential. As members participate and enjoy their successes, Hearing Loss Association activity accelerates because they want more fellowship and more success! Wednesday Hearing Loss Association activity is a priority and the organization is an integral part of their lives.

The Committee

Overview. Committees, no matter what their purpose or size, are fundamental to our structure. The contributions committees can make are the key to progress. Committee participation should be a most satisfying aspect of Hearing Loss Association involvement, an opportunity to help Hearing Loss Association, each other, and ourselves regardless of age, experience, talent, or degree of hearing loss. This is part of our therapy.

A meeting of committee members for a common purpose is a warm, caring experience, which helps develop close friendships and promotes fellowship. While learning and sharing in productive work experiences, interpersonal relationships develop in small groups that are quite different from large group activity. Once there are several people on a committee, it is important that the chair create an inviting atmosphere that will bring out the best in each participant. As they begin to work together, people with hearing loss who have withdrawn or felt isolated and lonely, can become active, feel empowered, and enjoy life with a new perspective.

A Committee Is Open. All committees should be open to the general membership. To encourage people to join, meeting dates should be published in newsletters, and/or notices, and announced at regular meetings. Early on, it may be convenient for new committees to meet briefly before or after regular meetings.

Meetings Should Be Organized. Meetings that are not organized have little chance of accomplishing much. A chair should always have two things on hand as a meeting begins: an agenda and a positive attitude. A meeting will be productive only if everyone knows what they are being called upon to do. The chair should know, and share, the committee's purpose/mission. The committee as a whole will decide goals. Chapter presidents should provide the committee chair with any Hearing Loss Association material available on the subject, suggest other sources of additional materials and where to go for possible resources.

Leader Is A Moderator. A committee leader's role is really that of a meeting moderator. He or she sets the stage with a welcome and an explanation of the committee's purpose, and then goes over the meeting agenda. This serves as a review for older members and informs newer members. Once the stage has been set, the members should be encouraged to take over. Their work has been outlined, so the task of keeping things

moving, sharing ideas, choosing methods, and even assigning tasks can come from the group. It is the moderator's role to pick up the slack, clarify, be supportive, and encourage new members in the committee's work. He or she should avoid being authoritative, offering ideas but giving equal time and attention to the ideas of others. Avoid the opinion that one member is right and another is wrong. Even though a few experienced members might be able to complete a task better than others or the group as a whole, that approach is not in keeping with self-help practice. Rather, we guide others in new experiences -- a positive step for the learner, the helper, and the organization. There may be better ways of doing things, but there aren't any better people.

Committee Members Need Opportunities. Each committee member should have an opportunity to share in the enjoyment of creating interesting ways of doing things and delving into available resources. Some people work better individually, some in pairs, but all need support and encouragement. A chairperson should plan to spend time with each member going over newly assigned tasks and exploring suggested procedures. Committee meetings should always close with a summary of discussion, decisions arrived at, and action to be taken. This is essential for people with hearing loss. It is extremely important that a chair keep in touch with members who are responsible for a task between meetings, offering support by asking how they are doing and seeing if there is anything they need. Try **not** to give advice or instruction unless it is asked for.

Hearing Loss Association supports job changes. People should not get pigeonholed in one job for too long a time. They should move into different roles, preferably something offering a little more challenge. Before a member moves onto something new, he or she should spend time working with, and training the person who will take over his job, and turn over all relevant materials.

Hints for Leaders

A Leader Has A Sensitive Task To Perform. A leader's role is to inspire self-confidence and help people move toward personal and group goals. Hearing Loss Association leaders are challenged to focus human energies and vision on a clear picture of the purpose of the organization and what we want to accomplish. You are there to serve the members as they help themselves. Effective leaders never assume authority -- they lead by example. Teach, don't preach.

“Don’t give the man a fish, teach him how to fish.”

As a leader, you may feel there are preferred ways of doing things. Your experience, skills, and talents are very important, but **use them to guide, not decide**. Be careful not to shut out an idea just because of who presented it or the way in which the suggestion was made. It is a good policy to accept all ideas as having merit and examine them to see if they can be supported. Give support to the members who present ideas. Recognize members for their efforts. It may even be wise to try old ideas that haven't worked before, rather than reject a member's repeated suggestion. It is possible that it has been a long while since some people have felt worthy of contributing. Some may never have had the experience of contributing. Above all, **listen to each person**; make that person feel needed and productive.

Don't Expect Perfection. To expect perfection is an unreasonable expectation, particularly in volunteer groups. While a responsible and motivated leader will want to see activities that move us forward, he or she has to expect some rough sailing. Making mistakes is part of growth. The leader who cannot tolerate periodic disagreement and temporary gaps in attention to duty will experience a frustrating tenure. Disappointment is the difference between expectation and reality. **Keep in mind that members are likely to be more responsive and dependable if they have a clear idea of what is expected of them.**

Take Control of Squabbles. Since people are only human, a leader should expect that there will be some adverse feelings and differences of opinions. Barriers to progress, even threats to the organization's existence can develop from runaway personality clashes or disputes between member factions. Try to spot trouble before it becomes an issue. There will always be someone to point a finger at. DON'T. It takes a good deal of personal security not to react defensively, to remain detached and objective, but this is part of a leader's challenge. Look for a resolution, not blame. Negotiate. **Make yourself part of the solution, not the problem.**

Give Recognition. *“Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity.”* (Samuel Johnson, 1751.) Give people recognition and praise for their contributions at every opportunity. Recognize them at meetings and in the newsletter. Give special awards periodically. Few may admit it, but everyone likes to see his or her name in print. The cost of recognition is low compared to the rewards of **making people feel appreciated and needed.**

Don't Expect Complete Loyalty or Agreement. There is a tendency for a group to agree with its leader(s). This does little to contribute to members taking responsibility for the organization. Honest differences of opinion are a part of progress. Leaders should encourage thoughts and opinions from the members. To inspire individual growth, members must feel that they have a right to freely express themselves. A leader should not expect agreement in all cases. If the leader has done the job well, he or she should be pleased that the members have expressed opinions of their own. **Be ready to live with group decisions.**

Note: All members who assume leadership positions as officers or committee chairs should read the chapter development paper, *Self Help Leadership That Encourages Participation*. (See the Chapter Development Materials Order Form.) It examines self-help leadership and is essential to success for a leader in a self-help organization.

How to Recruit Committee Members

Educating, stimulating, recruiting, and delegating are the most important contributions a successful leader makes, giving the organization a broader and stronger base. Approach potential committee members with sensitivity to their personal and communication difficulties. Soliciting volunteers by asking for raised hands, passing sign-up sheets, or saying "see me after the meeting," is neither effective nor reliable. Recruitment at meetings may be the simplest means, but meaningful contact with personal visits, e-mails or phone calls is a more sincere, effective gesture. Use the phone **only** if it does not create frustration for either party.

Make a friend. Gentle questions will reveal their interest areas, talents, and personal feelings about hearing loss. Answer their questions and encourage them to talk. Listen. Let them know they are worthy. Even if you don't agree with them on everything, affirm and appreciate them. Respect them. You may find people with fixed opinions and difficult attitudes. Some may complain that nothing helps. You can say, "We do have our problems. That's why Hearing Loss Association of America began." If resistance is not total, Hearing Loss Association involvement may begin to change such attitudes.

The important thing is to use individual concerns as a source of motivation to participate. Once you have empathized with your new friend, then it is time to invite this person to serve on a committee he or she will benefit from. **You're matching people to a job** -- something they will enjoy and feel capable of doing. Be enthusiastic as you explain committee functions. "It would be great if you will share your ideas and help get things rolling." Remind them that while we face many challenges, it's small steps that contribute to the whole. Specify date, time, and place of the committee meeting. Ask if you can count on him or her. Secure a commitment, and be sure to follow up.

Membership/Welcoming Committee

Approximately one in every ten individuals has a hearing loss -- and we want to introduce **all** of them to Hearing Loss Association of America! People with hearing loss, their families and friends, parents of children with hearing loss, hearing health professionals, or anyone interested in hearing loss are prospective Hearing Loss Association members.

A Membership and Welcoming Committee is one of the most important ones a chapter can have. First impressions are lasting impressions. A person who feels welcome is far more likely to become a member.

A healthy organization continually seeks new members through ongoing publicity. Membership and Welcoming committee(s) (combined or separate) should be functioning as soon as possible. The committee(s) should decide exactly how to welcome newcomers. No new person should leave without some new information and a welcome feeling. (See **Attendance**.)

The following suggestions may be helpful:

- 1) Keep a guest list at the entrance with ample space for address and phone number. Supply name tags. Many affiliates provide permanent name tags in plastic sleeves for members.
- 2) Once a newcomer is greeted, learn what their communication needs are, explain what is available to help them during the meeting, and introduce them to someone who will be their "buddy" for the meeting. All members should know that in talking to others, we avoid telling a person what they should do, and we do not recommend specific products or places. We can share our experiences and what works for us.
- 3) Provide each newcomer with an Hearing Loss Association brochure, *Hearing Loss Magazine* if available, and any literature such as a chapter newsletter. Some chapters develop brochures, book marks or/and business cards with meeting data on them. Free materials from headquarters are ideal for welcome and new member packets.
- 4) The presiding officer should personally welcome each guest at meetings and briefly describe Hearing Loss Association. In consideration of hearing difficulty, a written description of Hearing Loss Association should also be provided -- perhaps in a welcome packet.
- 5) Plan a follow-up e-mail, phone call, or visit by a membership committee member.
- 6) Once there are about five or more new members, orientation meetings are very helpful, especially in older chapters whose members are way ahead of newcomers. An orientation meeting might be at a member's home, before a regular meeting, or a special meeting.
- 7) Have the program chair or president set aside time at every second or third meeting for a short group discussion aimed toward newcomers.

A Checklist for the Membership/Welcoming Committee Chairperson

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide.

- Be sure that all guests and prospective members are welcomed, informed of the purposes of Hearing Loss Association, and given packets of organizational information.
- Maintain an accurate mailing list of all members and prospects entitled to receive meeting notices. (Most chapters send prospective members meeting notices and newsletters for three months before asking for a commitment to join.)
- Strongly encourage Hearing Loss Association membership.**
- Send information on new members to the newsletter editor. Interviews for newsletter publication are popular.
- Maintain a telephone committee or a chapter list-serve which contacts members in need of sympathy, congratulations, transportation arrangements, or referral services.
- Recruit one or more members to contact those who do not come back and learn the reason why. What did they like or dislike? Do they have any questions? In short, why didn't they join? This effort can provide insight into the weaknesses of the chapter and a direction for improvement.
- A chapter is not expected to support those who come indefinitely without joining. The membership should decide on a time-frame, after which the prospective member is asked to make a commitment.
- Before leaving this job, train successors and turn over all membership/welcoming records to successors.
- Other:

Publicity Committee

Publicity creates awareness. Awareness of hearing loss is the groundwork woven into everything that Hearing Loss Association of America does. Publicity sparks interest and reaches potential members. Since the advent of widespread use of personal computer technology, hundreds of thousands of people have visited the Hearing Loss Association national website as well as websites of chapters of Hearing Loss Association across the country. As soon as possible, a chapter will want to have a website – even if the information on it is limited to meeting details, a contact person, and perhaps a newsletter. Be sure to send your current contact information to Hearing Loss Association headquarters so they can link the chapter to the website and any referrals will be up to date.

Besides sending meeting notices to major area newspapers, try to get notices in papers that cover geographical sections, neighborhoods, and special communities. People tend to rely more on activities they see in these types of small newspapers. You will also want to penetrate television, radio, other newsletters, bulletin boards, houses of worship, fraternal organizations, libraries, hospitals and clinics, hearing health service providers, community, county and state agencies, and other organizations.

Publicity includes letters to editors and human interest articles. Hearing Loss Association chapters have had publicity on milk carton panels, on billboards of city buses, in public utility "bill-stuffers," on parade floats, on banners strung across the center of populated cities, and more. They have been on a variety of public television informational talk shows. Booths at health fairs or in shopping malls reach many people. Special Hearing Loss Association events such as the National Month of Hearing Screening are perfect reasons for strong publicity campaigns. Several chapters have established a speakers bureau to "tell the Hearing Loss Association story" to various public service organizations in their communities.

Marketing people will find themselves reading area publications, bulletins, taking a second look at signs, posters, library displays, etc., to see what others do and what might work for Hearing Loss Association. Our members are the most fail-proof publicity tool we have. Each member should have a handful of brochures to distribute at places they frequent and to people they meet. Quantities of Hearing Loss Association brochures, past issues of

Hearing Loss Magazine, and other materials, are available free to affiliates from headquarters on request.

If you are introducing Hearing Loss Association of America to the area, a sure way to make your presence known is by a direct mail campaign. Go through the yellow pages of phone directories making a careful list of names, address and phone numbers of all those persons or agencies you wish to reach. Send each a brief, but concise letter. Emphasize our educational mission and leave the readers with a positive impression of Hearing Loss Association of America -- one that will give them confidence in referring people to HLAA. Include Hearing Loss Association of America material, meeting data and information on how to contact people in the chapter. Also, if you are starting a chapter or having a special event, be sure to ask Hearing Loss Association national to send you a list of all area members.

Publicity Creates Positive Energy

(An *HLAA News* excerpt)

Considering the astronomical 31 million people who have hearing loss in this country, why aren't our meeting rooms bulging at the seams? There are thousands of Hearing Loss Association members in the United States (and in 17 other countries). Why then aren't our meeting rooms full?

There may be many answers to that question. But most definitely, at the top of the list is one reason all Hearing Loss Association shares: A LACK OF CONTINUOUS, EFFECTIVE PUBLICITY. The solution, then, is more publicity -- LOTS AND LOTS OF PUBLICITY. We need ongoing publicity to educate, to stimulate, to inform, to arouse curiosity and to answer questions to provoke interest, and to build support.

Millions of people who could benefit from all that Hearing Loss Association membership has to offer are unaware of the help that is available. Maybe you jumped when you first heard or read about Hearing Loss Association. But, the more typical reaction is denial, perhaps cloaked in hesitancy, uncertainty, doubt, fear, indecision, or a host of other reasons for not responding. Otherwise, our meeting rooms would overflow.

Publicity creates positive energy. We need that energy to create awareness that will make a positive impact --good, solid, factual, repeated and widespread publicity. Hearing Loss Association may be a lifeline to some people or simply arouse curiosity in others. But, it will bring prospective members to meetings.

Publicity takes time and teamwork. Monthly newspaper announcements; eye-catching posters displayed where many people can see them; newsletters; wallet cards; radio interviews; TV appearances; community health fairs; referrals from professionals in health care, rehabilitation and educational communities; human interest articles complete with photos --these are enough for starters. We need all these and *more*.

A single effort or special event, such as a membership drive, no matter how successful it seems at the time, is not enough. It is not unusual to hear from leaders that they feel they may have gained several potential new members from a particular effort or event. But the number of new meeting attendees may be a few one-timers -- drop-ins just not ready for help, or some who come more often but are not interested in participating.

What's wrong here? Nothing's wrong! We just need to keep on publicizing Hearing Loss Association, keep reaching out, and keep providing a variety of educational programs, low-key information and technical assistance and support that will, in the long run, pay dividends in the form of a strong, growing membership. Publicity will succeed best as a shared responsibility, with every member assisting -- from helping publicity committees distribute posters and other materials to personally taking part in outreach and other activities.

Positive energy creates more positive energy. It warms everything it touches. There are a lot of people out there who need us. Maybe we can't reach all of them -- but we can't be faulted for not trying...and trying...and trying. In time, we will succeed in reaching most of them!

News Releases

National projects, special guest speakers, fundraisers, outreach projects, awards, and other such activities are news. Group action pictures are better than posed formal shots. Human-interest stories are popular. Letters to editors about issues such as communication access stand a good chance of being printed. Follow the rules for newspaper copy:

- 1) Use standard 8-1/2 x 11-inch paper. Hearing Loss Association letterhead stationery is appropriate and lends credibility; each chapter must create its own with the logo it has been provided. Provide original copies to the editor.
- 2) Double space and type all the copy going to a newspaper. Use only one side of the paper.
- 3) When preparing the same story for two papers, vary your "lead." Use somewhat different language to say the same thing, particularly in the opening paragraphs. If the papers can depend on this, and you prepare good stories, they will run them just as you send them in.
- 4) Clearly label your copy so that the editor knows where it came from. Be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and the release date. Leave space above your story for the headline writer.
- 5) If the story runs more than one page, write "more" at the end of the first page. At the end of the story, type ###. This means the end.
- 6) If unexpectedly, you have an important piece of news for the paper, don't wait to write. Send an e-mail or call on the phone. You may have a story that will be used in the next edition.
- 7) Your best guide for how to write a story is to read, analyze, and follow the style used by the paper you are preparing it for.
- 8) Take special care with your lead paragraph. It must always contain the five W's...who, what, when, where, and why. The order in which they appear will vary according to their importance in the individual story.
- 9) After you have prepared a good first paragraph, the rest of the story should present additional facts in the order of their importance and interest. Many stories are cut by

editors because of space limitation. Therefore, the most important facts should be stated first, so that, if your story has to be cut, the "meat" will remain.

- 10) Don't cover too many subjects in one story. It is best to feature one activity, with perhaps a brief summary of what else is happening in the closing sentence.
- 11) Be absolutely accurate. Make sure facts are right. Recheck the spelling of all names and use a proper prefix. After the first mention of a name, if referring to a person again, he should be called "Mr. Brown" without his given name or initials.

Tips on Securing TV and Radio Air Time

- 1) Stations offer two types of public service broadcasts: programs such as group or panel discussions and interviews; and brief spots--announcements, editorials, or news stories. Determine the most effective format for your message/news.
- 2) Arrange an appointment with a station's program or public/community service director and get advice on what the station can do to help you in spot announcements or as part of a program. Talk to news directors or assignment editors about newsworthy publicity releases; i.e., "Governor/Mayor Signs Proclamation for Better Hearing and Speech Month" or "State Hearing Loss Association Conference to be held on January 16 and 17 at the _____."
- 3) Personally deliver TV or radio copy to the program directors. Sell them on the need for public service exposure for people with hearing loss.
- 4) Briefly describe Hearing Loss Association of America programs, and activities. Bring along a fact sheet with statistics and other specific information about people with hearing loss.
- 5) Ask about the station's talk shows and other programs which would be suitable. Have a specific idea in mind -- an interview with consumers, a local celebrity, or a specialist in hearing health care; a demonstration of assistive listening devices, etc.
- 6) Once Hearing Loss Association material has been used or a presentation made, write a thank you note to the station personnel. Tell them about the response Hearing Loss Association received as a result. This will leave a positive impression, increasing your chances for similar opportunities in the future.

Sample TV/Radio Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements (PSAs) create awareness of Hearing Loss Association of America with the general public. The usual time-spot announcements run 10 seconds (19 to 23 words); 20 seconds (40 to 48 words); or 60 seconds (150 words). For greater accuracy, time the spots before submission to the station and indicate reading time at the top of the copy. Be sure to check with the station on the use of spot announcements before preparing them.

10-second spots

- Did you know that noise pollution can permanently damage your hearing? Learn to protect your hearing during May -- Better Hearing and Speech Month.
- Does your four-month-old baby react to your voice only when he or she can see you? If so, it could be the sign of a hearing loss. Find out during May -- Better Hearing and Speech Month.

20-second spots

- You're not alone. 31 million Americans have hearing loss. We're committed to helping. Please join us. Call or write today to "HLAA" -- Hearing Loss Association of America, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814 (301) 657-2248 Voice or 657-2249 TTY. (Also insert local information.)
- May is Better Hearing and Speech Month. Here are some tips to protect hearing:
 - Immunize children against childhood diseases, such as German measles and mumps, which can cause hearing loss.
 - Wear ear plugs or muffs to protect against loud noise or music. Wear helmets while playing football or boxing.
 - Take care of your ears. They connect you to the world.
- Hearing Loss: You can do something about it! If you hear but do not always understand, have trouble understanding the television or telephone, often ask others to repeat what they said, or find you are avoiding people and gatherings, you are not alone. There are more than 31 million people in this country with hearing loss. Contact a local Hearing Loss Association of America organization (name, address, and/or phone number).

- One out of every ten people, people of all ages, has some degree of irreversible hearing loss. HLAA, which stands for Hearing Loss Association of America, is a consumer organization determined to "*Make Hearing Loss an Issue of National Concern.*" Interested parties can learn more by contacting HLAA at (local information).

30-second spots

- People often talk of growing old "gracefully." Yet, a problem that often detracts from the joy and independence of the golden years is loss of hearing. At age 65, one out of every three persons experiences hearing loss. Hearing loss ranks with arthritis, high blood pressure, and heart disease as one of the most common chronic physical disabilities in this country. Fortunately, most people can be helped -- medically, surgically, with hearing aids, or through hearing rehabilitation. If you or someone you know begins to show signs of hearing loss, urge them to get professional help. Call (phone number) for more information. E-mail address here.

60-second spot

- Hello, I'm _____ (celebrity\HLAA chapter president\representative). Did you know that an estimated (10% of area population) people in (area) have a hearing loss? (Or, 31 million Americans have hearing loss?) Hearing loss is our nation's leading disability. It hinders daily communication. This invisible condition affects us and everyone around us -- our family, friends, and co-workers. It can lead to withdrawal, isolation, low self-esteem, and a host of other unhealthy feelings. The tragedy is that so few people with hearing loss have done anything about it. Yet, many can be helped -- medically, surgically, through hearing aids, or hearing rehabilitation. Don't suffer needlessly. If you suspect a hearing loss, don't delay. Contact Hearing Loss Association of America, an organization of people with hearing loss. Write to HLAA (address). Or call us at (phone number). That's (phone number). E-mail address here.

Checklist for the Publicity Committee Chairperson

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide.

- Be responsible for providing and presenting a favorable image of Hearing Loss Association of America to potential members and the community.
- Publicize activities and distribute meeting notices, membership brochures, posters, etc., through all available outlets.
- Recruit committee members to carry out publicity programs desired. Encourage the establishment of a speaker's bureau and work closely with it. Coordinate with the program and outreach chair on publicizing special programs.
- Maintain contact with committee members, providing encouragement and supplies.
- Notify members of any community programs of interest, providing date, time, and place, at meeting or via the newsletter.
- Maintain a mailing list of community people who should be informed about Hearing Loss Association activities, and a list of places where Hearing Loss Association literature can be distributed and/or displayed.
- Mail notices of significant activities to the national office for possible inclusion in the *HLAA News* or the *Hearing Loss Magazine*. (Keep a copy for chapter history.) Photographs of outreach activity are valuable. Enlist the services of a "photo bug" member to capture important events.
- **Note:** See the Chapter Development Support Materials list for additional information about publicity to supplement this section.

Program and Education Committee

Hearing Loss Association is an educational organization. Our primary purpose is to educate ourselves, our relatives, friends, and the public about the causes, nature, and complications of hearing loss and, what can be done about it. We believe that people with hearing loss can help one another, be helped, and participate successfully in society. Thus, as an educational self-help organization, our meetings are planned to accomplish this purpose.

Since our function is to educate, program committees need to learn what the needs and desires of the membership are. The best way to gauge member interest is through an interest survey. Compose a list of possible meeting topics and ask members to rank them numerically. Do this exercise annually as new topics will come about or members may want a favorite topic repeated.

Then, the program committee can begin planning the meetings members have chosen. Formats for meetings can vary. Speakers, panels, discussion, small group discussions, videos, and role-playing skits are the most popular. Plan simple educational contests or games. People from the community, professionals, family members, and Hearing Loss Association members are all possible presenters. Discussion meetings in which members share their experiences are characteristic of self-help organizations. We have a great deal to learn from one another. The major consideration when planning is to be sure **all members can be involved**.

For successful meetings, be sure people have an opportunity to:

- ✓ Make a contribution
- ✓ Learn something new
- ✓ Renew an acquaintance or make a new friend
- ✓ Have a good time

There are many types and degrees of hearing loss. Some people have a life-long loss, others have acquired a loss over many years, and some have experienced a sudden hearing loss. Some people use hearing aids and assistive listening devices; others derive no benefit from them. Some who might benefit from using hearing aids do not choose to; and others are trying to adjust to them. Some people will come wondering if "they belong." Parents of children with hearing loss come to learn. Families need to understand hearing loss and how they can cope.

We serve a broad range of problems and concerns. Certain programs will appeal more than others. This should not be an area of great concern as long as programs are educational, informative, offer variety, and meet the needs of as many members as possible. Always evaluate each program. How successful was it? Did it accomplish your objectives? A post-meeting reaction (or evaluation sheet) is a helpful tool for the program committee. Share successful programs with other affiliates and Hearing Loss Association headquarters. We offer the following possible topics for meetings: (next page)

Program Topics

Accessibility
Advocacy
Alcohol/Drug Abuse and Hearing Loss
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Assertiveness versus Aggressiveness
Assistive Listening Devices
 (Hands On or Show and Tell)
Audiograms (How to read them)
Captioning/CART
Cochlear Implants
Coping Strategies & Skits
Community Service Organizations
 (Lions, Sertoma, Optimists, etc.)
Crime Prevention
Current Issues of Concern
Education of Children with Hearing Loss
Emergency Services in your Community
Employment Concerns & Issues
Family Panel Discussion
February - HLAA Family Month
Federal offices/agencies we should know
Going to School with a Hearing Loss
Hearing Aids: The Latest Advances
Hearing Ear Dog Demonstration
Hearing Health Professional
Hearing Loss and Hospital Access
 (The HLAA Hospital Program)
January - HLAA National Month
Legal Rights
Making Our Own Neck loops
Mental Health and Hearing Loss
National Month of Hearing Screening
National Parks/Communication Access
Noise Pollution & Hearing Loss
Oral Interpreting
Otolaryngologist (ENT Doctor)
Personal Experiences
Psychological Aspects of Hearing Loss
Publications & Resources (HLAA and
 Other)
Telecommunication Relay Services
Rehabilitation Services Representative
Research (Where are We?)
Self-Help (What is it?)
HLAA Programs and Projects
Hearing Loss Magazine
HLAA Convention
Speech Reading/Sign Language/Cued
 Speech (Alternate Methods of
 Communication)
Speech Therapist (How the Voice is
 Affected by Hearing Loss)
State Commission Representatives
Stress Management
Telephones, digital wireless, cell
The "T" Coil (Not the "T" Switch)
Teachers of Children with Hearing Loss
Tinnitus
TTY Use (Text Telephones)
Tours: Manufacturer, Speech & Hearing
 Facility, Museum etc.
Traveling with a Hearing Loss

A Checklist for the Program and Education Chairperson

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide.

- Make sure that general membership meetings are geared specifically to the interests and needs of the membership.
- Organize and plan educational meetings and program activities.
- Notify the chapter of any available seminars or courses, such as speech reading, assistive listening devices, training programs such as on the Americans with Disabilities Act or assertiveness training, coping strategies, etc.
- Maintain a record of speakers and programs for future use.
- Provide a clear, concise write-up of coming programs, submitting it to the newsletter editor before the deadline.
- Work with the chapter librarian so to be able to inform members of available literature and resources.
- Provide the publicity chair with advance information in order to arrange for publicity.
- Provide pertinent information to the secretary for thank-you notes to speakers, and guests.
- Other:

Tips for Group Discussion

Discussion might be described as "organized spontaneity" -- an informal atmosphere in which people can talk freely. Discussion offers two good experiences: that of being helped by others, and that of helping others by sharing information with them. It also gives leaders a chance to become aware of those issues of major concern to members. It releases the creativity of members. Discussion meetings are planned, purposeful, and center on a particular topic or problem with a definite objective to work toward. An example might be three new coping strategies for everyone. A discussion group should be limited to not more than 15 or 20 people. Seating should be circular -- or arranged so everyone can see each other. If visual aids are used, a U-shape with visuals at the open end is a good arrangement.

Discussion leaders assist the group in accomplishing its objective but remain in the background. He or she establishes a relaxed positive atmosphere void of judgment or censure, becoming one of the group, facilitating but not getting involved in the content of what is being said -- except to clarify. The facilitator is not expected to be an expert and should say so. Facilitating a discussion requires listening carefully (possible with a good listening system) and being a keen observer. (Presidents should feel comfortable about enlisting someone to facilitate a discussion who hears well.) A facilitator raises questions rather than makes statements, senses when to intervene, moves the group forward, and repeats and summarizes when needed. "Did I understand you to say that..."

Here are some comments that guide discussion:

Response to a generalization: "Can you give us a specific example of your point?"

Someone who talks too much: "Has anyone had a similar experience?" "Is there someone who hasn't spoken who has some ideas to share?" or "Let's hear from some of the others who have not had a turn yet."

To break a disagreement: "I think we know how Jane and John feel about this. Now, who else would like to comment?"

To clarify and keep discussion on track: "As I understand it, what you have said ties in with our topic something like..."

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Accomplishments of HLAA
Advocacy and Communication Access
Advertisements - What Aren't They Telling?
Aggressiveness or Assertiveness
Barriers to Break
Benefits of HLAA Membership
Challenge to Change Attitudes
Communication Tips
Community Facilities
Coping Strategies That Work for You
Denial Syndrome
Dependence and Independence
Effects of Hearing Loss at Home, Socially,
at Work
Faking It - Who Me? I Don't Bluff!
Feelings (anger, isolation, depression, etc.)
Fear: Fight or Flight?
Getting Used to New Aids (or ALDs)
Goals for Our Group
Hearing Aids: Dresser Drawers or the Ears?
Hearing Problems with Family Members
Hearing Problems in the
Classroom/Workshop/Meeting
Hearing Loss: The Differences Between
Being Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Holidays and Coping
How to Communicate with a Hearing Person
How to Deal with Background Noise
How to Survive a Cocktail Party
How to Help the Non-Aid User
How to Work a Room
Humorous Experiences
Living Alone with a Hearing Loss
Loneliness and Hearing Loss
Most Embarrassing Moment as a HOH
Person with a Hearing Loss and How You
Rebounded
Problems of Parents of Children with Hearing
Loss
Recognizing Signs that He/She Cannot Hear
Well
Recruitment Problems
Self-Help - What is it?
Share Your Success Story
Stressful Situations
Symptoms of Hearing Loss
Trials of the Telephone
Tips to Work on Each Week (Clarity,
Eye Contact, Shouting, etc.)
Travel Experiences
Troubleshooting Your Hearing Aid
What Do You Miss the Most?
What Do You Want From HLAA?
What has HLAA Done for You? What Can
You Do for HLAA?
Withdrawal and Hearing Loss

The Newsletter

A newsletter can be the most effective and valuable outreach tool an organization can have. A newsletter provides information first and foremost, but it also stimulates and facilitates outreach. It takes little effort to drop some newsletters in a waiting room, pin one on the bulletin board, or pass on to a neighbor who knows someone who has a hearing loss. It may be a while before a group is active enough or has the funds to provide a newsletter, but do begin as soon as possible, for no matter how brief the publication, it gives the group unity and reaches out to others.

At the onset, meeting notices can be combined with a small amount of news. Content is more important than length. Today's readers are busy people bombarded by information. If a newsletter is too long (more than eight pages) or not "reader friendly," it simply won't get read. A newsletter that is not neat, well spaced, and clearly written, or has a lot of typing errors, won't get read either. Newsletters can be published monthly, bimonthly or at three or four month intervals, but a commitment of a certain number per year should be made.

A newsletter speaks to members, prospective members, and interested professionals. The image presented to professionals will have a decided effect on the chapter in potential referrals, possible speakers, professional advisors, and newsletter sponsors. The newsletter keeps members aware of what is happening within and outside of the organization, committees at work, personal and chapter achievements, educational opportunities, social events, happenings on the national level, shared experiences, etc. Stick to accurate, factual data, not gossip or "inside jokes." Avoid writing in the first person. Don't publish a text of speakers or a blow-by-blow narrative of previous meetings. You want people to want to come to meetings and participate -- not come to a meeting via a newsletter. Prospective members will go over the newsletter with a fine-tooth comb. Select a portion that appeals to them such as information about Hearing Loss Association of America, or questions and answers. Include a brief message from the president. Include news from *HLAA News*, the national newsletter published weekly on line for members across the country.

Newsletters speak for and about an organization. Strive for excellence.

A Checklist for Editors

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide.

- Is the chapter name and address prominently displayed? Is the editor's name on the publication? You are urged to use the Hearing Loss Association of America logo in the masthead. The letters H-L-A-A are always capitalized.
- Do you print complete information for prospective members...the mission of Hearing Loss Association of America, the benefits of membership, how to join, and a phone number/e-mail address for more information?
- Do you clearly state that the chapter is part of a national organization?
- Do you print the names of officers with phone numbers/e-mail addresses?
- Do you acknowledge new members?
- Does your newsletter present a picture of a dignified, purposeful, yet warm group with a purpose and wholesome activities, one that would make a person with hearing loss feel comfortable in joining?
- Is there a streak of humor here and there?
- Do you regularly print information extracted from *HLAA News* the national newsletter published weekly online, along with information about local activities, opportunities, and meetings? Do you print stories of success, of human interest, and member biographies?
Note: With the exception of the National Action page(s), special permission is required to reprint material from *Hearing Loss Magazine* in newsletters. Article titles with brief extracts may be printed to pique interest. If in doubt, contact the Hearing Loss Association national editor. Always credit sources used.
- Is your layout nicely spaced; do you allow good margins; do you use creativity and care in layouts for variety, emphasis, and intrigue?
- Is the final job (all copies) well-printed, with clean, sharp, readable type?
- Do you circulate copies around the area and to the professional community? **Note:** The Hearing Loss Association chapter development office should receive a copy.

Outreach Committee

“It's not the difference we have...It's the difference we make.”

Once an organization has a strong nucleus and is functioning smoothly, outreach efforts should begin. Outreach promotes participation, encourages unity, deters group apathy, creates community awareness, and provides social outlets. Outreach makes a difference. Projects and activities may be short-term or continuous, and one or several may be in motion at all times.

While outreach is very important to Hearing Loss Association, and the list of possible pursuits is endless, it is wise to move cautiously, and choose realistic projects. Assess the readiness of the group as a whole. Success will depend on membership involvement. While it is exciting to develop creative plans, if a plan cannot be implemented effectively, it would be better to concentrate on something that can be achieved now. In short, begin with smaller or simple activities and projects, building to greater heights.

Clearly, outreach will be specific to the area where you live. In planning, keep these questions in mind:

- What is the goal of the project? What will it accomplish?
- Is the outreach consistent with the Hearing Loss Association mission and our priorities of access, awareness, education, and employment?
- How many people will it reach?
- What are the jobs that need to be done? How many people will be required to participate?
- What is the time sequence and the target date for completion?
- How much funding (if any) will be needed? Where will it come from?

Suggestions for Outreach

- 1) Participate in area health fairs. (Material to distribute and display is available free from the national office.)
- 2) Help to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by introducing the need for assistive listening systems in the community. Offer to help evaluate prospective systems in facilities. (Contact the national office for information you may need.)
- 3) Work with professionals and fraternal organizations to provide free hearing screenings.
- 4) Participate in the Hearing Loss Association National Month of Hearing Screening.
- 5) Sponsor speech reading, sign language, or coping strategy classes.
- 6) Plan a party or special event for children with hearing loss.

- 7) Enlist parents of children with hearing loss and active and retired teachers to present a Teacher Training Workshop, an awareness training program for classroom teachers designed to help them recognize symptoms of hearing loss, and meet the special communication needs of children with hearing loss. Contact Hearing Loss Association national for the *Teacher Training Workshop Program Packet*.
- 8) Begin a group for teens. Include plenty of fun events and socializing.
- 9) Develop a hearing aid bank. Fund an assistive listening device for a person in need, school, nursing home, etc.
- 10) Conduct workshops on assistive listening devices.
- 11) Visit libraries to acquaint them with Hearing Loss Association. Set up a library display. Encourage library membership in Hearing Loss Association. Contact Hearing Loss Association national for the *Library Lift-Off Packet*.
- 12) Investigate instruction in group speech reading, cued speech, coping strategies, assertiveness training, "make your own" devices workshop, etc.
- 13) Conduct "mini-meetings" for elderly people in senior centers, retirement residences. Take an induction loop and all the assistive listening devices you can collect for a hands-on demonstration. Contact Hearing Loss Association National for a *Senior Citizen Program Packet*.
- 14) Visit long-term care facilities and nursing homes as a friend to patients with hearing loss. Acquaint yourself with the staff and evaluate the problems and needs. Offer to put on an in-service workshop.
- 15) Initiate the Hearing Loss Association 4-Point Hospital Program in your community. Contact the national office for the *Hospital Program Facilitator Packet*.
- 16) November 29th is Hearing Loss Association of America Founder's Day. Throughout the month of November, Hearing Loss Association affiliates celebrate. They are also asked to participate in a fundraising project to help support the chapter development office of Hearing Loss Association national.
- 17) May is Better Hearing and Speech Month. Plan ahead for a project that will bring attention to the issues of hearing loss. Ask your governor/mayor to issue a proclamation, implement publicity in newspapers, on the web, on radio, and TV. (See **Publicity**.) Place attractive displays in libraries. Initiate and participate in a hearing health fair with service providers. This is a good time to go into the schools with lessons on hearing loss and/or noise awareness.

- 18) Hold a community workshop geared to consumers, professionals, employers, and employees. Host a state Hearing Loss Association conference.
- 19) Canvass your area: Are amplified phones available in public places, large stores, hotels, and hospitals? Do public utilities, emergency services, and other critical locations have TTYs? Is accessibility well publicized with the correct signage? Develop a resource directory of places with assistive listening systems. Suggest to the telephone company that symbols be added to these listings in the "blue" pages of phone directories.
- 20) Does your state have an early Infant Hearing Assessment Program? Are existing laws being implemented? State commissions, councils, regulatory and advisory boards usually have consumer slots. Let your interest in participating be known.
- 21) See that Hearing Loss Association is included in all state resource directories. Develop a resource guide.
- 22) Encourage movie theaters to show captioned movies. Send letters of support and thanks for captioning to national television networks, advertisers, and the companies who sponsor captioning.
- 23) Initiate "55 Alive" driver training or CPR classes for people with hearing loss.
- 24) Adopt a school. Initiate a scholarship program.
- 25) Give Hearing Loss Association membership as gifts where they will be appreciated and useful.
- 26) Obtain membership brochures from Hearing Loss Association national to distribute to professionals and organizations in the community that have an interest in hearing loss. Hearing Loss Association offers special benefits for members of the hearing health profession who join as professional members.

Checklist for Outreach Committee Chair

Make a copy of this checklist and use it as a guide.

- Organize and guide all outreach, coordinating with the president, publicity, and program and education chair.
- Make an effort to involve all chapter members.
- Receive approval of a majority vote before making any binding commitments.
- Provide a clear, concise write-up of activities and submit them to the newsletter editor before the deadline.
- Arrange for photos of outreach events. Submit reports, including photos to the editor and publicity chair for publication. Send a duplicate copy to the national office for possible use in the *Hearing Loss Magazine*.
- Keep a record of all activities for future reference.
- Use Hearing Loss Association national resources for outreach projects as appropriate.
- Work with those involved with publicity to establish and organize a Speakers Bureau.

Budget/Finance Committee

The treasurer often serves as chair of the budget and finance committee. A budget is a tool to use in planning an approach to objectives. It can be revised at any time as changes warrant.

Since young organizations have no historical record to analyze, it is difficult to establish an accurate budget the first year. However, a tentative budget of basic expenses and projected income can be set up and revised periodically as income and expenses are actualized. Over a two or three-year period, a trend can be observed making it possible to reasonably predict income and expenses for a year based on a projected number of members.

With a budget, fixed expenses such as mailings, newsletter costs, Founder's Day, convention delegate, etc., can be provided for first. The balance of funds available may then be distributed or impounded for other needs, or the chapter can plan to raise additional funds for specific needs.

A prepared budget should be submitted to the membership for approval and, thereafter, the approved amount disbursed by the treasurer. Any additional monies should be specifically approved. It is wise to plan for unexpected expenses by keeping a cushion in the account.

The most common category in the income section is support income. Be sure to make it clear that chapter support is not an Hearing Loss Association membership fee and that membership in Hearing Loss Association includes membership in a chapter. Other income sources might be donations, newsletter subscriptions, raffles, proceeds from fundraising events and special activities. Budgeting ensures that funds are spent wisely. A sample budget follows.

Sample Annual Budget

Fiscal Year January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003

INCOME:

Member Support	
25 members at \$10.00	\$250.00
Outreach Grant	150.00
Fundraising (annual garage sale)	185.00
Other (50/50 raffle)	<u>75.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$660.00

EXPENSES:

Newsletter (postage & copying every 2 months)	\$240.00
Mailing	90.00
Publicity (Printing)	40.00
Listening System Payments	55.00
Non-appropriated Funds for Projects	<u>235.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$660.00

Nominating Committee

In new organizations, officer positions are usually filled voluntarily or by appointment. By the end of the first year, membership should be sufficient to allow the formation of a nominating committee selected by the full membership.

Nominating Committee Guidelines

The Nominating Committee:

- Shall elect its own chair. (Three members suggested.)
- Shall search the membership for qualified nominees and determine willingness and capability to serve. (A nominating committee member may be a candidate.)
- Shall provide a slate of candidates to be announced to the membership at least 20 days prior to the close of nominations.
- May be asked to function as a standing committee to assist in filling officer vacancies that may occur during the year.
- Presidents may not serve on this committee.
- Any vacancy on the nominating committee is filled by appointment.

Elections

An election for permanent officers should be held after the members get to know one another, and feel they are ready to have officers. This usually happens in about a year. Subsequently, regular elections of officers will be held yearly or each second year.

Candidates must be current committed members of Hearing Loss Association of America. With the exception of secretary, officers should have a hearing loss or be parents of children with hearing loss.

Election dates are announced at least 45 days in advance and appropriately publicized. When floor nominations are not permitted at the election meeting, the notice of election meeting containing the slate provided by the nominating committee shall be distributed at least 20 days before the last meeting at which nominations from the floor are to be permitted. Candidates nominated from the floor must meet the same eligibility requirements as candidates nominated by the nominating committee. Good attendance at an election meeting should be encouraged to assure a quorum (the number of members that must be present for business to be conducted) is present. It is better to hold elections early in the meeting to be sure other agenda items do not deny the election process the time and attention it deserves.

The existing administration supervises the election. It prepares the ballots, supervises ballot counting, and prepares election results. If there is more than one candidate for any office, elections are by written ballot (versus a show of hands). Absentee ballots are not allowed unless bylaws provide for them. Voting may not begin until nominations have been closed.

Election Procedures

- 1) Have parliamentarian read from the Chapter bylaws/Standing Rules section pertaining to nominations and elections.

- 2) Nominating committee report and nominations:
 - (a) Chair asks nominating committee to read its report.
 - (b) Chair rereads nominating committee report completely, omitting the committee names.
 - (c) Chair calls for nominations from the floor if permissible.
 - (d) Chair asks, "Are there further nominations for any office?"
 - (e) When no further nominations are available, the bychair "declares the nominations closed."

- 3) Election by ballot:
 - (a) Assure that a quorum is present.
 - (b) Chair instructs assembly how to mark distributed ballots.
 - (c) Chair presents names placed in nomination once again to assembly.
 - (d) Voters deposit ballots in a central box, or chair has teller collect ballots.
 - (e) Chair inquires, "Have all voted who wish to vote?"
 - (f) Chair declares, "The polls closed."
 - (g) Upon completion of the ballot count, the chair reads the report completely and declares each officer duly elected.

Chair: "The following persons are declared the duly elected officers of the _____
Chapter for the year(s) _____."

President _____

Vice President(s) _____

Secretary(s) _____

Treasurer _____

If appropriate, the newly elected officers may take office immediately after the elections are final. If a ceremony is desired then, or at a later date, Hearing Loss Association national can provide a sample text to follow or use as a base for your own ideas.

Parliamentarian

This is an appointed position for a member who is familiar with, or would like to learn about, parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedures are basic rules that help to get things done fairly, while protecting members' rights. Parliamentarians act as advisors by interpreting parliamentary procedure during the business portion of general membership meetings or at other business meetings. They call attention to any procedural errors that may seriously affect the rights of a member.

The four basic principles of parliamentary law are:

- 1) Courtesy and justice for all.
- 2) Consider one thing at a time.
- 3) The minority must be heard.
- 4) The majority must prevail.

A basic chart for processing a main motion or resolution:

- 1) A member secures the floor, rises, addresses the chair (gives name in large assembly), and is recognized by the chair. The chair recognizes the member by name.
- 2) To expedite the meeting, no business is discussed without a motion. A member introduces business by making a motion ("I move..."). Another member seconds the motion. If not seconded, the chair states that the motion has died for lack of a second. If duly made and seconded, the chair puts the question before the assembly and introduces discussion ("Is there any discussion?").
- 3) The discussion continues until:
 - a) The chair implies there is no further constructive discussion.
 - b) A member moves to close debate. (This motion needs a second, then the chair calls for the question* and secures a vote. The motion needs a two-thirds majority to pass. If the motion "to close debate" passes, the chair immediately secures a vote on the original motion.) Once discussion or debate ceases, the chair secures the vote through one of the basic rules of voting.

**Call for the question is not a parliamentary motion. It merely means that one member feels there has been sufficient discussion. This situation is handled by the chair asking the assembly, "Is there objection to calling the question? If not, we will vote on the motion." If there is objection, the discussion continues.*

Librarian

Too little is known about hearing loss. Hearing Loss Association of America is an educational organization, devoted to the collection and dissemination of knowledge relevant to hearing loss. Our mission is to help members become well-informed so that they will be well-equipped, as well as encouraged, to make individual and group choices. A librarian assumes a creative, essential role to present a well-rounded collection of information to the membership and create a thirst for additional information. He or she should also interact with the program and outreach committees. A conscientious librarian will explore and gather resources and keep the membership aware and up-to-date. (See **Organizational Support: Resources.**)

Suggestions for the Librarian

- 1) A librarian will want to maintain a collection of the Hearing Loss Association magazines, *Hearing Loss Magazine*.
- 2) Set a goal for each meeting to have some new information available at a display table or as a handout.
- 3) Seek an effective means of keeping members informed of new materials, such as through a brief presentation at each meeting, in a newsletter, handouts/announcements for attendees. Institute a book/article loan system. Many chapters also have a lending library of assistive listening devices.
- 4) Add regularly to resource information by collecting data from local and state channels and Hearing Loss Association national. Most information will come to the leader, so check with her or him for this material.
- 5) Encourage membership to add to and use the library.
- 6) Investigate local libraries to learn what resources are available or what support can be obtained for the community of people with hearing loss. The more you ask for, the more your library may be able to get for you. Virtually every community and town in the United States has access to some library service, via city, county, or state systems. Materials can be obtained through inter-library loans. A useful project is to build up a local library collection of information about hearing loss as well as to provide intensive reference support for the entire community.

7) Library material may be incorporated into a notebook available for all to browse through.

The following categories are suggested:

Hearing Loss Association of America: Basic information on HLAA, its history, bylaws, structure, organization, etc.

Medicine: Articles on the physiology of hearing, medical aspects of hearing loss.

Professional Help: Lists of physicians, clinics, audiologists, hearing aid specialists, national organizations concerned with hearing loss.

Psychology, Sociology: Coping materials, inspirational personal narratives or articles of particular interest to specific groups such as parents of hearing impaired children, workplace issues, etc.

Hearing Aids: How to select them, adjust to them, maintain them. Articles on new features.

Assistive Listening and Alerting Devices: Varieties, sources, and catalogs.

Other Helps: Cochlear Implants, Speech reading, cued speech, hearing ear dog program, practical tips, and family support.

Legislation: Federal and state legislation/regulations affecting people with hearing loss.

Resource Materials: Lists of captioned films and videos, book reviews, data on potential speakers, or program materials.

Local Services/Programs: Information about local services/resources, lists of places with assistive listening systems (PALS), vocational rehabilitation, library services, etc.

Historian

Keeping a history may not seem important to a young organization, but time flies and people come and go. Finding someone to be a historian will be important later. (A number of older affiliates have had difficulty trying to put a history together after five or six years.) A history of the organization can be a consideration in seeking local grants or other funds. Some items to keep in a scrapbook include:

- 1) Names and photos of original members.
- 2) Names of officers and committee chairs and their terms.
- 3) Date chapter receives national recognition and other initial dates.
- 4) Publicity received.
- 5) A record of outreach events, projects, special/social events, etc., including photographs.
- 6) Biographical sketches of members.

Assistive Devices Committee

In 1979 when Hearing Loss Association of America was founded, assistive devices were unknown and scarce. For consumers and industry, the 1980's were the burgeoning era of assistive devices. During the 1990's and as rapid advances in technology continue in the new century, the effect will be felt by people everywhere. The passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in July of 1990, with inclusions for people with hearing loss, provided the opportunity for consumers and industry to further their knowledge and use of assistive devices.

We know from experience that assistive devices, whether they are individual systems, large-area systems, or alerting devices, are popular meeting topics. Indeed, learning about them and trying them is, for some people, a breakthrough in how they can hear and understand conversation. There is something useful for almost everyone, despite the degree of hearing loss.

Every chapter member should become conversant on the subject of devices "beyond the hearing aid." The most enthusiastic or technically inclined members will become a "built in" committee, and members will gravitate to these knowledgeable persons for advice and information. Chapters should begin by assembling an information file on alerting and assistive listening devices and systems. Hearing Loss Association national can help by providing resources on devices. Since technology changes so rapidly, this manual does not go into specific details.

The following list includes some chapter activities:

- Establish a library of devices for members to try and/or borrow. They usually begin with less expensive devices. An initial display can be obtained for \$300. When finances permit, additions are added such as infrared or FM personal assistance sets. A few chapters have established and operate devices demonstration centers. Others have been successful in helping local libraries provide devices that patrons may borrow.
- Arrange and host local or area-wide device workshops and demonstrations. Local representatives of manufacturing companies, hearing health professionals, or nearby businesses will put on the show. You simply need to set a time, a place, and arrange the publicity.
- Devote a little time at each meeting to "show and tell" one or two assistive devices. An array of devices can be overwhelming for newcomers or people not technically oriented.
- Review government regulations and ADA guidelines that mandate communication access.

Places With Assistive Listening Systems (PALS)

Chapters are encouraged to find where places with assistive listening systems (PALS) are located in their area and urge members to ask for and use them. If a public place does not have an assistive listening system, individuals should recommend that one be installed. Letters of appreciation to accessible facilities are strongly encouraged.

With the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all public facilities, all state and government offices, courts, schools, and most places of business must provide communication access. Most display the **International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss**. (Houses of worship are not covered by the ADA. Contact Hearing Loss Association for sources of details on the ADA and other resources.)

Assembling and distributing a directory of PALS in your area can be useful to members as well as the community. Some affiliates publish partial or complete lists in their newsletters. In one locale, PALS are listed in the blue pages of the telephone directory. Most playhouses, movie theaters, and places of worship include the International Symbol of Access and the International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss in newspaper listings and other publicity.

International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss



National Programs

Parent Involvement

Hearing Loss Association wants to help assure a secure future for today's children, as well as tomorrow's Hearing Loss Association. Parents of children with hearing loss face many challenges. We want to offer them our support, encourage their membership, and include them in all we do. Parent vitality and sense of urgency add an important dimension to Hearing Loss Association. Chapters can offer unique support to parents. Therefore, Hearing Loss Association national encourages chapters to reach out to parents of children with hearing loss and enlist their active participation.

Adults with hearing loss and parents of children with hearing loss have the same sense of hurt and loss. They need each other. Parents need and want to understand the educational, social, and emotional implications of hearing loss. Hearing Loss Association members who freely share their feelings can open doors of enlightenment and understanding, benefiting themselves and parents baffled by hearing loss. We can teach effective communication, coping strategies, and serve as role models for children with hearing loss -- many of whom rarely see adults with hearing aids!

Many parents are faced with difficult decisions. They must investigate all the different types of medical possibilities and educational needs. The concerns and issues affect the entire family. Through Hearing Loss Association, parents can find support and understanding. Here is a sampling of what we can provide:

- Guidelines of minimum education standards and guidelines to assess the quality of educational programs for children as well as ongoing monitoring.
- Support as they pursue appropriate education.
- The importance of serving on local, regional, and state special education advisory councils.
- Contact with other parents of children with hearing loss.

Suggestions for Parent Involvement

- 1) Obtain and study Public Law 94-142 and your state's special education law and implementing regulations.
- 2) Monitor the quality of educational services available for children who have hearing loss in local schools. What support services and classroom modifications would be useful?

- 3) Hold social activities for children, their parents, and adults with hearing loss. Schedule meeting topics of interest to parents.
- 4) Hearing Loss Association has a *Teacher Training Workshop Packet*, an awareness training program for classroom teachers. Hearing Loss Association members, especially teachers with hearing loss and parents of children with hearing loss, will be interested in making their local school systems aware of the program and helping to implement it. The program helps teachers recognize symptoms of hearing loss, and provides valuable suggestions to help meet the special communication needs of children with hearing loss. The packet contains a suggested outline for workshops, including: Visual aids; the *Getting Through* audiotape to simulate hearing loss; the book, *Our Forgotten Children*; Tips for Teachers in the Classroom; and other Hearing Loss Association materials.
- 5) Provide the chapter newsletter with occasional reports.
- 6) Volunteer to be a role model. Through health/education agencies, meet weekly with children to talk, go over homework, play games; or just care.
- 7) "Adopt a School." If the school has no identified children with hearing loss, focus on an increased public awareness of hearing loss, how to communicate with people with hearing loss, and hearing conservation.

Founder's Day

Hearing Loss Association of America was incorporated November 29, 1979. In 1984, Hearing Loss Association of America established Founder's Day, the annual celebration of our birthday anniversary to be observed by chapters during the month of November. It is a time to commemorate our beginnings, look back on our truly extraordinary achievements and celebrate the privilege of being a part of this great organization. Founder's Day is a time of gratitude, a time we remember "all our Novembers."

It is also an opportunity to express appreciation in a practical way. It is the single annual occasion during which chapters are asked to raise funds to send to the Bethesda office to help support the Hearing Loss Association chapter development department. This department, unlike other departments of Hearing Loss Association, does not have an ongoing source of income. It is a major department, yet dependent on Hearing Loss Association for financial support for extensive programs, publications and activity to assist new and existing chapters.

Chapters are asked to celebrate with a project, special event, social celebration, or simply use accumulated treasury funds. They are also asked to include family, friends, neighbors and others in the community. Early in the fall, the development department of Hearing Loss Association sends Founder's Day information to each chapter. While the amount to give is optional, and some organizations give very generously, a minimum of \$10 per each local member would help provide a major portion of the chapter development annual budget. When planning for the year, each chapter will want to plan for time and attention to Founder's Day. Many chapters find having a Founder's Day committee helpful.

May – Better Hearing and Speech Month

The Council for Better Hearing and Speech Month evolved from a 1978 meeting of nine hearing and speech organizations exploring ways to work together to promote a message of help and hope broad enough to serve as a national campaign under which organizations could promote a variety of help and services to people with communicative disorders. A public information program was the choice, and May, Better Hearing and Speech Month, the vehicle.

Through the media -- which gives special attention to celebrities and children -- each year a celebrity with a hearing and/or speech problem along with a national poster child are the prime spokes-people for the campaign. Twenty-seven organizations are Council members. (Note: Hearing Loss Association originally received a year's gift membership to the Better Hearing and Speech Month Council. Subsequently membership was discontinued because it was expensive for a consumer organization. However, we participate as much as possible and support the occasion as we are able.)

Each year Hearing Loss Association joins the organizations in a public information campaign. Public education efforts such as this depend on the media for much of their impact. See **Publicity** for sample public service announcements relating to Better Hearing and Speech Month. Hearing Loss Association will provide materials to help with awareness efforts.

January – HLAA Membership Month

January is Hearing Loss Association of America Membership Month, an occasion to build a meeting around Membership and information and about Hearing Loss Association. It is a time to help members grasp a clear understanding of Hearing Loss Association -- our purposes, goals and current issues and activities. It is an occasion to talk about the home office and our organizational structure. The benefits of Hearing Loss Association membership should be discussed, stressing that we practice a self-help philosophy in which every member is part of a participating team of an organization **of** (not for) people with hearing loss. The purpose in a program revolving around Hearing Loss Association Membership Month is to help members gain a better understanding of Hearing Loss Association, feel closer to and be proud of *their* organization.

February – Family Month

February is Hearing Loss Association of America Family Month, an opportunity to have family members participate in a meeting, and a time to express appreciation to them. There are many ways to do this. You could have a program where members talk about the help and support they have received from family, honoring their family member(s) in some fashion. A program presented by a panel of family members or couples is always very successful. Hearing family members need time to express their feelings and learn some coping strategies too. If a few hours of meeting time does not seem adequate, a special workshop can be planned. Professionals who specialize in family treatment (especially the effects of hearing loss) can be asked to facilitate the program.

Hearing Loss Association National Family Involvement Award winners are the highlight of the January/February *Hearing Loss* Magazine. Announcements of this award, along with the criteria, appear in a spring issue.

Library Lift-Off

Library Lift-Off introduces material on hearing loss and Hearing Loss Association into one of our most important information sources: public libraries. It supports our goal to reach out to people with hearing loss, with the added benefit of providing publicity for Hearing Loss Association. The program has two parts that support and compliment each other, but each part may also be used as a separate project. It will appeal to members who enjoy libraries and working with library personnel. Ideally, one or two members will be Library Lift-Off coordinators who, in turn, will recruit other members.

Part I provides the information tools to encourage the addition of a collection of print and non-print materials in our community's library system specifically related to the needs of people with hearing loss. It also includes data to ensure that the library system is communication accessible.

Part II supports awareness of hearing loss. It is a basic guide on setting up a library display of educational and informational materials about hearing loss and the organization that can help – Hearing Loss Association. Request this program from Hearing Loss Association national and indicate how many libraries you will need materials for.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990, President George Bush signed landmark federal legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA gives civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities that are like those provided to individuals on the basis of race, sex, national origin, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities. The ADA has five sections: Title I - Employment; Title II - State and Local Government Operations; Title III - Public Accommodations; Title IV - Telecommunications Relay Services; and, Title V - Miscellaneous.

Hearing Loss Association of America was active in defining and assuring that sections of the ADA included provisions for deaf and hard of hearing people. Although the law is "on the books," the provisions of the ADA are only being implemented, enforced, and ensured as citizens set the law in motion. Compliance begins at the grassroots level. We must vocalize our needs and let others know how they can help.

It is important to provide education about the ADA to individual members so they will know how to take an active role in awareness and educating others about the law. Hearing Loss Association chapters should also take an active role in implementing the ADA in their communities.

Note: Hearing Loss Association of America also has other programs: They include, but are not limited to, a Hospital Program, Leadership Training, Hearing Assistive Technology Training, and more. Interested members should contact the Hearing Loss Association office for information about these programs as well as any other existing or new programs.

Awards

During Hearing Loss Association conventions and throughout each year, Hearing Loss Association gives awards and recognitions in a variety of categories to chapters, state Hearing Loss Association organizations and individuals. At the end of each year, all chapter and state leaders or contacts receive a packet announcing the coming year's awards.

Categories and criteria for awards are developed by the Hearing Loss Association of America Awards Committee. Awards are intended to recognize chapters that have capitalized on their own resources. Judges examine applications, considering the locality, organizational size, and other factors, so that all chapters have equal opportunity.

Chapter/state awards include, but are not limited to: Outreach (Access and Advocacy), Education, Hearing Loss Association Support (such as Founder's Day), Professional Advisory Support, Outstanding Young Adult, Newsletter excellence, The Spirit of HLAA, and Family Support. The latter two and other individual awards are featured in the *Hearing Loss* magazine.

Chapters/states are encouraged to develop a local awards program to honor and express appreciation to outstanding members and/or people who have been exceptionally helpful. A program of community awards to individuals, institutions or facilities is excellent public relations. It is also a fine publicity tool newspapers will be interested in.

Convention Delegates

An Hearing Loss Association of America convention experience cannot be beat. It is unparalleled fun and a unique opportunity for Hearing Loss Association members from all over to meet and share with one another. However, the most valuable element of a convention is its excellence of education.

Affiliates should encourage all members to attend. Complete information and registration materials are on the Hearing Loss Association website (www.hearingloss.org) early each year and published in the March/April issue of *Hearing Loss*. Conventions are held in a different location each year so people in the region will be able to take advantage of attending closer to home.

The importance of each chapter sending one or more delegates cannot be stressed enough. Delegate(s) should be chosen by vote of the membership and clearly identified as a delegate from the named chapter when registering. Delegate ribbons will be attached to convention badges. If possible, delegates will have reserved seating at business meetings. If needed, delegates may accept any awards and recognitions their chapter may receive.

A portion, if not all, of a delegate's expenses should be funded by the chapter. The number of delegates is a local decision; however, Hearing Loss Association recommends no more than five, or one delegate for every ten members. Delegate(s) names should be entered into the meeting minutes so that any personal money they spend can be deducted on individual itemized tax returns.

Delegates should attend general sessions, business meetings and workshops beneficial to chapter development so they will be prepared to share the experience and information with their chapter. Delegates should be advised in advance of workshops to attend that have potential benefit for the chapter.

Hearing loss should not be a factor in the selection of delegate(s), because regardless of a member's hearing loss, all attendees will be able to hear, or read all that is going on due to an array of assistive listening devices and systems, real-time captioning and, on request, interpreters. The convening of members from all over the world is a unique, stimulating affair. Please urge attendance. It has been a high point of many people's lives.

Region and State Conferences

Hearing Loss Association of America is divided into ten regions. Each region includes from four to seven states. Leaders in these regions have begun to hold occasional regional conferences. A growing number of states hold state conferences. Most are held bi-annually. A portion of the proceeds from each event provides seed money to begin plans for the next conference. These conferences are usually two-day events held over a weekend. They include a choice of workshops, exhibits, plenary sessions, and a banquet. Hearing Loss Association national staff or board of trustee members are invited to attend most of these conferences to give a keynote address or conduct a workshop.

Both regional and state conferences allow members who cannot attend a national convention an opportunity to gain from an event that is similar but on a smaller scale. The experience frequently motivates members to attend a national convention.

Before beginning to plan a regional or state conference, please contact the Hearing Loss Association office about plans so the conference month does not conflict with Hearing Loss Association national events or the events of other organizations in the area. The Hearing Loss Association office has guidelines available for those planning conferences based on the experiences of other states.

Advocacy

Ask five people what "advocacy" is and you will get five different definitions. For some, it is synonymous with legislation. Yet this is only one aspect of advocacy. The concept of advocacy is much broader in application. By definition, "advocacy" is speaking or acting on behalf of oneself or others, or on behalf of a particular issue. As Hearing Loss Association members, we are self-advocates. Individually or in groups, we advocate to keep people with hearing loss in the mainstream. We do this mainly through education. In addition to educating ourselves, our families, our friends, and the public about communication accessibility, we educate our legislators.

Access is the right and ability to participate in life. We advocate for communication access to be able to hear and understand in any circumstance. **Advocacy can help create the environment for access.** Through education, raising awareness, legislation, and changing attitudes, our requests for equipment and services will be better understood and cooperation more likely. Hearing Loss Association national is continually advocating on behalf of the membership. Frequently, our position on issues is solicited, and we interact with other organizations and federal agencies on behalf of the Hearing Loss Association membership.

How Hearing Loss Association of America Helps with Advocacy Efforts:

- Provides information on any current national issues and laws.
- Provides guidance on how to contact your senators and representatives.
- Provides guidance on local and state advocacy projects on how to proceed.
- Puts you in touch with other chapters who have completed or are in the process of undertaking similar projects.
- Helps you research the facts, a requisite to back up your advocacy efforts.

Federal Legislation

Hearing Loss Association is a powerful voice on behalf of people with hearing loss. It is important that we not dissipate that power by ineffective lobbying. Because proposed federal legislation can have pitfalls for the unwary, chapters must coordinate and consult with the Hearing Loss Association office before initiating advocacy efforts. Each affiliate should become aware of the general commitment of its state's senators and representatives to support the welfare

of people with disabilities. Advocacy coordinators should keep tabs on the voting records of their representatives on matters of concern to people with hearing loss.

Note: The national office decides the organization's position on federal advocacy. All federal advocacy action must be coordinated with Hearing Loss Association national before initiation. Periodically, Hearing Loss Association organizations may be called on to support the national position.

State Legislation/Action

Broad federal legislation allows states to work within the parameters of the law to establish their own guidelines. Hearing Loss Association organizations can have impact on state legislation. Identify the membership of state legislature committee(s) concerned with matters affecting people with hearing loss. Learn what state office is charged with services for people with hearing loss. Does the state have an office or Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People? Are there task forces, advisory councils? Are there seats for people with hearing loss and are they holding them? Are hard of hearing people as equally represented as people who are deaf?

Research what your state provides or requires in licensing or certification of hearing aid dispensers, vocational rehabilitation agencies, technology access programs, state disability laws on communication accessibility for people with hearing loss, and so on. Place the organization on mailing lists (e-mail and snail mail) of publications relating to hearing loss or disabilities and for legislative announcements of proposed new legislation and hearings.

Set up a committee to learn these things and take appropriate action. Whenever possible, plan to testify on behalf of the hard of hearing population. Anytime, but especially during an election year, invite district and state legislators to speak at meetings. This will identify Hearing Loss Association of America as a constituency he or she is going to be responsive to, and provide them with facts about the issues and concerns we have. You will find elected officials most responsive.

Local Legislation/Action

Study the local governing body. Find out if public hearing rooms are communication accessible for hard of hearing people versus the more frequent emphasis on sign language

interpreters for deaf people. Push requests for public area assistive listening systems, compatible and amplified public telephones and TTYs in public service.

Develop a resource book of services for people with hearing loss. Put together a directory of communication accessible facilities in your community. Offer to do presentations on the special needs of people with hearing loss to representatives of key city elements, such as the police and fire departments, city council, courts, hospitals, the telephone company, and civic groups.

Advocacy Tips

Do not be timid in approaching legislators, preferably in person, or by letter or email message. As people with hearing loss, we are the experts where our interests are concerned. Legislators and officials may not know about our problems. You must be specific and stick to tangible, practical subject matter. Let legislators know that you would like to work with their staffs to address the problems of people with hearing loss. Do not ask for too much. Isolate issues and proceed one step at a time. Above all, follow up on your actions. Identify a staff person responsible for the particular issue. Let that individual get to know you, the organization, and about the Hearing Loss Association movement. On this basis, they will take time to respond to your needs.

Work with other members. Don't work alone. Advocacy is an activity where a collective union of members can make a big difference.

Caution: Any individual has the right to advocate his or her position on matters of interest to that individual. However, no individual has the right to use their Hearing Loss Association of America membership, the Hearing Loss Association name, logo, stationery, or to represent Hearing Loss Association in any manner which is not in agreement with Hearing Loss Association policy as determined by its board of trustees, or, if the policy is unknown, without first consulting the national office.

The Hearing Loss Association national office may be able to provide guidance and advice, and verify accuracy of information. Also, a campaign may be one other chapters will want to simultaneously pursue. Send a complete report of all advocacy efforts to the Hearing Loss Association office. It may help others and be appropriate for the *HLAA News*.

Social Events

Social outlets for people with hearing loss are needed and encouraged. We need places where we feel comfortable and will really enjoy ourselves. We need outlets in which there is no feeling of stigma or desire to withdraw. While monthly educational meetings provide this atmosphere, Hearing Loss Association chapters enjoy planning other socially-oriented activities that will bring them together.

Younger members may be more active socially, but all ages can enjoy each other. Hearing Loss Association parties are lively and successful. We are committed to helping family members cope with problems of living with relatives with hearing loss. In planning social events, always include spouses and relatives of members. They need to relate to each other too. Many feel initially uncomfortable at group occasions until they become more at ease in communicating with people with hearing loss.

Projects and social activities may combine well. Perhaps the chapter has raised funds to have a listening system installed in a local theater. You could then go as a group to enjoy a movie or a play. (Be sure to seek publicity.) This is a treat for the person who has had a minimum of social outlets, or few in an environment where they feel at ease.

Holiday wine and cheese parties, picnics, and potluck suppers are always successful. If there is also a need to raise funds, charge a nominal fee, a quarter for each person, or include games or a raffle.

Social events require planning and cooperation. A few well-executed events a year will be far more successful than a continuous string of events. Judge the level of group enthusiasm through a questionnaire, or show of hands. Coordinate with the outreach coordinator for events that will combine well. You will enjoy the reward of knowing you have contributed significantly toward an element in life we all need, and not all people with hearing loss have a lot of: fun!

Organizational Support

Professional Advisory Committees

Why Every Affiliate Needs One and How to Set One Up

While Hearing Loss Association of America is a self-help organization, we are also alert to our need for professional advice and support. During the past two decades, research has indicated the relationship between self-help groups and professionals is expanding. Research also indicates an increasing number of professionals recognize the positive affects of self-help groups.

A Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) can provide valuable professional counsel and guidance to officers and members. Many hearing health professionals have been instrumental in helping to start Hearing Loss Association chapters. They appreciate and understand the assistance that only those who experience hearing loss can provide to each other and know that peer support groups compliment their services. They are interested in the welfare of Hearing Loss Association and happy to be of assistance.

Professionals are careful not to dominate a chapter, knowing this diminishes the benefits of emotional support and education that can help people with hearing loss move toward a better quality of life. They understand that the members must lead and that all members need to take responsibility for their organization. If they are instrumental in starting a chapter, they know it is important to back away from any leading roles they may have assumed to help get started. They also know Hearing Loss Association chapters may not be used as vehicles for business.

Who/When?

Invite the help of professional advisors as soon as possible. Definitely secure professional advisors within six months before or after becoming a chapter. We suggest three to five members to serve a specified tenure not to exceed two years. However, tenure can be renewed if desired. Terms may be staggered to provide group continuity. Professional advisors may come from the fields of hearing health, such as ENT physicians, audiologists, hearing health specialists, or be rehabilitation counselors, educators, people in the business community, ministry, community leaders, or others.

Why?

- 1) To supply timely information and help with technical questions.
- 2) To make recommendations for action that will result in organizational progress and suggest new programs and projects.
- 3) To provide information on any innovations relative to people with hearing loss and make suggestions where and how the chapter might be more effective.
- 4) To give community stature to the organization.
- 5) To serve on panels or as speakers when requested.
- 6) To attend meetings of the officers when invited.
- 7) To observe at affiliate meetings. (Be sure to let them know they are welcome.)
- 8) To aid in resources and provide referrals to Hearing Loss Association. (The Hearing Loss Association office answers daily calls from professionals in hearing health who want to refer clients to us.)

How?

- 1) Select advisors from professionals who have demonstrated an interest in Hearing Loss Association and are familiar with problems relating to people with hearing loss, able to identify problem areas, and capable of lending direction that promotes progress.
- 2) Write to those people selected and follow up with a personal visit.
(See Appendix, Sample Professional Advisor Recruitment Letter.)
- 3) When you have received a firm commitment, make arrangements for the group of professionals to meet with your officers to discuss the goals of Hearing Loss Association.
- 4) Professional advisors should be members of Hearing Loss Association. They will enjoy keeping abreast of Hearing Loss Association activities. The affiliate may want to give a Hearing Loss Association gift membership to advisors and make them an honorary member of the affiliate. Hearing Loss Association professional membership has additional benefits.
- 5) Advisors should be kept informed of all activities. A steady and productive communication between the PAC and officers is useful. It can be useful to ask specific members to keep in touch with an advisor "assigned to them" on a regular basis. Most advisors are careful not to interfere. They will not help, or even come to meetings, unless they are invited.

Guidelines for the PAC

Purpose: The purpose of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) will be to furnish professional advice and support that will help promote the development of a credible, solid Hearing Loss Association organization in the community.

Functions

- Observe chapter programs and projects and make recommendations for action and implementation.
- Suggest new programs and projects.
- Supply information to the officers and membership.
- Lend direction that will promote progress for people with hearing loss everywhere.

Qualifications

Members of the PAC shall be individuals who are recognized as experts in their particular fields, and can relate to problems of people with hearing loss. They may be from the disciplines of hearing health, education, medicine, science, health fields, psychology, psychiatry, social work, sociology, religion, government, national or local organizations, or other fields of expertise.

Meetings

Members of the PAC are encouraged to attend Hearing Loss Association affiliate functions. The PAC may meet together at their discretion or at the invitation of the chapter officers to discuss specific problems, consider possible areas of service, or consider ways the chapter may broaden visibility in the community.

Term

Members of the PAC shall be invited to serve for a specified tenure, not to exceed two years, renewable. Terms may be staggered to provide continuity.

Chairperson

When a PAC consists of more than two members, a chair shall be designated.

Fundraising Committee

Assessing chapter financial needs should be agreed upon by the membership when there is a need, such as for postage for meeting notices, newsletters, etc. and should cover only those known necessary expenses. There is no need to work to acquire large treasuries in a self-help organization.

Finances for special projects or purposes such as gaining an assistive listening system, should be sought as the need arises. The challenges of fundraising can be well worth the results, not just in financial assistance, but in teamwork and socializing for the membership.

Before planning a project, ask the following questions:

- 1) Why do we need to raise money? (i.e., to establish an assistive devices lending library.)
- 2) How much money will be needed?
- 3) Will the funds raised help to further the purpose of the organization?
- 4) How many persons will be involved?
- 5) Will it be necessary to spend some seed money in order to raise more money? Is there seed money available?
- 6) Are there proper facilities available in which to hold the fundraising event?
- 7) Is the type of fundraising event under consideration one that is legal in your state or county? (See if your Chamber of Commerce has an information booklet.)
- 8) Is it possible to have the event serve one or more additional purpose besides raising funds? (i.e., publicity, outreach, new members.)

Suggestions on Fundraising

Along with the following suggestions, don't forget your library which has many books on this subject.

Parties: Try to make parties a special occasion; vary the themes with picnics, barbecues, buffets, or progressive dinners. Liven the affair with an in-house raffle or guessing game. Have each member bring a homemade craft item for auction or sale. Modify games such as Bingo to relate to Hearing Loss Association and hearing loss. Charge a dime for each time a person says "I can't," or some other word phrase. Have expert speechreaders silently mouth sentences. No charge to the first person to "get it," but the second pays a penny, the third two, and so on. Have a multiple choice or fill in the blank quiz on hearing. This is a good learning situation, and naturally, there is a charge for each wrong answer. Token sums are assessed for wrong answers. Have a game night, or salmagundi party, where the people at each table decide what game or games they wish to play - from Chinese checkers and monopoly to bridge. Charge admission by age, ___ cents for each year of age. It is not necessary to limit games to parties. They are wonderful ice-breakers at meetings, too.

White Elephant Sale: Events such as this are not easily repeated so try to have a large group participate. Each member is asked to donate a personal "white elephant," something not needed which is useable. Items may be wrapped and sold as surprise packages or left open for inspection. The best results are probably achieved on an auction basis, with a dollar minimum bid, or whatever you wish to establish.

Raffles and Guessing Games: These are an easy and lucrative means of raising funds. They can be seasonal, as jelly beans at Easter, a turkey at Thanksgiving, with just members and friends participating, or spread community wide. Prizes can be solicited from neighborhood merchants. Start several months in advance and keep the price low in order to increase the number who can afford tickets or chances. Publicity should include the name of our organization and the purpose for the contest. Many chapters have 50/50 raffles at each meeting to help raise funds.

Garage Sale: The member who volunteers a place to hold the sale is no doubt the member with the most to unload. The smaller, seemingly unworthy, items often disappear the quickest. Children are wonderful customers. Publicize the event well ahead of time, including prized items in the advertisements. Specify a rain date. Some areas have community sales at a central location for a small cost for space. This may be more appealing to the membership.

Bazaars, Carnivals and Fairs: Often communities plan these events annually. Booths may be sold at a reduced rate for nonprofit groups or even free. (Free space may be reserved for distribution of information only, no sales allowed.) Consider booths for food or recipes, a toy town, almost-new store, handmade arts and crafts, portrait center, flea market, fortunes, make-up for children (clowns, etc.), art gallery, Christmas booth, plant/flower garden, herbs and spices, games of skill and chance, and more.

Service Projects: An affiliate can provide a service in the community and earn money at the same time. Refreshments sold at ball games, candy and banners in school colors at high school sporting events, and manning roadside coffee stops are a sample of worthy projects. Novelty Sales: See if the yellow pages of your phone directory list companies that sell novelties. These can be bought in quantity and on consignment and then resold at a profit. Try homemade candy, crafts, books, and Hearing Loss Association T-shirts, caps and tote bags. Friendly merchants and institutions are happy to give space. Be sure it is clear that proceeds are for Hearing Loss Association. Members can distribute to friends and neighbors. This can be an annual affair, and Hearing Loss Association will become well-known for one event or article. (Note: The development of any item with Hearing Loss Association on it, must use the HLAA logo.)

Baked Goods: Bake sales are super fundraisers. Add used books and, presto! - a Book and Bake Sale. Pick a busy corner or shopping center on a day close to a special day, such as Mother's Day. If the baked goods are of excellent quality, your community will look forward to your sale each year.

Bean Soup Mix: Bag a variety of dry beans and include directions for cooking. This simple and inexpensive method of raising funds has proven to be lucrative and very popular in several Hearing Loss Association chapters.

Art Shows: It will take about three to six weeks to organize a show where professionals exhibit their work. (Prices are decided on by the artist, the organization receives one-third of the selling price.) The chairman of this project needs to be a person with an art background. With plenty of publicity, and a preview, many paintings can be sold over a weekend. The entrance fee should cover the cost of the printed program. Art books can be sold, an artist may be present (making quick sketches), and refreshments served for a small charge.

Sport Events: Athletic contests, walk-a-thons, bowl-a-thons, bike races, ball games, tournaments and a host of other athletic events have grown very popular and are well supported by communities. Businesses are happy to sponsor individuals who participate and frequently donate refreshments, food, and even prizes. The media is usually very cooperative, and often celebrities are happy to appear and/or serve as honorary chairpersons.

Stay at Home Tea: Send invitations to friends accompanied by a bag of tea. Write a little rhyme, telling them you want them to enjoy a cup of tea in their own home and ask them to send a donation in an enclosed envelope. Indicate what purpose the donation will be used for, and that all contributions will be acknowledged.

Miscellaneous: Solicit financial support from local Rotary, Optimist, Quota, Grange, Lions, Sertoma, Woman's, Pilot International, Kiwanis Clubs, and others. Are Hearing Loss Association members aware that many companies will match contributions of their employees? Work up a letter of introduction to ask for contributions in the name of the organization. Set out a dish for specific donations at meetings.

Community events: Many chapters sell entertainment books such as for restaurants in their communities. During holiday seasons, shopping malls often hold fundraisers for non-profit organizations. During special shopping hours, only ticket holders may enter and take advantage of special discounts, free wrapping, entertainment, prizes, etc. The members sell tickets in advance of the special shopping hours. The cost of the tickets is pure profit for the organization.

Resources

National

Hearing Loss Association of America policy does not permit recommendations of specific service providers or sources of assistive devices, but does provide general information relative to sources, technology, and current issues. Awareness materials for outreach are available in quantities, free of charge. Make your requests well in advance so they can be mailed library rate. (Otherwise there is a charge for mailing.) All requests receive attention as soon as possible.

The Hearing Loss Association Website provides information on hearing loss, current events, information for chapters, and links to all chapters. In addition, a net search will provide readers with unlimited resources of sites relating to all conceivable aspects relating to hearing loss.

In the Community

The following sampling of community organizations are listed here because they may serve as a source of professional advisors, speakers for meetings, referral services for Hearing Loss Association members, provide available educational materials, or be otherwise helpful.

Adult Education Centers	Medical bureaus, clinics, physicians, surgeons
Area Agency on Aging	Medical Research Foundations
Assistive Device Representatives	Medical Health Maintenance Organizations
Audiology Clinics	Parent-Teacher Associations
Board of Education	Police Departments
Chamber of Commerce	Public Information/Referral Services
City/County Councils	Recreation Services
Community Welfare Councils	Rehabilitation Agencies
Community Colleges	Religious leaders
Consumer Organizations	Retirement Communities
Community Action Agencies	Senior Citizen Service Organizations
Community Service Centers	Social Services
Consumer Affairs Office	Special Education Teachers
Dept. of Health & Human Services	State Agency for People with Hearing Loss
Easter Seal Chapters	State Hearing, Speech & Language Association
Emergency Services	Technology Access Programs (in each state)
Environmental Protection Agency	Telecommunications Relay Services
Family Resources for Individuals/Disabilities	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Fire & Rescue Squads	Other
Fraternal Clubs (Lions, etc)	
Hearing Health Specialists	
Hospitals	
Legal Aid Society	

Special Concerns

External Relationships

The predominant characteristic of the self-help movement is **ownership**. Having made the decision to take responsibility for themselves, Hearing Loss Association members "own" their chapter. There are specific implications which stem from this ownership (or independence) concept.

- Hearing Loss Association affiliates should not become **dependent** on others (particularly social service agencies, hearing health organizations, hospitals or large organizations which can absorb them) for meeting space, publication of a newsletter, administrative support, etc.
- Hearing Loss Association organizations should govern themselves. Professional Advisory Committees (PACs) are highly recommended, but, ultimately, chapter members make their own decisions.
- Professional/business personnel in the hearing health field should not usually be voting members of a Hearing Loss Association organization. A business person with hearing loss could be an exception but it may be more appropriate for them to serve on the PAC.

It is important to remember that self-help groups are different from other types of organizations. Social service agencies, hearing and speech clinics, hearing aid dealerships, and assistive device businesses all have different goals, agendas, methodologies, and constraints than self-help groups. More often than not, such organizations provide services **"FOR"** people. They do not generally work **"WITH"** people. In some areas, caring professionals have helped to establish Hearing Loss Association affiliates, recognizing that self-help, retention of choice, and self respect are part of the individual's need. Such professionals work to enable Hearing Loss Association members to grow rather than create dependence of members.

Self-help is an ongoing process governed by each individual's need and pace towards satisfying that need. Patience, caring for each other, a willingness to exchange personal insights and experiences are the earmarks of the self-help movement. Both the philosophy and independence of Hearing Loss Association must be preserved. Here are some examples that are linked by the common theme of independence.

- Hearing Loss Association national has politely declined the offer of office space in buildings owned by other organizations in the field of hearing loss.
- In *Hearing Loss Magazine*, we have and will continue to, reject advertising that conflicts with our organizational policy.

- Our presence in national and international coalitions is predicated upon cooperation with others in areas where Hearing Loss Association feels such cooperation will not adversely affect its philosophy or independence. This is not always easy. We have to constantly make decisions about what we will do, and how far and in what fashion we will go.
- At state level meetings, the perennial issue of sign language interpreters arises. Increasingly, agencies for deaf and hard of hearing people will provide a sign language interpreter free of charge. When one is needed, we should always graciously accept such offers.

What is important to keep in mind is that Hearing Loss Association was formed for people with hearing loss who did not have the kind of opportunities now provides. We are people who strive to function in the hearing world where English is our primary language, and the use of amplification with speech reading is our first line of coping. Overhead projectors, note takers, oral interpreters, computer-assisted note taking, and real-time captioning are useful too. A volunteer who can provide sign language would be helpful for members who sign, but a chapter is not obligated to employ an interpreter -- especially when any resources mentioned are available.

It is difficult for local affiliates to effectively meet the communication needs of such a diverse population. How, when, where, and why we choose to seek help from others are decisions that must be made in consideration of the Hearing Loss Association philosophy and our independence. If we are to remain true to our uniqueness -- our self-help methodology, we must learn and teach others to develop cooperative relationships on the basis of equality -- of working **with** one another in enhancing the human spirit.

Attendance

Attendance at meetings can vary widely. There may be 15 or 50 people at a meeting. We are interested in regular attendees, those who come all the time and will participate. They need Hearing Loss Association now. Others will come, get what they need and go. Some will not return at all. In short, attendance may be sporadic.

Our goal is to develop a core of regular members who believe in our cause and want to help themselves and others. This will happen if the focus of concentration is on the needs and desires of the regular members. In truly interactive meetings, people who come to receive will learn to give.

If attendance is a concern despite continued maximum use of a variety of avenues of publicity, remember that statistics are on our side. It is sometimes difficult to understand why everyone does not share our enthusiasm. This is when we are challenged to grow in dedication, patience and perseverance. Good progress is made slowly.

Hearing Loss Association wants a large united organization which has the impact of numbers but never loses the personal touch. Whether Hearing Loss Association organizations are large or small, they can be effective. Build with what you have within your limitations. Don't try to tackle too much in too many areas and spread yourself too thin. Set priorities. Develop a strategic plan. In time, favorable results will follow.

Participation

Throughout this manual, constant reference is made to encouraging member participation. That is because a true leader strives to develop future leaders through member participation. Hearing Loss Association is not unlike other organizations in that member involvement is a stumbling block. In addition to all the reasons (and excuses) people have for reluctance to participate, are the syndromes people with hearing loss are prey to: withdrawal, feelings of inadequacy, fears that accompany not hearing, etc. Many have never belonged to any kind of group until now and may want to participate but don't know how. Some will never participate. We must accept certain realities, even while striving for total member participation.

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to generate motivation. We must continuously bring up the subject at meetings, in newsletters, and person to person. Studies have shown that people really do want to participate. Use phrases like, "Will you spend just one hour a month helping in some way?" "Will you help us help each other?" "Plan ahead for a specific job you would like a particular person to handle. Ask for help in the midst of the group. "Would you be willing to help with job X?" A refusal under these circumstances is rare, excuses are fewer. With repetition, people may realize, "Hey, that's for me!"

A word of caution. As long as a few are willing to do all the work and like to control, others will remain complacent and unmotivated. Let's make Hearing Loss Association different. We cannot be a self-help group unless everyone feels welcome, worthy and needed. Leaders are charged with developing group spirit. A spirited group will respond. **Note:** For more understanding of participation and ways to get people involved, please take the time to study the paper *Self Help Leadership that Encourages Participation*.

Young Adults

Hearing Loss Association young adults are a vital segment of our population. Attracting them to meetings, having them join and participate is the key to the future of Hearing Loss Association. Much too often, a young adult will come to a meeting and not come back. The most common reason for this is a discomfort felt being in a meeting dominated by older people. One young member said that if the president had not kept calling her, picking her up for meetings, asking her to help with small tasks, she never would have returned because there was no one her age there. In time, she brought other young people, and now this organization has a large number of contributing young adults!

Watch for young adults and try to give them a special welcome. Line up people who are younger -- or young at heart -- to watch for any young adults and take them under their wing.

Another legitimate reason young adults may not come is because their needs are not being met. Try to understand what they are searching for and make provisions for it. Most likely their interests are in two major areas, employment concerns and interpersonal relationships -- a social outlet. We can and should help them in these areas. Across the country, young adult members know each other. Let's attract and welcome them to our meeting rooms.

People Who Are Elderly

A good number of Hearing Loss Association chapters are dominated by elderly people whose activity is necessarily limited. Frequently, it may be a desperate family member who makes contact, comes to a meeting, or brings a reluctant relative. Hearing Loss Association wants to support the family and assist our older members to the best of our ability.

Many aging people face chronic illness, reduced finances, loss of friends and spouse, plus concerns for their own physical safety. Hearing loss adds a critical dimension to healthy functioning. A sense of connectedness with others is threatened. Moreover, hearing aids and devices that go beyond the hearing aid may be felt as an embarrassment, a sign of senility or a loss of independence. Friendship and caring concern can be more important than technical issues.

Hearing Loss Association meetings will provide a feeling of connectedness. Very elderly people merit special handling. Self-help may be new to them and they may see "no future" in getting involved at this stage in life. A hearing loss may only be one of many physical afflictions and a legitimate reason they decline commitments. They may fear the daily ups and downs of their physical limitations will interfere with completion of responsibility. But, attending meetings can ease the sting of loneliness.

It is logical to try to stimulate people who are elderly by planning some programs that focus on their immediate needs and interests, as well as activities they feel part of. Elderly people particularly enjoy talking and interacting with others. How much isolation is due to hearing loss? How many enjoyable activities, such as the theater or playing cards, have been given up? Why are so many aids in the dresser drawers? They need to know there is no valid reason for an aid that hurts or whistles. Do they have and use a "T" switch? Are the mechanics bothersome? How much instruction in the mechanics have they had? In addition to Hearing Loss Association lending a hand, an assertive visit to their hearing health care provider may be overdue.

A hands-on demonstration of devices for the phone and television can be useful. A purchase of a few devices for trial and loan purposes is a practical project. Most people who are elderly are willing to try speech reading if their eyesight is okay. Family members will be grateful to learn the techniques of communicating with them.

Small special interest circles within the chapter will stimulate curiosity and assure the idea that someone cares. In time, these circles may graduate people who will want to do more in their special interest area. Shared positions of tasks for the chapter are realistic goals.

Foremost in our efforts with elderly persons, inject humor, the best antidote of all. Sprinkle a lot of it around. Humor improves attitude which is helpful to good health and longevity. Most of our elderly members already know this. We can take lessons from them. In devoting attention to this precious element of our society, Hearing Loss Association is contributing to an area of major concern as well as enriching lives.

Hearing Loss Association National has a *Senior Citizen Program Packet*, a guide for people who work with older people with hearing loss. It is suitable for groups in many retirement homes, most senior citizen centers, and other long-term-care living facilities. The packet contents are based on the supposition that services must be provided "for" rather than "with."

Participants Who Are Deaf

The words "hearing impaired," "deaf," and "hard of hearing" are too often used inaccurately. Hearing impaired is defined as a generic term, which does not indicate which population(s) are being referred to. In order to better serve people who are hard of hearing, a basic understanding of terminology is useful.

People with hearing loss may have pre or post-lingual hearing losses ranging from mild to profound. The majority of Hearing Loss Association members are people who experience hearing loss later in life (post-vocational) after the age of 19. Having grown up with hearing, their speech is usually adequate for communication. Generally, Hearing Loss Association members use assistive technology and speech reading to communicate. Typically, people with loss do not readily fit into the deaf communities and may also feel estranged from the hearing community of which they had been part.

People with hearing loss may have adjustment problems, career, and family crises. Because they are born with hearing, many experience psycho-social problems that differ from those individuals who are born deaf. For example, people with hearing loss may experience partial hearing loss suddenly, or progressively, and have had no prior experience with hearing loss. They experience grief reactions and have developed no means to cope with their new condition. Deaf people, particularly those who lost their hearing early in life, share experiences and ways of adapting to their deafness that differ from the problems confronted by people with hearing loss. For example, since many deaf people have never heard, they do not consider their condition a "loss."

Hearing Loss Association encourages members to develop a greater understanding of differences so that people who are deaf and those with hearing loss may come together to advocate for common interests. At the same time, the Hearing Loss Association recognizes and upholds its mission to provide support and education for hard of hearing people, which was virtually non-existent prior to the founding of Hearing Loss Association.

Hearing Loss Association encourages awareness of all communication methods, which might improve communication; however, we have found people with hearing loss have unique

communication needs. For example, people with hearing loss need to learn how to adjust to their loss and how to communicate more effectively with their hearing family and peers. The topics of Hearing Loss Association meetings generally do not serve the needs and interests of culturally deaf people, although they may join together to advocate on common human rights issues (e.g., to pass legislation for all people with hearing loss). Our efforts are targeted to those needs unique to people with hearing loss.

In our meetings, we want persons with hearing loss to be comfortable in a fellowship of people with whom they can identify. As the majority of members do not use sign language extensively or exclusively, it is difficult to communicate with deaf people who use sign language exclusively. For those people with hearing loss straining to understand, it is extremely difficult to speech read some deaf people. In addition, if there is a constant motion of sign language activity within view, a struggling speech reader is easily distracted. It is not a comfortable setting for the deaf person who does not speech read, often resulting in exclusion, due to breakdowns in communication.

We must be realistic about these different needs and explain them when a situation calls for it. A courteous and understanding member should explain to deaf attendees who use sign language exclusively that our focus is on educational meetings for people who, regardless of the degree of hearing loss, are able to hear and understand speech. To facilitate participation from deaf people, interpreters are welcome and encouraged, but Hearing Loss Association meetings are intended to serve the needs of the majority of people with hearing loss, and we do not have the financial means to provide sign language interpreters.

Hearing Loss Association of America Membership Policy

Hearing Loss Association of America was created because 31 million people with hearing loss is an unrecognized part of our society with unmet needs, both individually and collectively. Pioneers from all corners of the nation responded to the cause to make hearing loss an issue of national concern and, in the process, begin to make people with hearing loss a visible and viable part of our population. Our accomplishments are having a positive impact, not only on our lives but also on our families, employers, associates, and government. We have an excellent beginning -- but still much to do.

Great causes cannot exist without participants. The more members Hearing Loss Association has the more needs that can be met. The larger and more available we are, the stronger and more effective we can be. With a strong grassroots membership throughout the country, our voice, like our help, reaches further.

The policy of Hearing Loss Association regarding membership is: **A major objective of Hearing Loss Association of America is to develop a nationwide constituency of people with hearing loss. This cannot be achieved without members throughout the United States. Therefore, all members of chapters should be members of Hearing Loss Association of America to help accomplish the goals that will benefit all people with hearing loss and, at the same time, to receive the benefits of Hearing Loss Association membership.**

Hearing Loss Association does not require membership because this is not in keeping with the self-help methodology. Rather, membership should be an individual's choice -- based on a thorough understanding of Hearing Loss Association along with a commitment to our cause. Local organizers and leaders are the primary conduit of this information.

Hearing Loss Association membership goes far beyond the tangible benefits. Some individuals may say, "Why should I join? I get everything I need from the chapter meetings and the internet." It is likely that these people see or understand only a small part of the whole. Local members must be fully informed so they can see the big picture and realize how our entire organization moves forward and relies on the strength of our membership. They need to share the vision of an exciting, brighter future for Hearing Loss Association.

People who are not members need to receive this message through you. The message needs to be repeated continually, delivered in a variety of creative ways by voice and in print, one-to-one and en masse. We must do our utmost to help others understand what Hearing Loss Association is about. Beyond the personal benefits, they need to know that they are needed not only as individuals, but to help the mission and carry the message. Here are some reasons these members joined Hearing Loss Association. Share them with potential members.

“The greatest gains in self confidence and personal growth come out of my local involvement, but the direction for that growth comes from the collective experiences of our nationwide membership. Hearing Loss Association membership gives me broader view...the vision, motivation...” — Gwen Smith, Maine

"Hearing Loss Association national needs our action and financial support — and we as individuals are blind if we don't have the guidance and support of national. Without Hearing Loss Association National, there would not be any local organization."— John Centa, Idaho

"Hearing Loss Association can accomplish some things on a national level that would be difficult for a local chapter, such as advocating for hard of hearing people on a nationwide level and helping us to become more noticeable." — Greta Ruppel, NY

"For years, I felt adrift in sea of hearing people. My membership in Hearing Loss Association was much like having a lifeline thrown to me, so that I finally had something I could hold fast to. It didn't take me long to realize that this lifeline had to be anchored to something so solid, if I didn't want to start drifting again. Hearing Loss Association national has provided such anchorage for me." — Helen Fleming, MA

Benefits of Membership

Hearing Loss Association of America is **THE** voice for all people with hearing loss. Our strength lies in a large constituency, widespread credibility, contacts, and a strong volunteer base. The changes that we, the people with the problem, have made and will continue to make help all hard of hearing and deaf people to be all they can be. With the help of Hearing Loss Association, thousands of members are leading changed lives.

Over 10,000 people have joined Hearing Loss Association but there are millions more people with hearing loss to reach! To achieve this, we need members in every corner of the United States. Attendees and participants at Hearing Loss Association chapters should join Hearing Loss Association to help accomplish the goals that will benefit all people with hearing loss. Some of the benefits that Hearing Loss Association membership provides are listed below.

Information

- *Hearing Loss Magazine* -- an award-winning publication published six times a year
- Research findings on hearing loss issues presented at Hearing Loss Association annual conventions
- Exhibitors at the annual convention demonstrating the latest in assistive technology
- Real-life topical workshops at the annual convention
- Continual federal advocacy efforts taking place on your behalf as relates to communication access issues, insurance for hearing health benefits, research, and more (*)
- Buying a hearing aid, and getting the most out of your hearing aids
- Referrals

Support through local Hearing Loss Association Chapters with regular meetings on:

- Coping strategies and information
- Assistive technology
- Relationships
- Employment
- Current issues
- Self-help practices

Discounts On

- Books and other resource materials
- Convention registration fees
- Hearing Health Care Benefit Plan
- Special promotions
- Car rentals, hotels, and merchandise. Refer to listing available online or from HLAA

Participate In

- Hearing Loss Association Annual Convention planning in your state or region
- Local Hearing Loss Association newsletters
- Local chapters, state associations, or state offices
- State and regional conventions
- Choosing regional candidates and voting for regional and nationwide trustees
- Hearing Screening Program in your area
- Advocacy efforts
- Surveys, courses, special events

Potential members need to keep in mind that a major objective of Hearing Loss Association is to develop a large constituency of people with hearing loss that can influence change that will make a difference for all of us. We are still a young organization with a long way to go. So, rather than think in terms of what can be gotten from Hearing Loss Association, people need to know that their membership gives to Hearing Loss Association.

(*) Some of the places where Hearing Loss Association represents our population:

- Council of Organizational Representatives (COR), a forum for public policy issues related to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. A large number of organizations are members
- International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH)
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI sets technology standards for assistive devices)
- Government representation and interaction with members of Congress
- United States Access Board
- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- The U.S. Department of Transportation
- The U.S. Department of Education
- Media Captioning Services Advisory Group
- National Court Reporters Association Access Issues Task Force
- Advisory Council of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
- More than 150 volunteer Hearing Loss Association members serving on state councils, commissions, and task forces on behalf of people with hearing loss
- Professionals in hearing health - organizations, manufacturers, physicians, audiologists, hearing health specialists, and others seek Hearing Loss Association
- Hearing Loss Association national board committees work on areas such as Children and Youth Issues, Government Affairs/Advocacy, Support and Education and more

Are You?

**Are you an active member —
The kind that would be missed:
Or are you just contented
that your name is on the list?
When you attend the meetings —
Do you mingle with the flock;
Or do you stay seated
Waiting for opportunity to knock?**

**Come to the meetings often —
And help with hand and heart;
Don't be just a member,
But take an active part!
Think the meaning of self-help —
You know right from wrong;
Are you an active member
Or do you just belong?**

Anonymous

Appendix

You're Not Alone



**Hearing Loss
Association
of America**

31 Million Americans Have Hearing Loss.

We're committed to helping.

Please join us.

- **Local Chapters & Groups**
- ***Hearing Loss* Magazine & Resource Materials**
- **Annual Conventions**
- **Communications Access**



Call or write today for information.

Hearing Loss Association of America

7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814

(301) 657-2248 V • (301) 657-2249 TTY

Website: www.hearingloss.org

Meetings should begin with a brief welcome and statement about Hearing Loss Association of America. Include an **explanation of the assistive listening devices available and how to use them.**

Sample Welcome

"Welcome to the monthly meeting of the _____ chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America. Hearing Loss Association is a volunteer, international membership organization devoted to the welfare and interests of those who cannot hear well. We offer support, information, and resources not otherwise available.

Our goal is the empowerment of people with hearing loss so they feel in control of their lives and can continue to participate successfully in society. Hearing Loss Association is committed to "*Making Hearing Loss an Issue of National Concern.*"

The _____ chapter is a self-governing body under the auspices of the Hearing Loss Association national office headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland. Membership is open to people with hearing loss, their relatives, friends, and anyone interested in the subject. The only requirement is a desire to help ourselves and others enjoy improved communication.

Hearing Loss Association membership is _____ per year. Those who attend chapter meetings are strongly urged to also become members of Hearing Loss Association. Members receive a bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Loss Magazine*, and other benefits. Membership applications and a sample magazine are available here. (Optional).

Among us are those with all degrees of hearing loss. Equally important are our families and friends. We share our knowledge, resources, coping techniques, experiences, and hope to improve the quality of living for those affected by hearing loss. As we grow in fellowship with each other, we fulfill Hearing Loss Association mission through outreach into the community. Each chapter is a vital part of a national constituency, in common dedication towards better understanding by and of people with hearing loss. Please join us.

Note: For an occasional change, distribute or read excerpts from the *Chapter Manual* Foreword, Constitution, etc.

Hearing Loss Association of America

Dear Friend:

As a member of the Hearing Loss Association organization, you already know about many of the unique concerns of those of us with hearing loss. I would now like to invite you to learn more about these topics and have some fun at the same time. You can do this by coming to our chapter meetings.

The Montgomery County Chapter meets monthly to learn how to better cope with our hearing loss. Expert speakers are invited to talk about topics such as: the latest developments in hearing aids, coping with hearing loss on the job, new technologies and devices which make our life easier, and political issues facing people with hearing loss.

But the main reason people attend the chapter is for the support and friendship of other members. Coping with a hearing loss is difficult and stressful at times. It's tough to do it alone. That's why once a month we join together to share our thoughts, problems, solutions, and dreams. And we'd like you to join us.

You will you personally benefit from the experience, but you will also have the opportunity to help others. The chapter is involved in making our community more "hearing friendly" by working with local businesses, hospitals, and elected officials. We need the talents of people like you to expand these programs. Even if you don't have much time or energy to give right now, you can still make a difference simply by supporting these efforts.

Please drop by our next chapter meeting at 7:30 on March 16 in the meeting room of Davis Library on Democracy Boulevard. We'd love to have you! Contact me if you would like more information or to receive our chapter newsletter. I look forward to "hearing" from you.

Sincerely,

George Kosovich, President

(301) 123-4567

Sample Agenda

Hearing Loss Association of America, _____ Chapter
Monday, August 7, 2006, 7:30 p.m.

1. Welcome (5 - 10 minutes)
Advise newcomers on use of listening system
Explanation of Hearing Loss Association
Informal introductions
Special Guests: Pamela Slocum,--Advisory Council for State Vocational Rehabilitation
University Graduate Audiology Students
2. National news: (5 - 10 minutes)
Hearing Loss Association in December issue of *American Health* (3 minutes)
News of affiliates in our Region
Information about this years convention – Time to register
Nancy M. Summary report on new issue of *Hearing Loss Magazine*
3. Other Announcements (8 minutes)
TV Channel 4 invitation to the premier of closed captioned evening news
Community college -- interest in speechreading classes
Member announcements
4. Program (30 - 40 minutes) Turn over to Sandy M. -- Panel on coping with hearing loss
Marty Gray - hard of hearing since age 22
Sue Sloan -- parent of 2 siblings with hearing loss
Bob Dobbs -- sudden hearing loss
Pam Bates -- adult onset hearing loss
Terry Bates -- family member
Discussion/sharing (stop at 9:00-9:15)
5. Activity Reports/discussion (about 10-15 minutes)
Outreach (Access project)
Publicity
Membership
Program chair on next meeting
Bring up need for Speakers Bureau
6. 50/50 raffle
7. Closing 9:30 (ask for help with cleanup)

Refreshments

Cleanup

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

THE CHAPTER AT WORK.

"To come together in fellowship, empathy, and concern based on common experience."

"To establish such Chapters of this organization as will enable it to serve effectively the welfare of hard of hearing people in those communities where it is needed."

"To work toward social enrichment of hard of hearing people through activities in which they participate."

HAAA NOVA ONE is Virginia's first Chapter. It was begun four years ago by a handful of enthusiastic people. Members range in age from mid-twenties to late seventies, and enjoy the mix. They have varying degrees of hearing loss and some are the parents of children with hearing loss. All interested persons are welcome.

Monthly meetings are educational and allow time for all to get to know each other. They may be focused on a guest speaker or on rap sessions with members gathering into small groups. Social events and fund raising activities are scheduled during the year, in addition to certain community outreach projects.

An audio loop is used at meetings for people wearing hearing aids with "T" switches. The loop affords a marvelous new experience in hearing the spoken word. We promote the installation and use of sound systems such as this in public places.

We are organized locally and nationally, and always take a long and broad view of our purpose. We are dedicated, in our individual way to improving the lot of people with hearing loss everywhere. Your interest and talents are welcomed. By working together we move from the shadows into sunshine.

For additional information concerning the local Chapter, write to the address below.

WHAT IS SELF-HELP, ANYWAY?

Self-help means in our chapter meetings and group activities, people with hearing loss are encouraged to put their talents and interests to work to help the whole group develop coping skills and self confidence.

Self-help means saying, "If other people with hearing loss can do it, so can I." It means recognizing the common frustrations that we all share and being ready to offer encouragement and information to those who are struggling with those frustrations. It means becoming "experts" about our own hearing loss so we can be in charge of our lives and ourselves.

At our meetings, we explore ways we can put self-help to work to make hearing loss an issue of concern in our community and the nation.

Don't miss being part of the action!



SELF-HELP CAN EMPOWER US

OLD THINKING

Someone else will do it.

Denial, withdrawal, self-pity.

Don't try anything new.

I can't because...

Hearing loss controls my life.

What is in it for me?

SELF-HELP PRACTICE

I am responsible.

Acceptance, assertiveness, sharing.

Explore my talents.

I CAN!

I can learn how to control my reactions to hearing loss.

What can I do for HLAA?
And other people?



Sample Professional Advisor Recruitment Letter

(Date)

Address

Dear (Name),

The _____ Chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is in the process of establishing (increasing) our Professional Advisory Committee (PAC). You have been suggested as a possible candidate for this committee.

In case you are not familiar with us, Hearing Loss Association of America is an organization which is dedicated to serving the needs and interests of people with hearing loss and their families. I am enclosing an Hearing Loss Association brochure and a recent copy of *Hearing Loss Magazine*, a bi-monthly publication about hearing loss.

Also enclosed is the latest issue of our Chapter newsletter which will provide an idea of our programs and activities and a set of guidelines which explains the nature of the service we are requesting from you. (Our next meeting is noted in the newsletter. We invite you to come.) We feel you have special qualifications which could be of great assistance to our mission and hope you will find it possible to give our invitation serious consideration.

As soon as all our PAC positions are filled, we hope to bring our advisors together for an informal meeting with our officers. At that time the goals of the organization will be discussed more fully and we can outline the type of assistance each advisor might be able to provide. After reading the material enclosed, you might have some suggestions or comments regarding our program or projects.

If you have any questions regarding the _____ Chapter, or any part of Hearing Loss Association, please do not hesitate to contact me. We hope you will consider our request and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,

President

(Address)

(Phone/email/fax)

Enclosures: *Hearing Loss Magazine*, Hearing Loss Association Brochure, Newsletter (if available)

Membership Information Card

Last Name _____ **First Name** _____

Address _____

Phone/email _____

Interests: Check level of interest in each item; add others you enjoy.

	High	Some	Little
Learning leadership skills	_____	_____	_____
Learning to do new things	_____	_____	_____
Getting to know others	_____	_____	_____
Public speaking	_____	_____	_____
Group discussions	_____	_____	_____
Keeping records	_____	_____	_____
Writing	_____	_____	_____
Community outreach	_____	_____	_____
Organizing special events	_____	_____	_____
Publicity	_____	_____	_____
Social activities	_____	_____	_____
Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Fundraising	_____	_____	_____
Art/graphics	_____	_____	_____
Computer skills	_____	_____	_____
Parliamentary procedure	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____

Hearing Loss Association of America
LANCASTER CHAPTER
1801 Oregon Pike
Lancaster PA 17601-6499

HELP WANTED

Yes, the officers of the Lancaster Chapter are asking for your help in finding out who you are, what your opinions are, what interests you have, and suggestions you may have about Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Please take a few minutes now to answer the following questions...then bring this survey to the next meeting; or fold it, seal it with tape, stamp it then mail it back to us. **Thank you!**



How long have you attended meetings of the Lancaster Chapter of HLAA?

- First meeting 6 months 1 year 2-4 years Longer Never attended

How did you hear of Hearing Loss Association?

- Friend/Relative told me about Hearing Loss Association
 Newspaper listing of support group meetings
 Suburban Cable listing of area events
 Audiologist/Physician/ENT referral
 LINC -- Lancaster Information Center
 Other _____

Do you wear a hearing aid(s)? Yes No **How many?** 1 2

What types of aid(s) do you wear? In-the-ear Behind-the-ear Cochlear Implant

Are you a member of Hearing Loss Association National? Yes No

If not, what are the reasons you haven't joined?

- Never asked to join Don't know how to join Financially impossible
 Costs too much Can't see the benefits Don't know Other _____

Have you ever served as an officer of the Lancaster Chapter of HLAA? Yes No

If yes. what office(s)? _____

Would you be willing to serve as an officer? Yes No **If yes. what office(s)?**

- President Vice President Secretary Treasurer

Are you receiving the chapter newsletter *HLAA Soundwaves*? Yes No, but add me to the mailing list... Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Voice TTY Email _____

What changes or additions would you like to see in the chapter newsletter?

I attend chapter meetings regularly: Yes No **If not, why don't you?**

- No transportation available Conflicting schedule
 Meetings aren't interesting Other _____

Meeting topics I have enjoyed or were very beneficial to me:

- Dogs for the hard-of-hearing Care/Use of my hearing aid ALD's
 News from Hearing Loss Association National Vertigo Surviving the social scene
 ASL-American Sign Language Coping: Viewpoint from Hearing Spouses
 Cochlear implants Other _____

What topic(s) would be of interest to you for future meetings?

--fold--

How can the meetings be improved to make the chapter better at "self-help?"

- More "rap" sessions Shorter meetings Longer meetings Better sound system
 Additional assistive listening help Computerized note-taking More community involvement
 Social gatherings (pot luck suppers, etc) Fund raising events
Additional comments: _____

Would you recommend Hearing Loss Association to a friend or relative? Yes No If no, why not?

I would be willing to serve on the following committee(s):

- Program planning Publicity Meeting room set-up Finance ALD's
 Refreshments Meeting greeters Newsletter Membership Library

Additional comments/recommendations:

--fold--

**LANCASTER CHAPTER
1801 OREGON PIKE
LANCASTER PA 17601-6499**

**Stamp
Here**

**LANCASTER CHAPTER
1801 OREGON PIKE
LANCASTER PA 17601-6499**

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