



The newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of America, Albuquerque Chapter

WIRED FOR SOUND

The following is an excerpt from an online newsletter called "The Good Stuff"—a series of inspirational "good news" hosted by CNN. See the full article at <https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/13/us/third-grader-legislation-hearing-loss-trnd/index.html>

Third-grader inspires legislation to help those with hearing loss

Shirin Ali, CNN

(CNN) At just 9 years old, Ally Tumblin has inspired legislation in Congress that could help thousands of Americans pay for hearing aid devices by mandating insurance companies to cover them.

It all started in 2019 with a simple letter to her elected official after the then third-grader was assigned to do something to better her community for class. She decided to write to her congressman, Rep. Joe Neguse, D-CO, about her struggle to hear and how important her BAHA was, a Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid. It's an implantable device that most insurance companies do not cover and can cost up to \$10,000.

Tumblin relies heavily on her BAHA as she suffers from **microtia**, a rare birth defect where the external ear is small and not properly formed. Many times, as in Tumblin's case, having microtia also means having aural atresia, a missing ear canal. When the Tumblin family realized Ally's diagnosis after she was born, they were



shocked to find that no insurance company would cover her BAHA, despite her doctors confirming the device as medically necessary.

"From birth to age three—that's the critical years of development. Every medical professional knows that is the time the child's speech and language and vocabulary skills are coming in," said Melissa Tumblin, Ally's mother. "And it's critical to help them hear their best, and for insurance providers to deny these hearing devices is ridiculous." The Tumblin family ended up paying for Ally's BAHA out of pocket. Insurance coverage for hearing devices varies by state, and most typically pay only for traditional air conduction hearing aids. More sophisticated devices, like BAHAs and cochlear implants, are not covered and cost more than traditional hearing aids.

After receiving Tumblin's letter, Rep. Neguse established **Ally's Act, H.R. 477**. The bill would require insurance providers to cover osseointegrated devices, including BAHAs and cochlear implants for children and adults from birth to age 64. Coverage would extend to services to the hearing devices, upgrades, surgery and associated costs.

WIRED FOR SOUND

is published by the
HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER
Providing support and advocacy for
people with hearing loss

P. O. Box 36792,
Albuquerque, NM 87176
(505)219-1962

HLAAAbq@gmail.com

Home page: hearinglossabq.org

 **Hearing Loss Association of
America – Albuquerque
chapter**

Mention of goods or services in articles or
advertisements or meetings does not mean
endorsement by Hearing Loss Association of
America, Albuquerque Chapter, nor does
exclusion suggest disapproval.

ABQ Chapter Board:

President:
vacant

Treasurer: Bobbi Rodríguez
TreasurerHLAAAbq@gmail.com

Editor: A. E. "Rod" Rodríguez
EditorHLAAAbq@gmail.com

Membership & Web Master: Jim Dillow
catchJimmy@comcast.net

VP Programs: Victoria Rivera
vrivera@unm.edu

Publicity Chair:
vacant

Hospitality Chair: Jim Twohig
JKTwohig@gmail.com

Professional Advisor: Dr. Carol Clifford
CClifford@abqhearing.com

Past Pres./Advisor: Mary Clark
Mary@mandgclark.com

The Albuquerque HLAA Chapter is
affiliated with the



7910 Woodmont Ave, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
phone: (301)657-2248

20 Mar Meeting 10:00 Am - Noon On **Zoom**

Join the Zoom meeting by following either of two links:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81227676492?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81227676492?pwd=OGpIVIBqUlJObEtaV3ByaHhXeFVSUT09)

[pwd=OGpIVIBqUlJObEtaV3ByaHhXeFVSUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81227676492?pwd=OGpIVIBqUlJObEtaV3ByaHhXeFVSUT09)

How to Be That Fabulous Person with Hearing Loss

For our March presentation we are very pleased to welcome Gael Hannan. Gael is a writer, public speaker, and advocate who is passionate about hearing loss issues, and we are very excited to have her as our March presenter. Throughout her presentation Gael will show us "How to be That Fabulous person with Hearing Loss". Read below what Gael says about herself and what's to come.

"As a person with lifelong hearing loss, I *should* know a thing or two about it. One thing I know for sure is just when you think you've nailed it, something happens to



knock you back to square one. For example, trying to communicate through pandemic masks. But I also know that we can get up, dust ourselves off and move forward again, by being true to a few golden principles. I discuss these in my presentation "How to Be That Fabulous Person with Hearing Loss".

Upcoming programs:

Topics in the works:

- Hospital safety for those with hearing loss—Advocacy for patients with hearing loss in a hospital setting
- Owning your hearing loss—Effective and practical strategies for owning your hearing loss

The HLAA ABQ Chapter has openings for several roles. You can man a special project. You can help us out for a few months, or consider a longer-term commitment. "Try us out" for a month or two. We will provide orientation for working on a nonprofit board, share our chapter's mission and goals, and discuss topics we can use your help with. If interested, contact any board member (contact info at left), or use the chapter email hlaabq@gmail.com.

An open letter of interest:

Dear Hearing Loss Association of America:

I'm writing from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC to warmly invite you, your members, and anyone from your community to join us for a weekly online program called The Art of Looking. The sessions take place on Fridays from 1:00-2:00 pm Eastern, and CART captions are offered in one of the virtual meeting rooms.

More information about the program can also be found here: www.nga.gov/ArtOfLooking

By sharing observations, interpretations, questions and ideas, participants build on their own first impressions and broaden their understanding about a single work of art in each meeting. Each session lasts one hour and is completely interactive. Gallery educators will facilitate the conversation to create an environment for shared learning. These conversations will encourage you to engage deeply with art, with others, and with the world around you as you hone skills in visual literacy and perspective-taking.

The program is designed for everyone interested in talking about art. No art or art history background is required.

This program is free and open to the public. Ages 18 and over.

To join us, please visit www.nga.gov/ArtOfLooking and register for the date/s you can make. Please also email us at looking@nga.gov and let us know you'd like the link to join the room with CART captions. We will send you a link to use each week to ensure you are in the meeting room with the live captions.

Please share this information widely.

I'm very happy to answer questions, so please reach out anytime. We'd love to see you on Friday, or any and all dates you can make it!

Lorena Bradford
Accessible Programs and Projects
National Gallery of Art
Washington, DC
202-842-6905.

Smith's Community Rewards Shop at Smith's with their Rewards card, and Smith's will make a donation to HLAA Albuquerque chapter. You get your usual rewards points.

Call 1-866-4141 to sign up or re-enroll.

The HLAAbq NPO number for Smith's is 14881.

Amazon Smile You can donate to the Albuquerque Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America every time you make a purchase of most of the products from Amazon.

Go to <http://www.hlaabq.com/amazonsmile.html> for more information and detailed instructions on how to designate HLAA-ABQ Chapter as your charity of choice when you make amazon.com purchases.

Once you have set it up, always log into smile.amazon.com to purchase from amazon. 0.5% of the purchase price is automatically donated to HLAA Albuquerque Chapter—at no cost to you.

Loop People, Loop Places

Ginevra Ralph

Take Charge!

If ever there were a time to take charge of your hearing, it's now! It's unlikely that all those Plexiglas barriers will disappear soon, even when masks do. It's high time to insist that you need to hear wherever you go!

Here are two tips that can help you take charge now and in the future. One is a simple business card that you hand out freely during your daily

rounds that asks the person to attend to being a more effective communicator with you. They may need to speak up or look at you or speak more slowly or enunciate better – or all of these things. Check the HLAA Get in the Hearing Loop Toolkit website. Or personalize your own message such as “HELLO! I have a severe hearing loss and may not understand your words because of our masks.

Thank you for your understanding.” On the back of the card add the suggestion that the location might benefit from having a hearing loop at their desk or counter.

And second, be sure that your telecoil has been activated and your hearing professional has demonstrated how to use it with all of the loops

you will encounter more and more. YOU are the crucial voice in the advocacy for increasing that number of available loops. Won't it be great when everyone can nicely, but compellingly, say, “Why don't you have a loop? I will be back when you do!”



A small counter-top hearing loop might help me and your other customers with hearing loss a lot. If you would like to test one out for a month, please call Ginevra Ralph at The Shedd, 541-434-7002.

HELLO!

I have a severe hearing loss and may not understand your words because of our masks.

Thank you for your understanding.

Do you have a personal experience relating to hearing loss that would benefit your fellow HoH readers? It could be something practical or a warning of something to avoid or even something humorous. If you don't mind sharing a short note, send it by email to:

EditorHLAbq@gmail.com



A gas station owner had needed a hearing aid for too long, but kept putting it off. One day, he was standing at his station when an attractive woman in a convertible drove in. He made it a point to take care of her before his employee could.

After he filled her tank, cleaned her windshield and checked her oil, he thought she asked if he had a whisk broom. “No,” he replied, “but I do have a vacuum cleaner. We can clean you out with that.”

The woman got a furious look on her face and zoomed out of the driveway. The owner, looking around with confusion, saw his employee rolling on the ground laughing.

“Oh, man!” the employee howled, “I don't know what you thought she said, but she asked for a restroom.”

I prefer to think of myself as “easy of misunderstanding, rather than “hard of hearing.” Sometimes I envy the deaf; they at least have their own sub-culture or society, while I live neither “hear” nor there. I believe it would be appropriate to say I feel “excommunicated” from the world in general.

And it pleases me to boast that mine is a “multi-lingual hearing disability,” since I don't hear Spanish just as well as Italian or French, but I don't hear Russian best of all.

Helen Piekim of Hodabearn, NE

Yearly dues are \$15 per household. They are due in January. If you missed it, just see page 5.

Thanks to those listed below for their generous donations.

Platinum \$400+

Albuquerque Hearing
and Balance
Rosaline Cohen
Ginevra Ralph
Donald Thurn
Adelaide Zabriskie

Gold \$200 - \$399

Jim & Karen Twohig

Silver \$100 - \$199

Ben Curret
Gloria Inlow

Mike & Barbara
Langner

Bronze \$50 - \$99

Barbara Armstrong
Carol Emerson
Kim Granzow
Bette Jean Ingui
James & Sharen Koch
Michael & Karen
Lieberman
Paul Merritt
Fran Neil
Rod & Bobbi Rodríguez

Friends - up to \$49

Gail S. Anastasia
Hal Behl

Norm Dawson
Don Degasperi
Carol Emerson
Barbara Fix
Shirley Furen
Andrew "Bo" Gamboa
Sophie Gavarian
Gene & Sondra Golden
Patricia Gonzáles
Don Johnson
Richard Johnson
Barbara Kerr
Dirk Knowles
Richard Kutscher
Victoria L. Magown
Deanna & Bob McMain
Louie Morrison
James Ogle

Barbara Pierce
Mary J. Rajc
Linda Sue Romero
Harriet S. Smith
Steve Smith
Richard Tuschhoff
Mary Tyler
Marge Weitzel
Sandra Williams

Special

Smith's Community
Rewards
Amazon Smiles
Frontstream
Ginevra Ralph: Two
portable loop
systems

NM HLAA chapters are 501(c)3 nonprofits and all donations are tax deductible.

Support the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Become a member TODAY!

The Hearing Loss Association of America is a volunteer association of Hard of Hearing people, their relatives and friends. It is a non-profit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interest of those who cannot hear well. Membership in the national organization is by annual dues, which are separate from the annual Chapter fee paid to your local chapter. National membership includes a subscription to the bi-monthly publication Hearing Life.



Albuquerque Chapter Membership

- New
- Renew

Name: Date:

Address: Please mail Newsletter rather than email.

City: State: Zip:

Email: Phone(s):
voice? text? VP? caption?

Mail to: HLAAAbq Treasurer, P. O. Box36792, Albuquerque, NM 87176

Payment: Membership amount: \$..... Donation: \$..... Total: \$.....

Dues: \$15 per household per calendar year (Includes newsletter subscription)

Online: <https://www.hearinglossabq.org/electronic-pay>



P.O.Box 36792, Albuquerque, NM 87176

A map of Albuquerque, New Mexico, showing a grid of streets. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the map, centered on the location of Los Altos Christian Church. The box contains text about the chapter meetings. The word "Meeting" is written in large red letters across the top of the box. The text below it provides details about the meetings, including the location, date, and time. The word "on Zoom" is written in large red letters across the bottom of the box. The map shows various streets and landmarks, including Big 5 Sporting Goods, Arby's, and several churches.

Meeting

HLAA Albuquerque Chapter Meetings are held at Los Altos Christian Church, 11900 Haines Ave NE, on the 3rd Saturday of the month, Sep-Jun. Social time starts at 10:30 am; presentation at 11:00. The public is cordially invited to attend.

on Zoom