

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

# WIRED FOR SOUND

## All About Tinnitus

Linda Bilodeau ([lindabilodeau19@gmail.com](mailto:lindabilodeau19@gmail.com))  
in *Meandering Through A Hearing World*

Is a ringing, roaring, hissing, or buzzing sound in your ears driving you crazy? If so, chances are you are among the 10% of people in United States suffering from Tinnitus, a symptom of underlying disease or hearing loss that occurs equally in men, women, or children of any age.

Tinnitus has its root in a variety of medical problems. Most with Tinnitus have a sensorineural hearing loss or Meniere's disease. It might also originate from earwax buildup, medication, trauma, aging, a head or neck injury, or emotional distress. More than 80% of people with hearing loss have some form of Tinnitus, though some do not have this debilitating symptom.

Listening to the continuous rings or buzzes can upset one's psyche. Tinnitus can affect your work, your personal relationships, and interrupt sleep patterns. Some suffering from Tinnitus end up underemployed. People with Tinnitus are prone to anxiety, depression, and mood swings. Some people find they cannot concentrate on anything while under a Tinnitus attack.

There are two types of Tinnitus. Therapy depends on the type that you have, which is why it is important to see a doctor or audiologist if you start hearing continuous abnormal sounds. While working someone up for the source of the Tinnitus, a doctor or audiologist will take a complete medical history and ask about the drugs that you take. You will have an audiogram. The examiner will place a stethoscope over the patient's outer ear. If the examiner hears the same sound as the patient then the symptom is dubbed Objective Tinnitus.



If your doctor suspects you have Objective Tinnitus, you will most likely have a CAT scan or MRI as part of your workup to determine if you have inner ear damage. Problems of this sort occur after an injury or a trauma that result in a broken blood vessel, damage to the bones of the inner ear, or muscle contractions within the inner ear. Once the injury is repaired and healed, the Tinnitus usually goes away.

Those diagnosed with Subjective Tinnitus are bothered by sounds only they can hear. There are several ways to treat Subjective Tinnitus. Doctors and audiologists usually recommend hearing aids even if there is only mild hearing loss. Most of the major hearing aid manufacturers have Tinnitus therapy options, known as white noise, built into their hearing aids. Via a setting on their hearing aids, the patient listens to distracting sounds such as water trickling or ocean waves, in the hope that their brain will focus away from the sound of Tinnitus. If you have no hearing loss associated with your tinnitus then you will receive treatment through the use of specialized equipment that can deliver white noise. Often this type of treatment is very successful.

Some hearing aid manufacturers are experimenting with new treatments called Tinnitus Notch Therapy. In this type of treatment, the audiologist or physician identifies the sound frequency of the Tinnitus and then lowers it, until it fades into nor-

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Providing support and advocacy for  
people with hearing loss

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Hearing Loss Association of  
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chapter

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**21 Nov Meeting** 9:30 Am - Noon On **Zoom**

Join the Zoom meeting on Nov 21 by following this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89169391217?pwd=TUZucFdSNIB-vZiNoNkx4TE5lQmgtQT09>

**Dementia and Hearing Loss**

A few years ago, Dr. Carol Clifford of Albuquerque Hearing and Balance shared a presentation about hearing loss, dementia and the relationship to each other.

Our own chapter president, Dr. Norm Dawson, will be giving a similar presentation that talks about dementia at the November HLAA-ABQ meeting. He will be sharing some of the many other causes that are attributed to dementia, one of which is hearing loss.

He will share why it is important not to leave your hearing aids in the drawer and why you should keep your hearing as functional as possible. Invite your family and friends who may know someone who has a hearing loss to this important topic.

**Upcoming programs:**

Topics in the works:

- Hearing loss in the hospital
- Stress during the holidays
- Traveling with COVID
- Family events with COVID—Are they safe?

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](mailto:hlaabq@gmail.com).

Yearly dues are \$15 per household. They are due in January, but you may pay yours early and get it out of the way in 2020.

mal background noise thus retraining your brain to hear those annoying sounds as you would hear environmental sounds. Eventually you learn to ignore the sound. 65% of those who try this therapy see a success.

Tinnitus is not an easy condition to deal with, but there are many therapy options. If you are me-

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The HLAAbq NPO number for Smith's is 14881.

### Note from the HLAA-ABQ President

I got my first hearing aid when I was about 15 years old. Back then hearing aids were primarily for "old folks." I felt so out of place and had zero support except for a friendly audiologist who told me about the t-coil and how to change batteries. There was no HLAA and no other kids that I knew of at my age, and most adults did not even understand or know what hearing aids would do. They looked like funny things on my ears! The resources that we have available to us now are astounding, including the HLAA-ABQ chapter meetings and the educational information shared with us. The changes since my first days of hearing aids are incredible. Our last meeting was an example of just a couple of changes.

Wow! Talk about changes! We had another great HLAA-ABQ meeting. With the help of the board members and all the volunteers we got some great information from 2 great speakers.

- Nathan Gomme is on top of many many changes that we can use in our daily lives. I cannot stress too often the knowledge and breadth of the technical information that Nathan Gomme—Executive Director of the NM Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing—

andering through the hearing world with this problem, you might want to see a doctor or audiologist to receive the help that you need. When Tinnitus and hearing loss are treated, most people experience more productive and happier lives.

**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/amazonmile.html> for more information and detailed instructions on how to designate HLAA-ABQ Chapter as your charity of choice when you make [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) purchases.

Once you have set it up, always log into [smile.amazon.com](http://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.

shared with us this second time around. We in NM are very fortunate to have his expertise available to us and so appreciative of him taking time to share at our meeting. I encourage you to find out as much as you can to take advantage of the services and technologies and information that the Commission makes available to us. He encourages us to reach out and ask questions. Please feel free to do so. You can email [nathan.Gomme@state.nm.us](mailto:nathan.Gomme@state.nm.us) or call the NM Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:

- Voice: 505-383-6530
- TTY: 505-383-6541
- VP: 505-435-9319
- Toll-free: 1-800-489-8536
- Fax: 505-383-6533



Another great change since my days as a hearing aid user was the telephone. Back then, I was lucky if I could get an amplifier for my landline phone. Ha! LOL! Now these little gadgets called cell phones are small computers. And there are all kinds of applications to help us hear and communicate with others in so many ways.



We had the pleasure of hearing from Cristina and Matt with InnoCaption.

InnoCaption provides, at no cost to you, closed captioning of phone conversations on your cell phone. Created for the deaf and hard of hearing, InnoCaption empowers you to call anyone, day or night, with fast and accurate real-time captioning. If your hearing loss makes understanding your cell phone calls difficult, the app is the solution for you! For more information check out their website <https://innocaption.com/>

Of course, as you can imagine, when I was a kid I did not even imagine what a cell phone was. I wonder what kinds of changes are going to happen in the next 5-10-20 years?

See you next meeting!

*Dr. Norm Dawson, DC, BUS, BS, AAGG*

## First impressions of InnoCaption

*Bobbi Rodriguez, Treasurer, HLAA Abq*

I followed their instructions and went to their website. There was a link to register, and it was very easy. They warned there would be a Welcome e-mail, which came within a couple of minutes. During my wait, I loaded the app. The e-mail had my InnoCaption phone number and links to instructions on how to set up call forwarding & voice mail.

The app had all my contact information and is easy to use. I called my sister & explained my new "toy". I then asked her if the caller ID was my name and if my ring tone played. They both did.

The captioning was pretty good, but I could tell what was being said from the context of the conversation when there was an error. There were even a couple of times the captioning filled in something I missed.

I had Rod call me as a test. This was a bit different. His ID showed up on the screen & his ringtone played. However, it gave me the number pad screen, and I had buttons to choose iPhone or InnoCaption to answer, which threw me off. I chose the InnoCaption icon. Rod was immediately connected, but my phone was locked, and I had to unlock my phone and open the app to get to the captions. That was a bit annoying, but now I know what to do, and it is workable.

### *Life After Death*

When I die from age or ill  
And there I lie, stone cold and still,  
When you stare around my shroud,  
Good friends, beware, don't talk too loud.  
For though my soul's no longer perking,  
My hearing aid may still be working.

*Mrs. S. Pendergrass*

I like to go dancing,  
Tho' I can't hear the beat.  
But I pick up the vibes  
Thru' the soles of my feet.  
That system ain't bad,  
But it still has its faults;  
I once danced the tango  
When the piano played a waltz.

*L. Margolis*



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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 bimonthly publication Hearing Life.



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