



Our mission is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

## Chicago North Shore Chapter Newsletter 2021



### DECEMBER

Chapter in-person meetings at the North Shore Senior Center continue to be a hope for the near future.

### Upcoming Meeting

**Virtual Holiday Party**  
**11 a.m. to Noon Monday**  
**December 13, 2021**

You are invited to join us at the HLAA Chicago North Shore Chapter's annual Holiday Party Zoom meeting.

Register below by clicking the Zoom link.  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZUlcOuhrDMoEtHmB0paAEaOeWyE4tGep2rO>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Zoom meeting on Monday, December 13, 2021.

Bindy Bitterman will read and discuss her new book, "Skiddly Diddly Skat". She will answer questions about how she developed and published the book.

Did you begin a new hobby during the pandemic? Tell us about your "Pandemic Projects". We can share and learn from each other's creativity. For example: Jean has sewn dolly clothes for her granddaughters, and Liz has painted and distributed rocks with heartfelt messages *and* adopted a hearing guide puppy. Others may have read some books they'd recommend or discovered games, gardening, photography, memoir-writing, birdwatching, sketching, or something else that they have always wanted to do.

Two \$10 Starbucks gift cards will be awarded: one to the person who has the ugliest holiday sweater; and one for the most creative Zoom background, be it virtual or your own artfully created background. Looking forward to seeing you on Monday!

Elaine McCaffrey

## Chapter Sponsors

### Platinum Level (\$200 or more)

Margie Cox  
Audiology Associates of Deerfield, PC  
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Debbie Borales

We are very grateful to these Sponsors for their generosity and support of the HLAA Chicago North Shore Chapter.

**NOTE:** if your name or business is not listed correctly, please let us know.

## When doing your holiday gift shopping,

please don't forget that the Chicago North Shore Chapter is on AmazonSmile and benefits from your using the link shown below.

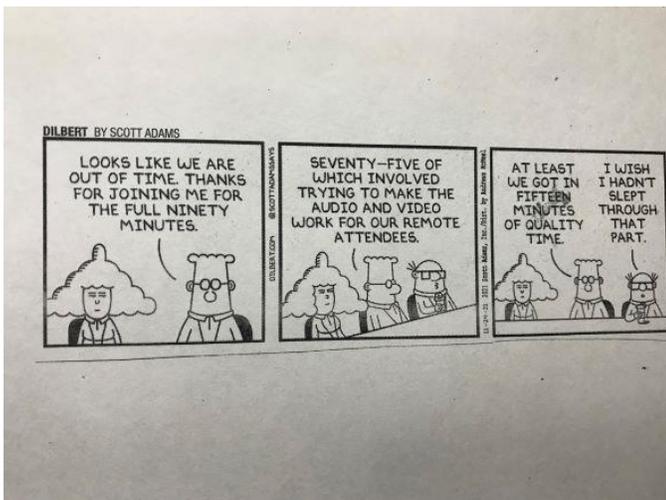
Shop at [smile.amazon.com/ch/27-3871624](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-3871624) and Amazon will donate to the Hearing Loss Association of America Chicago North Shore Chapter.

## Meandering Through A Hearing World



### Mixing and Mingling While Trying to Hear

I should be getting dressed to go out to a Christmas party with friends. Instead, I'm procrastinating and writing, dreading the upcoming evening. It has nothing to do with my friends. They are dear, sweet people, and I love being around them. It isn't Christmas, I'm a fan, just walk around my house and you'll be treated to a decked-out tree, table decorations, and my lovely Christmas village, displayed as usual. I love parties; the wine, the food, the dancing are all up there are my holiday to-do list. It's the noise I dread. Struggling to hear in a crowded room with music and the voices of fifty other people is difficult and exhausting. Often, those of us



who suffer from hearing loss wonder why we put ourselves through these kinds of social events.

One of the things any healthcare professional will tell you is that hearing loss greatly affects one's ability to socialize. Even those with a mild hearing loss find it difficult to navigate in noisy environments. I remember complaining about my inability to hear well in noise to a forty-something ENT physician and his comment was, "Oh, I can't hear in those kind of places either, and my hearing is perfect."

So what does one do? I have my hearing tricks to help me through the noise of socializing. Lately, my husband and I try to meet up with only one other couple at a time. We find sitting at a table with six or eight people an impossible hearing situation. At cocktail gatherings, I tend to find a corner in the room and most of the time, people will gravitate toward me if for no other reason than curiosity. What's that woman doing standing there all by herself? While lurking on the sidelines of a party, I've made new friends and had some pretty interesting conversations. I'm finding most people over a certain age share my hearing issues and empathize with my hearing issues.

I've also found that honesty helps. I've been accused of being aloof and antisocial, but when most people find out I suffer from hearing loss, they are understanding and change their way of thinking about me. Telling people that you have hearing loss and pointing out that you need to face them or that you need to move to a quieter area of a party usually works. However there are those, and I've run into them, who will never understand what someone with hearing loss goes through. I'm of the mind that if someone isn't

courteous enough to accommodate your needs then why would you want to talk with them? Or be around them?

My husband is reminding me that if I don't turn off my computer and get dressed we're going to be late. I'm not one to keep my friends waiting. So I'm taking a deep breath, gathering some courage and hearing strength, hoping I'll have a great evening. Putting on a great attitude along with a dress and makeup is the best way to meander through the holiday hearing world.

**Linda Bilodeau, Sarasota Chapter HLAA**

STEVEN PETROW Special To The Washington Post

At 45, I needed reading glasses. I got them. At 52, distance lenses. Ditto. By 56, I had graduated to progressives, which incorporate distance and reading, and all I remember thinking was, "Wow, these are expensive." Not once did I balk at getting spectacles as my vision started to deteriorate. If and when I need hearing aids? Well, that's another matter.

**Editors' note: We frequently publish website links to further information related to newsletter articles. If you have a problem with a link, please let us know and we will attempt to provide a printed copy of the reference.**

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