

Telephone: (585) 266-7890 Email: info@hearinglossrochester.org Website: https://www.hearinglossrochester.org

Volume 38, Number 1



# Special COLOR Edition

September 2024

# **SEPTEMBER CALENDAR & PROGRAMS**

Monthly Daytime Program Meeting In Person at St. Paul's and on Zoom - September 10<sup>th</sup>

# **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10**

#### **10:00 AM-11:00 AM IN PERSON, ST PAUL'S VESTRY ROOM:** JOE KOZELSKY CCC/A, HOPE Session: 'Hearing Other People's Experiences' (HOPE)

**11:00 AM - 11:30 AM AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL:** Conversation and light refreshments.

**11:30 AM - NOON AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL:** Chapter announcements and business meeting

#### NOON - 1:00 PM AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL AND ON ZOOM

#### **Featured Presentation:** Phoenix AZ Convention report from attendees and HLAA National Update from Pete Fackler

National HLAA's Treasurer, Pete Fackler will lead a panel of local attendees to the recent National HLAA Convention. One question for discussion - what was the most significant experience you took away from the convention?

# WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

**7:00 PM - 8:00 PM ON ZOOM:** Hope in the Evening. Same as the live morning but for Zoomers.

# **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17**

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ON ZOOM: Board of Directors Meeting

#### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**

#### 10:00 am - 2:00 pm - ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICE DEMO CENTER. Technology Team. In person. Lifespan, 1900 South Clinton Avenue

View and try out a selection of assistive-listening devices before actually buying them. Included are captioning-capable and amplified telephones, signalingalerting devices and smart phone APPs related to hearing enhancement. Chapter members stand by to

# 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Book Club on Zoom See

back page for details.

answer your questions.

(Continued next column)

# Leader's Letter

By Suzanne Johnston, Chapter President

I am so pleased to be able to write this letter as your new chapter president this program year. We have so



much to celebrate, and also so much to accomplish together this year for our chapter and for people with hearing loss.

This past year or so, with Dan Brooks at the helm, we/our members accomplished much:

We put into place a **new organizational model** for our Chapter, we joined forces with an area graphic designer for **new educational/promotional products and venues**, we began a **book club for folks with hearing loss**, we made **presentations and demos in area libraries and health fairs** and **donated books on hearing loss**, we began a **pilot program to reach** 

(Continued on page 2)

# **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**

8:00 - 9:00 pm on Zoom: HEAR TOGETHER: Kristin Bergholtz CCC/SLP./Carly Alicea Au.D/Ph.D

Speech language pathologist Kristen Bergholtz conducts a virtual support group with audiologist Carly Alicea.

For parents and caregivers of Deaf/hard of hearing children. Learn more about your child's hearing loss, services to benefit them, and tips to support their language development. To register, contact kristinbslp@gmail.com.

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

#### 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom: Cochlear Implant Meeting

Pete Fackler will facilitate a meeting with a representative of Cochlear Americas, one of the three manufacturers of cochlear implants worldwide, will be here to answer your questions. To register, send a message to **cochlearimplantgroup@gmail.com** and provide your name and contact information.

Please check our Chapter Website hearinglossrochester.org for any changes

# Leader's Letter

#### (Continued from page 1)

inner-city folks with hearing loss. These efforts were in addition to what we do on a regular basis: we continued to fine-tune our access technology for meetings, and for support of community members, we raised dollars by participating in a successful Walk4Hearing, we offered monthly educational programs that are hybrid, as well as evening programs for those unable to attend daytime meetings, we updated our website, we instituted alternative/virtual methods of donating/ making payments, we brought into our fold a group who addresses the needs of parents of children with hearing loss, and we celebrated , at a Gala event, 40 years of service to the Rochester community and surrounding areas. And that is just the 'tip of the iceberg'...so much more has been accomplished.

As this new program year approaches, the challenges are significant. Not just to keep up with all our current activities, but to know how we can continue to develop and improve our work in the community.

Our Rochester Chapter is one of the largest in the country, (close to 340 members!) and continues to be *run solely by those who generously volunteer* their time, gifts and energy to keep the proverbial 'ship' – our Rochester Chapter - moving forward.

I am ever grateful and amazed at the energy and commitment of so many folks whose mission is clearly to promote the cause of supporting people with hearing loss. They include our Board of Directors, our Committee Chairs and members, our treasurers, our website managers, our social media wizards, our phone answerers, our newsletter writers/printers, our correspondence composers/senders, etc. etc., etc. the list goes on. It certainly 'takes a village' to run such a large organization. And, as we have increased in size and complexity, the Board has begun to look at ways to stay organized (and not overwhelmed) so that we can continue to effectively move forward with success.

This year your Board of Directors began to craft a different organizational model to more evenly distribute the work of the Executive Branch of our organization. This effort is essential in making sure that we have leaders who are prepared/willing/able to step up to important roles without feeling overwhelmed by the potential workload that may be present for such a large volunteer organization.

That model includes establishing 'Division' Chairs who will take on expanded roles in managing, monitoring and communicating the work of each Division. Each 'Division' will include all the current HLAA Rochester Standing Committees within various areas of focus eg. Officer, Administrative, Committee (Support Services), Outreach (Education & Advocacy Services), and Technology Divisions. Those Chairpersons will become more integrally involved in management and communications regarding their Division progress, needs and focus with the Executive branch.

We hope that this new way of doing things will develop more leaders, prepare more individuals to assume management roles, and to streamline the otherwise separate works of each Standing Committee (of which there are now 10!)

As this new '24/'25 Program Year comes into focus, I hope you will join me in being excited to see what new things we, as a team, will accomplish. If you have any questions, or ideas you would like to share about this 'new way of doing things', or are interested in volunteering to do the important and significant work of our Chapter, please always feel free to reach out to me at: **sejohnston1959@gmail.com**.

Suzanne Johnston, President '24/'25, HLAA Rochester Chapter

# **Cochlear Implant Group Meets Sept. 26**

The HLAA Rochester Cochlear Implant Group kicks off its fall 2024 programming with a Thursday September 26 visit from a representative of Cochlear Americas, one of the three manufacturers of cochlear implants, worldwide.

The program is set for 7:00 pm. and will run to 8:30 pm. Group discussion will follow the formal presentation.

To register, send a message to **cochlearimplantgroup@gmail.com** to provide your name and contact information.

# **HLAA Rochester Book Club**

By Jennifer Lowden

The Book Club is currently reading *Shouting Won't Help: Why I...and 50 Million Other Americans Can't Hear You* by Katherine Bouton.

I invite you to join us on zoom on Thursday, September 19 at 7:00 pm for a discussion of the book. If you are interested in attending, please email Eric Matson at **pematson3@verizon.net** and he will send out the zoom invite a few days before September 19<sup>th</sup>. The book is currently available through the Monroe County and OWWL (Ontario, Wayne, Wyoming, Livingston counties) Library Systems.

Jennifer Lowden is the Assistant Director of the Chili Public Library and Chairs the new HLAA Rochester Chapter Book Club.

# Bruce and Candi Nelson, Receive the Outstanding Chapter Newsletter Award



Our co-Editors, Bruce and Candi Nelson, were presented with the Outstanding Chapter Newsletter Award at the HLAA National Convention in Phoenix.

They took on the position as our newsletter editors in the Fall of 2020 after the illness and passing of our former editor, Ginger Graham. And, as you can see, they do an award winning job!

Bruce and Candi, as our Newsletter Editors, accepted the award at this year's National HLAA Convention.

Bruce and Candi have been more than generous with their time and talent. Bruce not only performs editing functions but helps with mailing and often the Newsletter distribution as well. The Chapter usually has between 800-840 issues per month - a staggering but very welcomed number.

Bruce and Candi write in a style that is optimistic, informative, and educational, with articles from many sources which allows for both updates regarding hearing aids and assistive listening devices, and the experiences of those with hearing loss.

We congratulate Bruce and Candi for winning the National award for our Rochester Chapter, and of course we are very grateful for all the hard work and effort they put in to produce our extraordinary Newsletter!

# seen at the convention















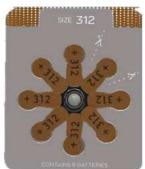






MORE PICTURES AT HTTPS://BIT.LY/HLAA2024

The packaging of hearing aid batteries has undergone significant changes, driven by a combination of safety concerns and regulatory requirements. One of the most notable catalysts for this transformation is Reese's Law, named after Reese



Hamsmith, a young child who tragically lost her life after swallowing a button cell battery.

# THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Button cell batteries, commonly used in hearing aids, pose a serious risk if ingested by children or pets. These small, coin-shaped batteries can cause severe internal injuries if swallowed. Recognizing this danger, Reese's Law was enacted in August 2022 to mandate childresistant packaging for all button and coin cell batteries, including those used in hearing aids.

# NEW PACKAGING STANDARDS

The new packaging standards require that all hearing aid batteries be enclosed in child-

resistant packaging. This means that the packaging must be difficult for children to open, but still accessible for seniors and individuals with limited dexterity. The shift started in early 2023 and full compliance will be in early 2024.

Manufacturers are working diligently to redesign their packaging to meet the new standards while ensuring that the batteries remain easy to use for their primary audience.

#### **IMPACT ON CONSUMERS**

Unfortunately, making packages child-proof is making them almost adult-proof. The batteries sold by our HLAA chapter are now easily opened via a tab in the cardboard. They will be changing to a version which requires the batteries to be cut out with scissors. A similar package made by BatteryOne for Costco is pictured above.

#### **POSSIBLE WORKAROUNDS**

Various postings on social media have suggested that if it is difficult to open your battery packages, you could enlist the help of someone who can cut into the package and empty it into a carry-case of some sort. Some have suggested it may be time to look into rechargeable hearing aids. They suggest you speak to your hearing aid provider for a solution that works for you.

# Captioned Entertainment Around Rochester

JCC Center Stage - Tickets and information are available at www.jcccenterstage.org or (585) 461-2000. Please specify "Captioned Area". Tickets are \$35-40 with discounts for JCC members, full time students and seasonal subscribers. All captioned performances are on Sundays at 2 pm.

**The Little** - The Little Theatre provides options for people with hearing loss, including hearing amplification headphones in all theaters. The hearing amplification headphones can also be used for descriptive listening.

Theatres 1, 2, 4, and 5, are equipped with Hearing Loop Systems. Personal captioning devices are available for all theaters. Please inquire at the box office.

The Little offers open caption screenings when available. Open captions mean captions are visible to everyone, and cannot be turned off. Open caption screenings are currently shown on Thursdays, along with the first matinees on Sundays (please note some films do not have an open caption version). You can find Open Caption shows via thelittle.org (listed in the showtimes on each film page), and on social media. **Roc Cinema** has a hearing loop and some Saturday matinee movies are open-captioned.

**Other Theaters -** Regal Theatres, Cinemark Theaters, AMC Theaters, and Movie 10 all indicate on their websites that they have closed captioning devices available by asking at the box office. The Strand Theater in Brockport, has individual displays on goosenecks available .



**GEVA Theatre Center** - Open Captioning for patrons with hearing loss is provided during the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday matinee and both performances of the final Wednesday of each Wilson Stage Series production,

and the first Saturday matinee of each Fielding Stage Series production. When booking your seats, mention your interest in open captioning in order to secure the most advantageous view of the display on the right of the stage.

-	<b>RBTL Live Theater</b> - Open Captioning, made pos-		
rbtl	sible by HLAA, is offered during most 1 pm Sunday		
	matinee subscription performances of the Broadway		
Season, and select other performances. A text display scrolls			
words in synchronization with the dialogue and lyrics of the			
show. Reserve seating in view of the captioning screen in ad-			
vance or request open captioning for unlisted events,			
585.222.5000 or mail@rbtl.org.			

# In Memoriam

The HLAA Rochester Chapter mourns the loss of three of our most active volunteers over the Summer, Allan Baker, Fred Altreith, and Barbara Law.

# Allan Baker

Allan Baker passed away on June 27, 2024 at age 86.

Most recently, he could be found working at the HLAA Assistive Device Demo Center where he would help setup and cleanup, and would share his knowledge with visitors to the center.

He was predeceased by parents, Frederick & Margaret Baker; daughter Jane (Jim) Bacon; & his brother, Frederick (Mae) Baker Jr. He is survived by his wife, Janet 'Ludwig' Baker; daughters, Robyn Baker & Wendy Baker; son, Christopher (Lauren) Williams; grandchildren, Lydia (Jonah) Lester, Jessica Barnes,



Brooke Barnés, Karl Williams, & Vivienne Williams; great-grandchildren, Sheyan, Hailey & Nataly Lester.

After a career at Eastman Kodak, he ran his own business installing dog containment systems. He received much knowledge & support from the HLAA Rochester Chapter.

# **Fred Altrieth**

Fred Altrieth Jr. passed away peacefully on July 20,



2024. He was predeceased by his loving wife of 54 years Josephine and survived by his children Fred (Monica) Altrieth III, David (Lynette) Altrieth, Deborah Altrieth, Kevin Altrieth; grandchildren Kailee (Brian), Olivia (Justin), Steven, Amber (Troy); great granddaughter Adalyn Josephine; and furry companion Sophie.

Fred was a unique individual who went out of his way to help people with hearing loss. He collected just about every known hearing assistive device in order to recommend them to others.

Fred was a member of the Chapter for almost 40 years. He was head of the Technology Committee and installed the loop in the Vestry Room at St. Paul's Church, from which we all benefit today. He was instrumental in doing the initial groundwork for the Assistive Device Demo Center, using many collected devices for the very first Demonstration Presentation for our Chapter. Fred's dedication to the Chapter and those with hearing loss was profound; he was a tremendous advocate for our Chapter for decades. Along with his passion for fishing, Fred had an endearing personality, a quick smile, and never ending sense of compassion for people with hearing loss. We have lost a great friend.

Fred was presented with the HLAA Rochester Chapter Spirit Award in March, 2024.

# **Barbara** Law

Barbara Law died peacefully on August 1, 2024 at the age of 81.

Barb was a long - standing, very active, dedicated member of the HLAA Rochester Chapter. Her leadership skills went a long way. She served as its President, was a member of many committees, served as early Webmaster and was on our Board of Directors for many terms. Barb was the Chairperson of the Program Committee almost from it's inception, arranging speakers for the monthly evening and special meetings. Barb, brought a calming approach to stressful situations, had a ready smile, and always had a kind word for everyone. Her hard work, many talents and easy style will be missed.



She was predeceased by her husband, David Law, father and mother, Robert and Clara Stoneham, brothers: Harry (Norma) Stoneham, Paul Stoneham, David (Jane) Ward and sister, Grace Stoneham. She is survived by her sons: Stephen (Nicole) Law and Bryan (Colleen) Law, granddaughters: Paxton Law, Madilyn Law and Isobel Law, and many nephews, nieces, cousins and close friends.

Barbara taught elementary education for 5 years before deciding to stay home to raise her family. She went back to college (RIT) to get a computer technology degree, and worked as a computer programmer at the University of Rochester, until she retired in 2008.

# "Your Voice Matters" Survey Updated

In our June newsletter, we published an advertisement on the back page, for a survey being conducted by RIT Professor Dr. Qing Mao and student Iskender Mambetkadyrov.

Unfortunately, shortly after the newsletter was printed, their website was inundated with bots and fraudulent responses and needed to be taken down. The survey has since been redesigned, and interested participants must first fill in a screening form in order to receive a link to the actual online survey, which will have video ASL interpretation for each question and answer choice for greater accessibility.

The purpose of the survey is to gauge the current effectiveness of local emergency services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Rochester, NY area, and to solicit ideas on how they can be improved.

It is anticipated that the survey will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Successful participants will receive a \$20 gift card. Responses are anonymous and confidential and will be used only for research purposes.

To access the screening form, go to https://rit.az1.qualtrics.com/ jfe/form/SV\_5A015WP0hxciELk

or scan the QR code:



Questions may be directed to Dr. Qing Mao at qxmgla@rit.edu.

This research is supported by the National Science Foundation and Department of Energy under Award No. 2322255.

# **Fackler Elected National HLAA Treasurer**

Congratulations to Pete Fackler on being elected as Treasurer of the National Hearing Loss Association of America. He has previously served as the national association's Board Chairman and Vice-Chairman and as the Rochester Board Chairman and other positions.

HLAA needs help identifying TV advertisers who caption their TV ads. Please send the names of local advertisers



who close-(or open) caption their ads to:

captions@hearinglossrochester.org

# Donations

# **Donations in Addition to Membership**

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**Thank you to our major contributors** Elaine VanderBrook Warren Crandell Estate Phyllis & J. Stuart MacDonald Estate Dr. Ruth P. Oakley Estate Mary Tuckley Estate

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Happy Birthday in September to: 9 Jim McGrath 10 Marlene Sutliff 13 Julius Toenniessen 15 Janet McKenna 18 Nancy Meyer 23 Mary Ann Stager 25 Jenn Lowden

# **Buy Hearing Aid Batteries from HLAA**

The HLAA Rochester offers hearing aid batteries at our monthly program meetings. You may purchase a pack of six for \$1.50, or an entire box (60 batteries) for \$15.00.

# REFRESHMENTS

We appreciate our members who have volunteered to bring refreshments to our September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting: Gayle Carini, Sue Miller, Paul and Mary Ann Stager, and Marlene Sutliff

# **HLAA New York State Association Report**

by Peter Fackler, President -- Board of Directors

The work of the state association typically slows down over the summer and 2024 has been no exception.



Meanwhile, the national office team together with the New York City chapter and our friends in Buffalo are hard

at work planning for their respective Walk4Hearing events in September. Earlier, in May, the Westchester/Rockland Walk4Hearing set records for attendance and for financial contributions acquired.

The Buffalo Walk4Hearing will take place Saturday September 21 and the New York City Walk will take place Sunday September 15. As you read this newsletter, there is still time to register for one of these events and participate in this fun and awareness-raising event to support the work of HLAA on the national level and locally. Visit walk4hearing.org for information and to register.

As I write this piece for the chapter newsletter, we have learned of the passing of **Barbara Law**, a long-time leader of the Rochester chapter of HLAA after her dogged and courageous fight with cancer. With Barbara's passing and not long ago, **Fred Altrieth**, and **Al Baker**, we have lost three great friends and colleagues of long standing who gave so much of themselves and enriched the lives of all of us who have known them. RIP.

# **Assistive Device Demo Center**

Our chapter sponsors the Assistive Device Demo Center where our members and the public can see some of the latest devices available to help them with day-to-



day difficulties associated with hearing loss.

The types of devices represented during the demo sessions include signaling-alerting devices,

captioned telephones and personal assistive listening devices with an emphasis on TV listening and coping with noisy environments. Chapter members stand by to answer questions.

Sessions are usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month. The next demo session is at Lifespan, 1900 S. Clinton Ave. (Tops Plaza) on Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 2:00 pm. Sessions are free. All are welcome!

# **My Story**

#### by Brian Fox

I grew up in the village of Brockport and when my brother and I were in high school my parents strongly insisted we attend SUNY Brockport, live at home, and become teachers. I attended that teacher's college from 1964-1968. Besides graduation as an elementary education major, my greatest accomplishment was falling in love and marrying Kathy who has been my wife for 56 years. Her career included teaching elementary school at Holley Central School.

In the fall of 1968, I began teaching fourth grade at Brockport Central School. In 1977, I noticed about a 60db hearing loss in my right ear. The next year I had an unsuccessful stapedectomy operation on that ear that resulted in losing all my hearing in that ear. In 1979, I was fitted with my first bi-cross hearing aid. The problem I had was working with 27 students all day with a hearing aid that tended to amplify all the classroom sounds. This issue and others forced me to make the extremely difficult decision to stop teaching and take a disability retirement after just teaching 14 years. I went back to SUNY Brockport and earned a Master of Public Administration degree (MPA).

From 1986-1999, I worked in the non-profits at Big Brothers/Big Sister, the Rochester Presbyterian Home, LIFESPAN, and Neighborhood Housing Services of Rochester. At BB/BS, besides special events coordination and fund raising, I did case management that included administering a deaf/hard of hearing mentoring program. After 14 years at those organizations, I left to work another 14 years in facilities at Pearce Memorial Church next to the Roberts Wesleyan campus. At all the places I worked it was always a pleasure to help and inform people about hearing loss, hearing aids and SHHH/HLAA.

While working part time in 1985 it was brought to my attention from a staff member at The Health Association that Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH) was started in Rochester. I've been an active member for 40 years and some highlights include being president in 1989-1990, all the friends I've made, and how it has helped me cope with my hearing loss. If you attended our 40th anniversary celebration last year you would note from the brochure you were given which included all the accomplishments our chapter has achieved. These accomplishments, the community partnerships attained, and how we have attained our mission of support, education, and advocacy consistently over the years have been truly outstanding. Together with national HLAA, we have a proud past and look forward to continuing to serve.





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- Elizabeth Orlando, Au.D.
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# HLAA Membership Information

Hearing Loss Association (HLAA) Rochester Chapter, Inc., a tax exempt and volunteer group, is a chapter of a national, nonprofit, nonsectarian, educational organization devoted to the welfare and interests of those who cannot hear well.

We are currently meeting in person and online via Zoom. See our website at

# hearinglossrochester.org

to register for the online access.

While our primary focus is directed toward people with hearing loss, we welcome everyone to our chapter meetings whatever their hearing ability.

For more information, call

585 266 7890 or see hearinglossrochester.org

#### Professional Advisors Sue Miller, Chair

**2023-2025:** Jeff Klein Jennifer Popovich Korin Reynolds Betsy Runnion, Ph.D.

2024-2026: Paula Brown Meghan Fox, PsyD William Marshall John McNamara, AuD.

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<u>Newsletter</u> Newsletter deadline: first day of the month preceding the issue month.

Bruce & Candi Nelson, Editors 120 Cobblestone Dr. Rochester, NY 14623 585-334-5513 editor@hearinglossrochester.org

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

# Be Part of National HLAA

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\*Donations of \$45 and higher have option to receive Hearing Life Magazine by mail.

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or send your donation, with your name, address, phone number, and email address (if any) to 6116 Executive Blvd, Suite

320, Rockville, MD 20852

#### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP FORM HLAA-ROCHESTER Membership year: July 1 - September 30

I want to join as a first-time member I want to renew

All members receive the Rochester chapter Newsletter!

Check preference for access: via US mail via Chapter website Check membership type: Individual Family Corporate Check contribution: (\*please consider a charitable donation above Basic dues - an acknowledgement is sent for donations of \$10 or more.): Basic/Individual Dues, \$10• Basic/Family Dues, \$20 Corporate\*\$50• Friend\* \$25• Partner\*\$50, Supporting\*\$100•Donation, \$

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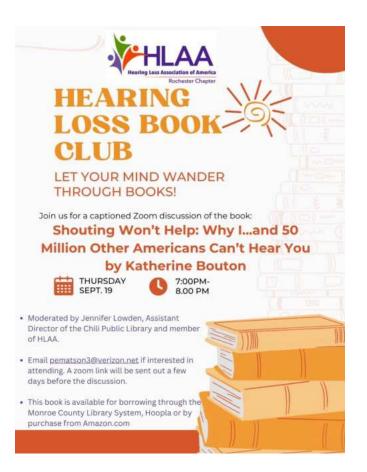


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# **Our Meetings are Hearing Accessible**

We meet in St. Paul's Episcopal Church, East Ave. and Westminster Rd., across from the George Eastman Museum. Parking is available at the George Eastman Museum, if needed.

All meetings are <u>audio looped and captioned</u>. Our chapter meetings will also be streamed on Zoom, with captioning. See our website at **hearinglossrochester.org** to sign up for access to all future meetings. Please register at least 24 hours before the first meeting you wish to attend, so that you will receive the link by email.

Everyone, with or without a hearing loss, is welcome to join our meetings online or in person.