

Focus on Tinnitus and Hyperacusis

American Tinnitus Association
www.tinnitus.org
founded 40 years ago, it funds research for a cure and publishes *Tinnitus Today* magazine.

From the ATA website:

What is Tinnitus?

Put simply, tinnitus is the perception of sound in the ears or head where no external source is present. Some call it "ringing in the ears" or "head noise."

50 million people have tinnitus. It is the #1 disability for military veterans.

Patient FAQ from the ATA website:

10) What causes tinnitus?

We have made tremendous advances through research, based on what is known about the auditory (hearing) system - sound is detected by the ear and processed by the brain. But the exact physiological cause or causes of tinnitus are not known. There are several likely sources, all of which are known to trigger or worsen tinnitus.

- Noise exposure - [Exposure to loud noises can damage and even destroy hair cells](#), called cilia, in the inner ear. Once damaged, these hair cells cannot be renewed or replaced.
- Head and neck trauma - Physical trauma to the head and neck can induce tinnitus. Other symptoms include headaches, vertigo, and memory loss.
- Certain disorders, such as hypo- or hyperthyroidism, Lyme disease, fibromyalgia, and thoracic outlet syndrome, can have tinnitus as a symptom. When tinnitus is a -->

Saturday, October 22 at 10 AM

coffee & conversation at 9:30 am



Tinnitus: A Problem of Ear and Brain" with Jennifer Melcher, Ph. D.

Dr. Melcher, Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School and Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary, is a neuroscientist, not a medical doctor, and has been studying hearing and the brain for over 20 years. Her research currently focuses on the clinical problem of tinnitus, the perception of sound in the absence of any source. She and her research group use a variety of approaches to understand both ear and brain function in people with tinnitus. She has recently returned from speaking at a national convention and is looking forward to sharing new research information with us. Live CART transcription for this meeting is provided by a grant from the Kelley Foundation. We thank them for their support.

Free and Open to the Public



---> (continued from previous column)

symptom of another disorder, treating the disorder can help alleviate it.

- Certain types of tumors
- Wax build-up
- Jaw misalignment
- Cardiovascular disease
- Ototoxicity - [Some medications are ototoxic](#), that is, the medications are toxic to the ear. Other medications will produce tinnitus as a side effect without damaging the inner ear. Effects, which can depend on the dosage of the medication, can be temporary or permanent. Before taking any medication, make sure that your prescribing physician is aware of your tinnitus, and discuss alternative medications that may be available. There are some websites that provide information on drug interactions. Two popular resources for this are Drugwatch.com and the Physicians Desktop Reference websites.

Hyperacusis is defined as a collapsed tolerance to normal environmental sounds. Everyday sounds become painfully loud and there is no cure at this point. The Hyperacusis Network, www.hyperacusis.net primarily consists of individuals who are sensitive to sound and their caregivers. This can include, but is not limited to, individuals who suffer from hyperacusis, recruitment, hyperacute hearing, tinnitus, misophonia, phonophobia, autism, and Meneires.

**Sept. Meeting with Perry Ebel
by Janet Jansson**

Perry Ebel, Ph.D., BC-HIS, of Beltone New England focused on "The Future is Now! Advancements in Hearing Aid Technology" and explored the past, present and future of hearing aid technology. Beginning with the early 1940's when aids were very cumbersome, he brought us, decade by decade, up to the present with small receivers and tiny wires, technologically able to transmit voices and sounds, unnoticeably. For the future, we can look forward to Bluetooth technology, which allows different devices to talk to each other over the air, such as TV and cell phones wirelessly connecting directly to our hearing aids. And, with a remote, no less! After the meeting, hearing aids were cleaned by representatives from local Beltone offices--Jerry Pessin, Mary Harris, Cynthia Connolly and Nataly Swanson. It was an interesting--and encouraging--meeting. We thank them all for their time.

2012 CHAPTER DUES--

Annual chapter dues are still only \$10. If you join now, your dues will include the rest of 2011 and all of 2012. Or consider a LIFETIME membership at only \$100.

Looking for help!

Help identify meeting places with loops such as town halls, school auditoriums, libraries, and places of worship. We will publish these lists to make life easier for us and our hard of hearing friends. To help, call Betty at 508-432-3948, email info@hearinglosscapecod.org or drop us a note.

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**Kelley Grant 2011**

We are very proud to announce that we received a grant from the Edward Bangs Kelley and Elza Kelley Foundation, Inc. to help fund live CART transcription for the October meeting. [www.kelleyfoundation.org](http://www.kelleyfoundation.org)

**Our Meeting Room**

We meet at Dennis Public Library, 5 Hall Street, just off Route 28 in Dennisport where the meeting room is equipped with an induction loop that works with your hearing aid telecoil to bring sound directly to your ear. Headphones also available. Our meetings are captioned by CART Reporter Stefanie Farrell, who is just about 100% accurate. Her typing is a pleasure to read as you well know if you try to understand captioned TV news. web: [www.dennispubliclibrary.org](http://www.dennispubliclibrary.org)

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LOOPS (Electro-magnetic Induction Loops) and T-COILS

by David Swanson

The induction loop, a loop of wire placed around a specific area, generates a magnetic field that can be sensed by hearing aids having internal t-coils. The source of this magnetic field can be audio inputs from microphones, TVs, dvds and any device having an an audio output.

Many hearing aids are now available with a t-coil. The 't' in the name t-coil means *telephone* because originally the primary use of the t-coil was to increase audibility when using a regular phone. Now hearing aid t-coils are used to pick up any audio signal present in the loop's magnetic field.

A hearing aid user's advantage in using the t-switch position is that the audio comes directly to the ear without picking up background noise such as chatting people, etc.; it's like sitting right next to a person in a quiet space having a good conversation. If one's degree of hearing loss is severe, especially if discrimination is less then 20 percent, s/he may have problems even with a loop and t-coil. I think it is very important, when having your ears tested for a new or reprogrammed hearing aid, to have a discrimination test with the hearing aid fitted in your ear.

When you talk of installing a loop, it is better to talk about a **loop-system**. A loop-system will generally consist of the following:

- A loop of wire surrounding the desired loop area
- An audio amplifier to convert speech into an electrical signal
- Microphones for the source of audio inputs.

Having a loop in the home

A loop can be set up in one's home to improve hearing the tv or talking in a group. For the TV, you install a loop of wire around the room and connect the wire to a loop amplifier which in turn is connected to the audio line output jacks on the back of the TV. The amplifier may need to be plugged into a 120v wall receptacle. For group conversation, the amplifier needs to have input jacks for microphones. Here is where the tricky part comes in. I have tried using just one flat table top microphone but the results were not good and I tried using two handheld mics that were plugged into the amplifier and this worked okay as long as people held the mic close to their mouths. People got forgetful and I had to keep reminding them and this whole scenario got rather frustrating and I just gave up. The ideal setup would be for each person to have wireless lapel mic, which can be pinned on a shirt or blouse.

If you would like to see what's currently available, go to the website www.ovalwindowaudio.com. They sell portable loop systems as well as those for large and small areas; you will also get an idea of prices.

helpful website: hearingloop.org

CART and Remote CART

CART was originally defined as Computer Aided Real-time Transliteration (or translation) and is now known as Communication Access Real-time Translation.

CART is a technique that provides visual display of the spoken word and is typically used where a group of hearing impaired people meet, and some of them cannot hear well enough, even with hearing aids, loops and t-coils.

The primary component of a CART system is the CART Reporter, generally, a person who has been trained as a Court Stenographer, and has additional training for at least two years. The CR uses a stenograph machine, a computer, a video projector and a projection screen. The CR has the ability to type every spoken word at a sustained speed of 225 WPM. There are a limited number of CART reporters in New England, and none on the Cape. We have been privileged to have Stefanie Farrell, one of New England's most talented CRs at almost all of our meetings and she has been with us for at least fifteen years. Up until a few years ago, the Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) paid the CR's fee, but then due to state budget cutbacks, they could no longer fund us. We investigated the use of remote CART to cut the cost of travel time to the Cape.

Remote CART

Remote CART allows a CR to be at home or another location and save the driving time. Remote works very well using a phone line and is presently used by Eastham for their town meetings and I had used this method personally as a member of the Town of Dennis's Disability Committee. Stefanie suggested using Skype because a telephone line is not needed--only the library's wireless computer system. It worked perfectly at the September meeting.

News from National

Try a HLA WEBINAR from the comfort of your home! All captioned.

Reading Faces: An Introduction to Speechreading

Host: Patricia Tomczyszyn with Gael Hannan

When: Thursday 27 October 2011, 07:00 PM - 08:00 PM

For more information, go to hearingloss.org/content/schedule

We are an official chapter of The Hearing Loss Association of America, the Nation's Voice for People with Hearing Loss.

www.hearingloss.org a 501(c)(3) non-profit

--HEARING LOSS MAGAZINE

--member discounts

--2012 National Convention June 21-24 in Providence

-- free online seminars called webinars

\$35 for individuals; \$45 for couples

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### Have you joined the group yet? Pay 2012 dues now!

Send 2012 dues (still \$10 annually each member or LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP \$100) with all your contact information or join at a meeting.

For ADS, send business cards (\$75 includes chapter dues) and check made out to Hearing Loss Association, Cape Cod Chapter to:

Marita Cable, 7 Spruce Street, South Yarmouth, MA 02664

consider a tax deductible donation to help fund CART or other projects.

## Hearing Loss Association of America/Cape Cod Chapter

President Bobbie McDonnell [bobbie@hearinglosscapecod.org](mailto:bobbie@hearinglosscapecod.org)

Vice-President Betty Keeshan Treasurer Marita Cable

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[www.hearinglosscapecod.org](http://www.hearinglosscapecod.org)

CONTACT US: [info@hearinglosscapecod.org](mailto:info@hearinglosscapecod.org); call 508-432-3948

A 501(c)(3) non-profit

Meeting place: Dennis Public Library, 5 Hall St., Dennisport

[www.dennispubliclibrary.org](http://www.dennispubliclibrary.org)


**Upcoming Meetings --  
Mark your calendar**

- October 22 Tinnitus**
- December 10 Holiday Luncheon  
for members and guests.**
- January 28 Instructional Video**
- March 24 tba**
- May 26 tba**
- June Social event for  
members and guests.**

**President's Corner**

I could write pages on the hearing aids, assistive devices, over-the-counter drugs, and techniques I've tried over the years to come to terms with hearing loss. It's easy to become isolated--movies, lectures, and book groups are often inaudible, restaurants are too noisy, holiday get-togethers with the family test our patience. HLACC and our National organization offer support to bring people together to help each other. If you don't participate, you won't get the benefit of that support. In the current issue of *Hearing Loss Magazine*, author Michael Eury encourages you to be a super hero and take advantage of the support around you to participate in life. Start by admitting to others that you have a hearing loss and asking people to speak up! Join our group, join National and learn how to advocate. What are you waiting for?

*Hope to see you Oct. 22---Bobbie*



**The Lilyweb Group**

*How can we help?*

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508-432-9385

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*computer tutor, writer, editor, researcher*



Leanne O'Neil Fletcher, Au. D., FAAA  
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Email: [hearus@cape.com](mailto:hearus@cape.com)



**DENNIS-HARWICH LIONS CLUB**  
Membership Info: 508-385-3431  
P.O. Box 41, Dennisport, MA 02639  
www.dennisharwichlions.org

Bd. Mtgs. & Speaker Mtgs. - 2nd Wed. - Dennis Police Station  
Dinner Mtgs. - 4th Wed. - Riverway Lobster House, SY

We recycle eyeglasses & cell phones!




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**Hearing Loss  
Association  
of America**  
Cape Cod Chapter

c/o Marita Cable  
7 Spruce St.  
So. Yarmouth, MA 02664

**"Tinnitus: a problem of ear & brain"**  
Saturday, October 22 9:30 am coffee  
Dennis Public Library  
Dennisport