

Helping Ourselves To Hear Again... by Ed Schickel

"It's November and 36 years ago on November 27, 1979, Rocky Stone founded our organization as Self Help for Hard of Hearing People. Rocky realized there were people who were "between two worlds" like himself -- not fully hearing but not deaf. He founded the organization we now call the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA).

It is amazing how one individual can impact the lives of many. If it weren't for Rocky, Melanie Magruder and her friends, there would not be an HLAA KY chapter. Nor would there be HLAA KY Home chapter. Also there would not be this website www.hearinglosskyhome.org. Rocky's dream and his efforts have fueled treatment, training, inventions, access, well-being, and us as individuals. He was a "walker" on a beach who picked up the starfish and threw it back into the water. It mattered to the starfish and it matters to us.

Learning to communicate again is like losing weight or going to the gym. We have to decide how important it is for us to hear. How important is it to understand our spouses and our grandchildren? Do we love them enough to? Then, we have to set out to make ourselves better, heal ourselves. It's work!

We can learn new things. We can look to the new technologies. There are many. The key is self-advocacy. The point is a body at rest tends to stay at rest. The non-hearing tend to stay non-hearing. They think there is nothing to do. HLAA is a self-help organization first. We have to help ourselves. Sometimes we help ourselves by helping others. Other times we help others because we are "paying it forward." We are stronger because we join together. We are more knowledgeable because we share information. We can even have more fun because we are with others who understand us.

What have you done for your hearing today? What have you done for someone else's hearing today? Have you commented on anything here today? Have you written your own Point of View? Have you shared something or learned something?

This website has a head full of material. All of which can help. This is a starting point; but, to sustain it, it needs your comments, your input, and your contributions. I have said that because someone invented the wheel, we drive cars. Because Rocky Stone became hard of hearing, we have HLAA. Because Melanie Magruder and her friends were frustrated with their hearing we have HLAA KY. Help yourself. Join us on www.hearinglosskyhome.org. Join us at an HLAA meeting.