

July Newsletter 2019: Exclusive Interview with The President & Hard of Hearing Horror Movie Hero!



2019

NEWSLETTER

HLAAHOUSTON.ORG

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Upcoming Meeting!

Monthly meetings every 2nd Saturday of the month.
This month's meeting will be held **9:30 AM Saturday July 13th, 2019**

Meeting Location Change:
We now meet at St. Luke Presbyterian Church

8915 Timberside Drive Houston, Texas 77025
(You can actually see it from Bethany
Methodist parking lot.)



Our speaker for July,
Austin Zindler
from



ClearCaptions enables anyone with
hearing loss to communicate easier
with the most advanced call
captioning system available.

WordsMatter.™

"Do you want to know what new developments and apps can help support your hearing? Come join the HLAA meeting on **Saturday, July 13th** to chat with Austin Zindler about how **Clear Captions is stepping up** this year with **new information, technologies, and services** to help you "Get the Whole Conversation."

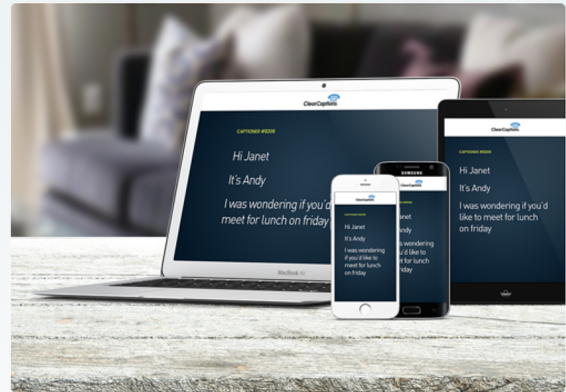
How ClearCaptions Works

ClearCaptions is a free phone captioning service that provides near real-time call captions of phone conversations for individuals whose hearing loss inhibits their phone use.

Similar to captioned television, ClearCaptions allows for you to read real-time written call captions of what callers say on our revolutionary home phone, your mobile device, or your computer.

This free captioning service is provided by ClearCaptions and paid through a fund administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). There is no cost to qualified individuals whose hearing loss inhibits their phone use.

FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS ANYONE BUT REGISTERED USERS WITH HEARING LOSS FROM USING INTERNET PROTOCOL (IP) CAPTIONED TELEPHONES WITH THE CAPTIONS TURNED ON. IP captioned telephone service may use a live operator. The operator generates captions of what the other party to the call says. These captions are then sent to your phone. There is a cost for each minute of captions generated, paid from a federally-administered fund.



[LEARN MORE](#)

Our Chapter Board Members

Jan Connolly
President

Email janpatrice@att.net

Enriqueta Martinez
Treasurer

Email martinezenriqueta@yahoo.com

Mike Quinlan
Secretary

Email mquinlan@sbcglobal.net

Allan Ofield
Past-President

Email nbtawq3@yahoo.com

Teri Wathen
Advisor

Email teriwathen@sbcglobal.net

Lois Johson
Advisor

Email ettalois@sbcglobal.net

Upcoming Events!



Kick-Off At MainEvent



**Saturday, September 7, 2019,
from 2-4 at Main Event
in Katy I-10 @ Grand Parkway,
24401 Katy Fwy, Katy, TX 77494**



2019 Houston Walk4Hearing



**Come out and
walk with us to
make an impact!**

**No matter where you
are on your hearing
journey, on Walk day
you will feel
empowered.**

Find out more at
walk4hearing.org

Saturday, October 5, 2019

Location:

University of Houston -
Lynn Eusan Park
4500 University Drive
Houston, TX

Time:

9:00 a.m. Registration
10:00 a.m. Walk

Walk Chair

Karen Davin

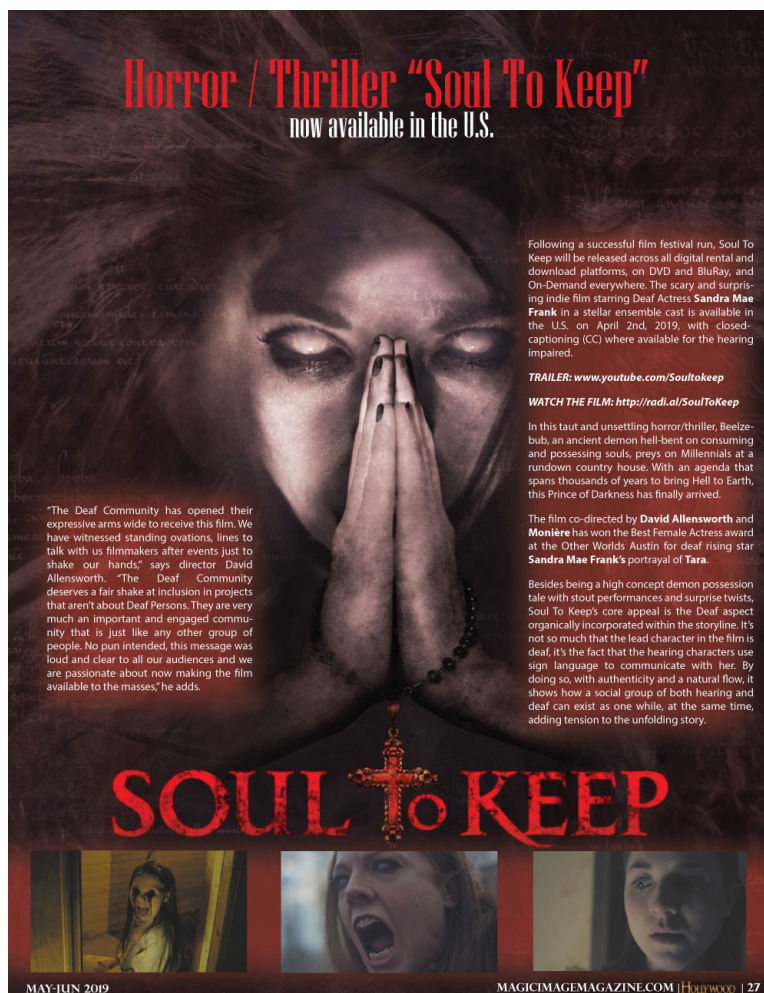
houstonwalk4hearing@gmail.com

Article to Read - From Voices From the Balcony

Hard of Hearing Horror Movie Hero saves peers from an evil demon. Her disability helped sense what others couldn't, watch this underdog take on the supernatural in...

Soul To Keep: rated R

watch on Netflix, YouTube, iTunes, Google Play, & AmazonPrime



Horror / Thriller "Soul To Keep"
now available in the U.S.

Following a successful film festival run, *Soul To Keep* will be released across all digital rental and download platforms, on DVD and BluRay, and On-Demand everywhere. The scary and surprising indie film starring Deaf Actress **Sandra Mae Frank** in a stellar ensemble cast is available in the U.S. on April 2nd, 2019, with closed-captioning (CC) where available for the hearing impaired.

TRAILER: www.youtube.com/SoulToKeep

WATCH THE FILM: <http://radi.al/SoulToKeep>

In this taut and unsettling horror/thriller, Beelzebub, an ancient demon hell-bent on consuming and possessing souls, preys on Millennials at a rundown country house. With an agenda that spans thousands of years to bring Hell to Earth, this Prince of Darkness has finally arrived.

The film co-directed by **David Allensworth** and **Monière** has won the Best Female Actress award at the Other Worlds Austin for deaf rising star **Sandra Mae Frank's** portrayal of **Tara**.

Besides being a high concept demon possession tale with stout performances and surprise twists, *Soul To Keep's* core appeal is the Deaf aspect organically incorporated within the storyline. It's not so much that the lead character in the film is deaf, it's the fact that the hearing characters use sign language to communicate with her. By doing so, with authenticity and a natural flow, it shows how a social group of both hearing and deaf can exist as one while, at the same time, adding tension to the unfolding story.

"The Deaf Community has opened their expressive arms wide to receive this film. We have witnessed standing ovations, lines to talk with us filmmakers after events just to shake our hands," says director David Allensworth. "The Deaf Community deserves a fair shake at inclusion in projects that aren't about Deaf Persons. They are very much an important and engaged community that is just like any other group of people. No pun intended, this message was loud and clear to all our audiences and we are passionate about now making the film available to the masses," he adds.

SOUL TO KEEP

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Soul To Keep tells the story of Beelzebub, a demon hell-bent on consuming and taking control of souls, who hunts down siblings and their lifelong friends at a rundown country house.

*“Soul to Keep is a great possession horror film that uses a deaf character to uniquely tell the story,” says Shriekfest’s festival director **Denise Gossett**. “This is a film that horror fans are going to love and we are thrilled to be showing our first ever open captioned film!” she adds.*



The introduction of a deaf lead character, Tara, played by deaf actress **Sandra Mae Frank**, allows the exploration of unique modalities in the narrative style, notably the use of sign language throughout the film. All the actors flawlessly learnt and incorporated the sign language into their performances to serve the purpose of the story. This inclusive aspect of the unrepresented Deaf Community makes the production accessible to hard-of-hearing audiences as well

as creating a dialogue between the Deaf and Hearing populations.

“The Deaf element in this film came to me originally as something of a scare tactic, and it blossomed into an important statement about bringing communities together,” says director David Allensworth. “Our co-writer Eric Bram’s wife is partially deaf, as well as one of our producers, Matt Meyer, who has partial hearing loss.”

“I wanted to bring out the elements of a minority group – the deaf and hard at hearing – and showcase them as heroes. In addition, I wanted to tell a horror story with real proven metaphysical elements, not another horror-slasher film,” adds co-director Monière.

About *Soul To Keep*:

Soul To Keep showcases an ensemble cast composed of eight up-and-coming actors: **Sandra Mae Frank** (Tara), **Aurora Heimbach** (Erin), **Kate Rose**

Reynolds (Grace), **Tony Spitz** (Josh), **Craig Fogel** (Freddy), **Jordan Theodore** (Brandon), **Derek Long** (Toby) and **Jessie Jordan** (Kimberly).

Soul To Keep is a **Shady Tree Films** and **Cineque Pictures** production. Directed by **David Allensworth** and **Monière**. Written by **Eric Bram** and David Allensworth. Produced by **Patrick Kendall**, p.g.a., **Monière**, David Allensworth, p.g.a., and **Matt Meyer**. Co-Produced by **Bears Rebecca Fonté** and **Rachel Morgan**. Cinematography by **Eric Giovon**. Sound Design by **Angelo Panetta**. Music Composed by **Irv Johnson**. Editing by **Ray Chung**. Production Design by **Lisa Ramsey**. Visual Effects by **Carlos Aldana**.

About the filmmakers:

David Allensworth, director, co-writer, producer

David Allensworth's storytelling circles around how we connect to characters and stories resulting in positive changes, enlightenment and an opportunity to escape. From surprise plot twists, to secret character motives, to authentic situations turned upside down, he infuses his visionary "gotcha" style with every film, series, screenplay, and pitch he's been involved in. "*Soul To Keep*" marks his first *feature*film, and it is a perfect reflection of that style. Though he maintains an office in Los Angeles for his production company Shady Tree Films, he makes New York City his home with his wife and three children. He finds New York to be a hotbed of culture and characters, all of which inspire his storytelling. He is a member of the Producers Guild of America.



Tara alerting her friends there's danger, watch this suspenseful movie & find out what happens!

Monière, director, producer

Monière's storytelling is significantly influenced by his upbringing; born in Kandahar, Afghanistan and raised in Flatbush & Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. He comes from a lineage of Sufis and healers, strong believers in metaphysics and the unknown. *"If angels are real, why can't demons be real,"* Grace, *Soul To Keep*. Every project he attaches himself to must raise the collective consciousness of humanity as a whole, creating a morphic resonance. Monière formed his company in 1999 during

grad film school. He merged the words *Cinematically* & *Unique*, to form his company name Cineque Pictures. He lives in Midtown Manhattan with his wife and baby son.

For more information and updates about *Soul To Keep*, please follow them on Instagram at [@SoulToKeepMovie](#).

Other Links:

Official Website: www.SoulToKeepMovie.com

Facebook (Film): www.facebook.com/SoulToKeepMovie

Twitter (Directors): [@DjAllensworth](#) & [@Monierism](#)

Hashtag: [#SoulToKeepMovie](#)



We are *HEAR* for you!

The Hearing Loss Association of America Houston Chapter is your local support group and organization for the deaf and hard of hearing of Houston, Texas. We wouldn't be here helping those in need without YOU! We are continuously growing in support, technology, and resources to help all who we can.

Joining the HLAA Houston Chapter, you're not just part of support group.

You're part of a family. What's a better way to get to know your family than getting an exclusive interview with the people of your chapter. This months interview is with...



Our President, Jan Connolly

"I feel that I'm apart of a group that works together to help others learn how to empower themselves."

Jan has been a loyal, courageous, and caring member of the Hearing Loss Association of America Houston Chapter since late 2013. Here is an exclusive interview with the President herself, where we hear her story on her life before HLAA, how she got involved, and how HLAA has helped her overcome her disabilities.

Q: How did you lose your hearing?

A: I was actually born with some deficit and it progressed as I grew up.

I had multiple hearing infections multiple surgeries, at 13 my doctors discovered **everything just decayed away. Everything**, all of it the drum the hammer, and I didn't get hearing aids until I was already out of high school and which was too late.

I basically just watched people and kind of figured out what was going on.

Q: What was one of the hardest challenges that you faced before meeting HLAA?

A: I would say things that make no sense but to me they did but because my sounds weren't right but I couldn't tell they weren't the right sounds.

A lot of times **I really didn't know** and I would find out later when I missed something or I had said something that didn't make any sense.

So I was never aware and then when I became aware it was that feeling of stupid like "God, I feel so stupid." I **didn't know the teachers actually talked while they wrote on the board** until I got hearing aids.

I'm like *"WOW that makes a lot of sense!"*

I also had a speech Impediment when I was younger and certain words/sounds I couldn't say like the "TR" the "TA" and I would put an F in place of it. **Of course my brother would always ask me what a truck was**, you know stuff like that right out in public and I would embarrass my mother!

I would say things that make no sense but to me they did but because my sounds weren't right but I couldn't tell they weren't the right sounds.

Q: What is still challenging for you to this day?

A: [Being Hard of Hearing] is not something I'm doing purposely. It's something I can't help.

A family informed me that **being around me is very tiresome** and very difficult because they have to repeat themselves even with my implants.

"I'm tired of doing it." [they said]

And I'm like "okay...", What do you do about it?
How do you answer that? You can't. It's not like I can change it.

[Being Hard of Hearing] is not something I'm doing purposely. It's something I can't help.

Q: How do you find out about the organization?

A: I go to the walk and of course Teri and the other members were there and they had brochures for the HLA meetings. And I'm like *"You know what, I need to give this another try."* So, I went and the rest is history. Everyone was just so friendly and

welcoming and I basically just kept coming back.

I was having difficulty at work, **let's just say my coworkers were not exactly compassionate or understanding about my situation or they didn't really believe it.**

I couldn't hear from behind, I still can't. If somebody's talking to me behind me, I don't they're talking.

“Oh I was talking to you and you're walking away from me!” [they would say]

And I'm like “What are you talking about? When were you talking to me and I walked away from you?”

“Well, you were walking down the hallway.” [they reply]

I'm like **“I didn't know you were there! I didn't hear you.”**

So I literally had to go to, I guess it would be the equivalent of “DARS”

[The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, or *DARS*, administers **programs that ensure Texas is a state where people with disabilities**, and children who have developmental delays, enjoy the same opportunities as other Texans to **live independent and productive lives.**]

And they made me aware of some little retreat that was going on, and actually I met Teri Wathen at that time. [Teri Wathen is an Advisor for the chapter] **There they gave us information about “SHHH”** [Self Help for the Hard of Hearing, the chapter before it became HLAA Houston Chapter]

I went to one of the meetings but it was just really at the other side of town and it was really hard to make that commute.

Later, on a road-trip to family functions, **I got an email from Ronnie; and I’m like “Who’s this Ronnie person?”** And we’re all in the car when I’m opening the email and I’m like **“Oh Cool! Walk4Hearing in Houston, I’ll do this!”** I signed up and so we’re making up names, you know. We created a team there in the car and what have you.

And I go to the walk and of course Teri and the other members were there and they had brochures for the HLA meetings. And I’m like **“You know what, I need to give this another try.”**

So, I went and the rest is history.

Everyone was just so friendly and welcoming and I basically just kept coming back.



Q: What have you learned being part of HLAA?

A: Learning that advocacy is okay. It's not being rude when you speak up and say, *"Wait a minute, you know, I need this accommodation."*

When I started going to HLA, **I became aware of a lot of different things**, [assistive technology advancements] like the captioned phone, learning that advocacy is okay. It's not being rude when you speak up and say

"Wait a minute, you know, I need this accommodation."

And it's not like I'm asking someone:

"I need you to loop this room just for me" - No
[loop hearing system from www.hearinglink.org
A hearing loop (sometimes called an audio induction loop) is **a special type of sound system for use by people with hearing aids.**]

It's kind of like when you go to the movies with assistive listening and it doesn't work. [When I advocate for it] **I make them aware that I'm speaking not just for me but for everyone who has a hearing loss and that there's a lot of out there.** There's a lot of us that don't come to the movies anymore because the [assistive device] doesn't work

and I would love to go out and tell them,

“Hey! It does work! You know, they got it. It’s working and all you have to do is say that you need it and they work with you.”

Q: What was it like before this change?

A: I could be dying with sweat, but nope.

Would not pull my hair back in a ponytail

because somebody could see [my hearing aids]. Now I don’t give *hill-a-beans*.

My first time when I got hearing aids, my hair had to cover them. Had to cover them. I would never pull it back. I mean, I could be dying with sweat, but nope. Would not pull my hair back in a ponytail because somebody could see them.

Now I don’t give hill-a-beans.

Q: Why is HLAA an important factor for living with hearing loss?

A: I don’t want to be corny and say “It’s like the oxygen for a hearing person.” But it kind of is.

It’s a group that lets you know you’re not alone. Having a local chapter to go to you know we’re a support group. You’re there to help people.

You know, almost every month someone comes up and says "Thanks for you all putting this program together!"

Q: What was your journey to presidency and how does it feel to be President?

A: After our past president, Allen had served to long of a term. I stepped up from being VP to take on the Presidency position because truthfully, our chapter, we work more in tandem.

Well, it backs up a little bit with Secretary. They were doing elections when they made a comment, "*Oh, we need a Secretary*" - "***Well, Jan you're an English teacher! Would you be the Secretary?***"

And I'm like "*Woah, wait a minute, what does that intel?*"

I'm the type of person where if I say I want to do then I want to follow through be able to do it. I don't want to tell someone that I can do something and then have to tell them, "Ah, I couldn't. I got overloaded at work."

And they [convinced me]
I said "*Okay I'll go for it! But I need you know I'm a full time teacher.*"

And a lot of people think [it's easy] to teach, But It's an all consuming mental situation. And of course it was fine.

So, after a couple years, what came up was the Vice President position that needed to be filled.

Being Sec. for 3 or so years I said “I’ll step up to Vice President!”

After our past president, Allen had served to long of a term. I stepped up from being VP to take on the Presidency position because truthfully, our chapter, we work more in tandem.

When there’s a job that needs to get done, let’s get it done. It’s not said as “Oh, well, that’s not my job that’s not what I’m supposed to be doing, therefore I won’t do it.”

I don’t feel like I’m in charge of anything. I feel that I’m apart of a group that works together to help others learn how to empower themselves.



C0set Media Management

With the internet & media rapidly growing, I am here to help the HLAA Houston Chapter reach those in need of support and raising awareness of Hearing loss to audiences through social media, giving your organization more outreach than ever before.

Photography, Videography, Editing,
Website Development, Social Media
Management



YOUR AD HERE!

Contact with us through our website!

**All proceeds go to
HLAA Houston**

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JULY 2019 NEWSLETTER

This concludes our July E-newsletter of 2019!
A special thank you to the readers and sponsors
supporting the HLAA Houston chapter. The best is yet to
come!



Our Newsletter is proudly created
by C0set Media Management & Content
Creation