

# What's in a Name?

BY DAVE HUTCHESON

It seemed like a simple enough task. I mean, how hard could it be, all you need are a couple small words, right? But as we quickly found out, renaming the venerable *Hearing Loss Magazine* was anything but simple. It took months.

## So What Made It So Difficult?

A magazine's name has to do so much more than let people know what it's about. It has to have meaning, and not just to current readers, but to prospective ones who could also benefit from it. So it has to have broad appeal, it needs to be relevant (both now and looking

to the future), compelling, and unique. But most of all, it has to grab someone's attention and be memorable. And it has to do all that in two or three words. Wow. And there was never an "a-ha" moment.



After several brainstorming sessions we developed a pretty extensive list of possibilities. Over the course of another month

or so we narrowed it down, added a few, and modified some. We also periodically stepped away from it for a while. This process was turning out to be very emotional, stressful, even deflating at times. But we persevered.

## Introducing...*Hearing Life*

It wasn't until late October that we knew we had it—*Hearing Life*. Not only did we think it met or exceeded all the criteria to be a successful name, it just felt right. After all we went through, it was our gut that gave us the answer.

As Executive Director Barbara Kelley talks about in her article on page 10, HAAA has always been, and always will be, about people. Yes, we are all about hearing loss, but *people* with hearing loss. Our mission is to inform, educate, support and advocate for *people*. In other words, to help live a better life with hearing loss.

# hearing life

THE MAGAZINE FOR BETTER HEARING

This is what we believe the name *Hearing Life* embodies. It has two very important meanings. First, it says that hearing loss does not have to define one's life; that it is possible to live a high-quality of life despite the fact that you might have a hearing loss. It says that there is life with hearing loss.

The second meaning can best be described by a question: Are you hearing life? There are sounds all around us, some we hear better than others and some we might not hear at all. But focusing on what we *can't* do—or *can't* hear—is already a big step toward defeat. It prevents you from enjoying the life around you. Sure, you might not be able to hear sounds in the most literal sense, but with support, encouragement, and acceptance, you will realize there is so much in life that you *can* hear. Through technology or some other means we have all made the decision to live in the hearing world. This means we have already taken a big step away from defeat, and a big step toward hearing life.

As I said earlier, a magazine's name has to do more than tell people what it's about. We truly believe that *Hearing Life* is more—much more—than just a name; it is a message of hope and support. If you believe that you really do have a hearing life, albeit one with a hearing loss, you will begin to understand that you can indeed hear life. **HL**

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