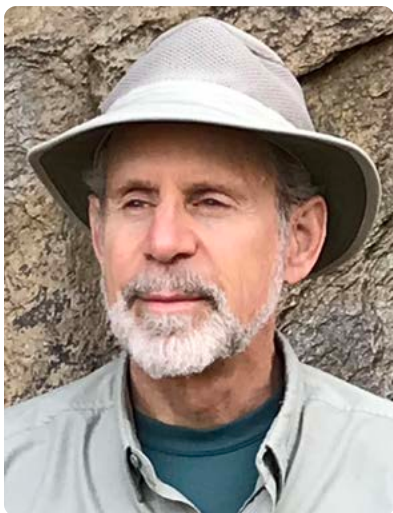


*The Michael Beall Threadgill Award was established in 1990 to honor those individuals who have contributed in a significant way to the growth and continuing excellence of the National Hearing Conservation Association by their outstanding commitment of time and effort.*

## Elliott H. Berger

by Vickie Tuten and Susan Cooper



In 2020, the NHCA is proud to present, for the second time, this prestigious award to Elliott Berger. Elliott was first awarded the Michael Beall Threadgill award in 1996 for the many significant contributions he had made to that date.

Elliott has shown no evidence of slowing down in the 24 years since that last award, his con-

tributions so numerous, it simply demanded a 2nd presentation of this award that honors members who contribute to the success and growth of the NHCA.

For some who are newer to our organization, we'd like to share a brief synopsis...okay maybe not so brief...of Elliott's many contributions to the NHCA. He is a previous recipient of the Outstanding Hearing Conservationist Award in 1993, the Michael Beall Threadgill Award in 1996, the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2013, not to mention three Outstanding Lecture Awards in 1993, 1998 and 2001. We didn't have another award that would honor the too-numerous-to-mention contributions by Elliott in recent years. The Michael Beall Threadgill Award is the NHCA award that speaks to an individual's contributions specifically to our organization. Elliott Berger sets the standard for all to emulate, and his contributions have now spanned over three decades.

Elliott has been a member of the NHCA since 1982 and has been involved in nearly every aspect of this organization. Prior to his last award in 1996 he had served as Program Chair three times that culminated in three extremely successful conferences. Some of the more impressive things done at conferences over the years such as the film/video theater some may remember fondly, and the Spectrum supplement conference program, the Outstanding Lecture Award, special luncheon speakers, and of course the specifications for and improving the quality of the a/v support at conference, were conceived of, and developed by Elliott. He has since been at the side of nearly every Program Chair 'behind the

scenes' helping to ensure the success of every conference. Of special note, Elliott has secured many of the keynote, luncheon and Don Gasaway speakers that we have enjoyed at our conferences through these many years. To be exact he has found speakers for 21 out of 28 talks including our luncheon speaker for 2020. He lists his favorites over the years in order as Bernie Krause, Gordon Hempton, Murray Schafer, Christopher Clark, Tomlinson Holman, and Johnnyrandom. He single-handedly arranged for that memorable visit from Don Gasaway at our 2019 conference.

If you were to do a historical review of all our conferences, you would find Elliott on the conference speaker list more years than not. Did we mention that he has also received the Outstanding Lecture Award? An excellent workshop he gave the past several years on the 'Art of the Presentation' was absolutely a do not miss workshop. His contributions to the science of hearing conservation as an Acoustical Engineer, have made him a sought-after speaker with much to share with NHCA members.

Public speaking and conference arranging aren't Elliott's only strengths. Add writing and editing as well, and once again, NHCA has been the beneficiary. Elliott has been an invaluable member of the Spectrum editorial board since 1994 and its technical editor since 2014. Elliott is dedicated to identifying current research which is relevant to all hearing conservation professionals. His technical expertise ensures that each manuscript is based on sound science that can be trusted by the readership.

I'm not sure that we can ever allow Elliott to depart the NHCA Executive Council...some individuals truly are irreplaceable. What has he done on the Executive Council you ask? He served three years as Vice President of NHCA, then was elected to the three-year term of President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past-President of NHCA. He established several ad-hoc committees and has probably been the most consistent contributor to the NHCA Policy Manual that serves as the 'standard operating procedure' document for this organization. Any member who has ever served on the Executive Council has seen Elliott easily reference exactly where a policy can be found in that document.

Unquestionably, the greatest contribution from Elliott has been in his role as the NHCA Historian which he has fulfilled since 1996. We have our very own NHCA Wikipedia in Elliott! No need to do an internet search to get your answers, just reach out to Elliott

or check out his detailed documentation. You'll find a meticulous spreadsheet tracking membership, conference attendance, special lectures, and a dozen other statistics, and over 150 pages of Archival Reports of NHCA activities from 1996 to date – truly a wealth of important information that helps provide consistency to new officers and committee chairs! And with a constant flow of volunteer participation, how many organizations have such ready reference to consistent detailed archives? Members can access online historical records of NHCA position statements, workshops and annual meetings. This was truly a labor of love... Elliott collected, sorted, and scanned every available historical record. Members can access PDFs of the professional detailed annual programs Elliott helped pioneer in recent years, all the way back to the humble one-page typed program from NHCA's very first annual meeting held in 1977.

Although not his first rodeo in helping transition through a new management company, our current Civica management team have come to know Elliott over the last two years as one of the most dedicated and passionate volunteer leaders within NHCA. His archive historical data has been invaluable in helping with a smoother transition. Elliott has been their go-to guy for website content and development and has spent countless hours on this project with that continuing even to this day. They cite that one of the greatest contributions to the website, the Robert Dobie

Library, came about because Elliott approached the family and received permission to house this incredible online resource on the NHCA website. The Civica staff looks forward to Elliott's correspondence, whether by phone or email, and appreciate his dedication and work which not only boosts NHCA but provides the leadership they need to fulfill their jobs.

Elliott Berger...the man, the myth, the legend. He will always be remembered as:

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>E</b> Energetic  | <b>B</b> Brilliant   |
| <b>L</b> Learned    | <b>E</b> Earnest     |
| <b>L</b> Loyal      | <b>R</b> Rational    |
| <b>I</b> Insightful | <b>G</b> Gracious    |
| <b>O</b> Organized  | <b>E</b> Enduring    |
| <b>T</b> Talented   | <b>R</b> Responsible |
| <b>T</b> Tenacious  |                      |

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that we honor Elliott Berger with the Michael Beall Threadgill award for his continued contributions to NHCA for the past 38 years. *Congratulations Elliott!*

