

## Two Historic SB Theatres Renovate and Innovate

— by Kase Martis, Independent Living Resource Center

Two historic Santa Barbara theatres recently joined the growing ranks of local and national venues to adopt hearing loop technology. The Lobero Theatre and the New Vic installed state-of-the-art hearing loop systems when

the New Vic when the \$10.5 million renovation project was completed. “The hearing loop allows those patrons with hearing aids to easily and discretely connect with the performance without the need for separate headsets.”

*“I’ve missed it and wanted to introduce my daughters to the vibrant experience of live theater. Now we can go together; see it, feel it, and hear it. I’m thrilled.”*

**Cherie Alvarez**

they reopened in December, after undergoing extensive renovation work.

Already widely used in Europe and Scandinavia, hearing loops are rapidly gaining popularity across the United States, thanks to advocacy campaigns like Lets Loop Santa Barbara (LLSB) brought to the community by the Independent Living Resource Center.

The technology helps hearing aid users receive sound signals directly through their t-coil enabled hearing aids. As most hearing aids include a t-coil as standard, users do not need any additional equipment to access sound in a looped venue — a major advantage over other systems.

“We are thrilled to have more options for the hearing impaired to enjoy our productions,” said Jonathan Fox, Artistic Director of the Ensemble Theatre Company, which moved from their current base at the Alhecama Theatre to

The hearing loop installation at the Lobero Theatre has been entirely funded by Jack and Kathleen Moseley, who also contributed to the theatre’s capital campaign. Speaking about his donation, Mr. Moseley said “I’m just pleased that more hard-of-hearing people can enjoy the theatre.”

Many of Santa Barbara’s 90,000 residents with hearing loss currently lack easy access to live theatre performances. Of her own experiences, Cherie Alvarez, President of the Santa Barbara Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America said, “I attended theater in Santa Barbara consistently until the mid-90s, when my hereditary hearing loss became so severe that I could no longer understand what was being said.” She is looking forward to attending a looped theatre performance. “I’ve missed it and wanted to introduce my daughters to the vibrant experience of live the-

ater. Now we can go together; see it, feel it, and hear it. I’m thrilled.”

The Independent Living Resource Center, Inc. (ILRC) is a community-based, private non-profit organization of, by and for persons with disabilities. ILRC promotes the independent living philosophy and its tenets of full access, equal opportunity and maximum success and self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities. The staff’s goal is to eliminate barriers to full participation in the community.



For further information contact:  
Kase Martis, Hearing Loop  
Advocate, Independent Living  
Resource Center. Phone (805)  
617-3778 or e-mail her at  
[kase@loopsantabarbara.org](mailto:kase@loopsantabarbara.org).



**Do you know what this sign means?**

**Better hearing for those with hearing loss.**

**A hearing loop transfers clear sound directly to hearing aids or headset receivers, eliminating distracting background noise.**

Experience a loop:

Lobero Theatre • The New Vic • Campbell Hall  
and over 20 other locations

Other applications:

Places of Worship • Conference Rooms • Home TVs

For a complete list of locations visit [www.loopsantabarbara.org](http://www.loopsantabarbara.org)

To find out if your hearing aid is compatible, ask your hearing professional.

Let's Loop Santa Barbara is a project of the Independent Living Resource Center with funding from the California Communications Access Foundation.

