

HLAA TC January 2015



Twin Cities Chapter

The mission of HLAA TC is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

January 17, 2015

HLAA TC meeting: Mary Hartnett, executive director, MCDHH, "Legislative Update and Overview"

February 21, 2015

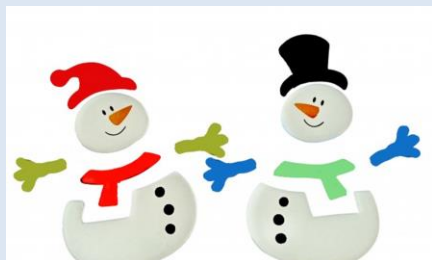
Barbara Friedman, "Making the Most of Your Hearing Aids, Implants and accessories"

March 21, 2015

Tanya Gahler, "Hear the Possibilities"

April 18, 2015

Gary Johnson, "Scams, Fraud, and Identity Theft"



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Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) is held the 3rd Saturday of the month (September thru May). We gather at 9:30 to socialize, and begin our meeting at 10 AM at The Courage Center, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442. The meeting adjourns at noon.

President's Message

January 2015



Christine Morgan (with Lionel Locke)

President's Message

2015! Unbelievable! I'm sure most of you remember how you felt and where you were at the beginning of 2000. The fears, the trepidation, etc. Here it is 15 years later and oh, how our lives have changed.

The holidays are behind us. The joy of being with our families, the rush of shopping, the get-togethers, and sometimes the loneliness and frustration. We love to get together with family and friends but it is a challenge (and at times frustrating) for those of us with hearing loss. Missing conversations, side comments, people talking over each other, and the background noise!!!! We all have good and bad stories to share. I'll share mine.

Visiting my almost 89 year-old mother was a bittersweet experience. She suffers from age-related hearing loss and refuses (because of her age and frail physical condition) to be fitted for hearing aids. I bought her a "pocket talker" last year (which she says works for her). However, she refuses to wear it while people are visiting. The inevitable loud television (on all the time) and her diminished hearing caused us to talk (yell?) much louder than usual. Not a good situation for

someone who wears a hearing aid and has a cochlear implant. I am, however, so glad that I got to share the Christmas holiday with her.

I hope your holidays were filled with joy and that you experience good mental and physical health in 2015. The Board of the TC Chapter strives to bring you valuable speakers, information, education, support, and friendship. We understand the incredible challenges that hearing loss can bring. We want to help you live a fuller, joyful life.

Be sure to let us know how we can improve our chapter and if we "miss the mark". We will be distributing a questionnaire in the near future to determine how we can better meet your needs. Please feel free to talk to any of the Board members before, during or after the meetings with your comments, suggestions, and concerns.

We have a great line-up of speakers for the remainder of the season. Bring a friend, family member or acquaintance with you. Let's get the word out. The number of people with a hearing loss is increasing rapidly. We need to reach them.

With warmest and best wishes for a memorable 2015,

Christine





HLAA TC December Meeting Synopsis

*by Lionel Locke (with Christine Morgan),
HLAA-TC VicePresident*

President Christine Morgan called the meeting to order at 10 AM. She thanked all those in attendance and then called on Vicki Martin to introduce our guest speaker Rhoda Nelson.

Rhoda has spoken to the HLAA group before most recently in 2012. Rhoda majored in deaf education, received a master degree in rehabilitation for teaching for the blind and also has worked with state agencies for the deafblind in the State of Minnesota. Although Rhoda is deafblind herself, that does not stop her zest for living and for sharing that with other people.

Rhoda's topic for her presentation is Boomerang Joy. "If you toss that joy out in the world like a boomerang, it will come back. It may hit you in the head, it may not, but it will come back. You give it freely, don't attach any demands to it, just give, and it will come back."

The presentation was filled with many examples of joy, of sharing happiness, and of excellent humorous stories. Humor, according to Rhoda, gives us power, it transcends our predicaments. We feel uplifted. We feel encouraged, empowered, and it really works.

Many times we are powerless against events in our life. However we can minimize those emotional upsets by finding some humor in it. It helps us cope. Humor provides us perspective. We get a new eye on things. Your vision becomes less blocked, just as you hold your hand in front of your eyes and then slowly move it away. Your upsets are still there but they are not as much of a problem because they blend into the landscape.

Rhoda ended her presentation by letting us know that she has many more stories but we have to invite her back to hear the rest. Her closing poem was about finding someone and helping them along the way; very fitting in the Christmas season.

The balance of the meeting included enjoying our annual potluck, the White Elephant gift exchange, door prize drawing, Vicki's ASL presentation, cookie sale and much laughter and enjoyment. President Christine wished everybody a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See you at the next Meeting January 17th 2015.



Consumer Electronics News

The big annual **Consumer Electronics Show** (CES) occurs this month in Las Vegas. A handful of exhibitors are Minnesota-based companies – and two of those are hearing-related. (Yay!)

“Oakdale-based **Hearing Components** is announcing... the latest in a long line of foam-based earphone tips. The Comply Sport and Sport Plus earbud tips... are designed to remain lodged in the ear more securely...[they] also incorporate a SweatGuard treatment to protect earphone components from corrosion and perspiration” (Pioneer Press, December 25, 2014).

Hearing Components also makes “temporary” foam earmolds for hearing aids. (Editor’s note: I have been using these for 30 years, and they are the best!). Any improvement in hearing technology is welcome news.

A second Minnesota company, **ReSound** of Bloomington, was named a 2015 CES Innovation Awards Honoree in the Accessible Technologies category for its ENZO – a high-tech hearing device that can be controlled with an i-Phone app. It is aimed at people with severe to profound hearing loss.

ReSound also makes hearing aids that are compatible with the Cochlear brand cochlear implants. It is good to know they are recognized for their innovative products!

Outreach notes:

(From Hearing Loss News, November/December 2015)

Chapter-building workshops

“The Chapter Building Workshop debuted in August in Boston for all the New England chapters...[it] provides an all-day session to help chapter and state leaders address the major issues and opportunities that each participating chapter faces...Leaders are invited to schedule one for three or more interested chapters.”

Outreach is key to growth

“...chapters are discovering [the need]...to go where the people with hearing loss are, rather than rely on chapter meetings alone.”

Some of the outreach strategies have included placing support booths at health fairs, Farmer’s Markets, and community centers.

New HLAA Online Store

Brochures, copies of *Hearing Loss Magazine*, DVDs, banners, displays, tablecloths, and other promotional materials (which can be made up with our chapter logo) are available for sale at the HLAA online store. See what might be useful at fairs, presentations, community events and the like.

Tainted and Sainted

Those of you who read the Pioneer Press probably are familiar with the *Sainted and Tainted* which appears every Saturday. It's one of my very favorite parts of the Saturday paper. I love to read about how so many people reach out to help someone else. Many times, I read the *Sainted* with tears in my eyes because it is so refreshing to hear about helping instead of hurting others.

I also have to admit that I enjoy reading the *Tainted* parts. Recently, someone from St. Paul (they only list the first initial, last name and city), complained about noisy restaurants and bars. Wow! Something we all can relate to. They asked that others "get on board" and write in as well.

I am a person who *rarely* writes letters of complaint, editorials, etc. However, I was motivated to write immediately. Within a few days, I received a response from Mr. Kelly from the Pioneer Press stating that he "totally agreed" with my e-mail *Tainted* comments. And going on to say that so many places are "too loud for my not perfect ears".

He stated that he found a "blissfully quiet place" with excellent food! The Monte Carlo in downtown Minneapolis. I have been by it before because my son and his wife live nearby but have never been there. Lionel and I plan to try it after the holidays.

I would encourage any of you who are interested in letting restaurants and bars know that they are too loud and that it is not appreciated to write to the Pioneer Press *Sainted and Tainted*. You can send an e-mail to letters@PioneerPress.com. Be sure to put "Sainted and Tainted" in your subject line. You must also put your full name, address, and phone on the e-mail in case they need to verify the information.

This is just another small way to let establishments know that we do NOT appreciate the loud "background?" music.

Christine T. Morgan

(Editor's note: the official title of the newspaper column is "Sainted and Tainted" – the reversal in this article's title being, I assume, intentional!)



Sainted and Tainted letter
Pioneer Press, December 27, 2014

“I and many of my relatives and friends are ‘on board’ with C. Mosio of St. Paul regarding the loud ‘background’ music in bars and restaurants.

1 out of 5 people in the US have hearing loss. 25% of students entering college today have significant hearing loss. Loud noise contributes to sensorineural loss!

Restaurants pipe loud music into their establishments and cause people trying to have a conversation to talk even louder. With everyone talking louder and trying to hear their companions, it makes for well over 90 decibels of "noise". Enough to contribute to loss of hearing. Waitstaff have to lean over and yell to hear customers.

It makes it unbearable for those of us with hearing loss. However our hearing companions also complain of being unable to hear each other.. We are constantly searching for quiet places to eat and visit. Often resorting to entertaining more frequently in our homes to enable us to hear conversations.

Customers can vote with their feet. The employees are not so lucky!”

Christine T. Morgan
(President, Hearing Loss Association of America, Twin Cities Chapter)

You Can be Heard Too!

Christine’s letter to the Pioneer Press “Sainted and Tainted” column is just one example of the many ways our voices can be heard. In the Pioneer Press newspaper alone, there are several columns that invite reader input. “Sainted and Tainted” is one. Letters regarding gripes and pet peeves – or alternatively, praise and acclaim-- toward our society or individuals in it are welcome. “Bulletin Board” is another sounding board, less serious and often humorous. “Letters to the Editor” is more serious and widely read. Do your fact-checking first!

Local newspapers are another possibility. They are often looking for letters and comments, especially those of local interest.

Businesses often have their own in-house newsletters or bulletins, and may be happy to share any praise or constructive criticism you can offer.

Access Press is a publication devoted to news and information about accessibility.

Try them all!

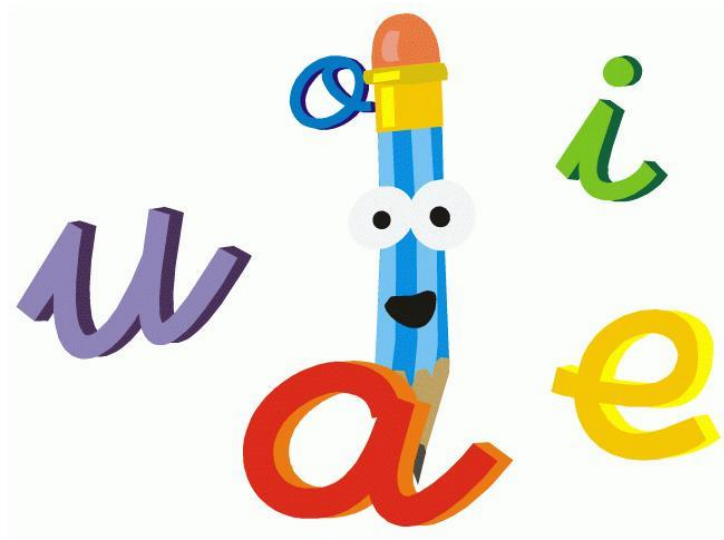


Yes, you can speak monophthongal vowels in polite company. In fact, it's Minnesota Nice!

You have probably noticed, if you have difficulty understanding people who speak with an “accent”, that “accents often occur in the vowels of words” (Pioneer Press, December 7, 2014). Since many hard of hearing people hear *only* vowels (well, maybe an occasional consonant), this goes a long way toward explaining why we have such trouble with accents.

But there's more! “While other regions would say the ‘o’ in a word like ‘Minnesota’ as two different sounds, Upper Midwestern English speakers, particularly those in Minnesota, may pronounce it as one flat sound – making the ‘o’ vowel seem longer – a feature called a monophthongal vowel”

Now you know.



DHHS training sessions -- Free sessions!

From Marie Koehler

DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING SERVICES ~ Metro Office

651-431-5964 (Voice), 651-964-1514 (VP), 888-206-6513 (TTY), 651-431-7587 (FAX), www.dhhsd.org

Note the following upcoming sessions coming in 2015:

Beginning Sign Language

Jan. 15, 9:30-11:30 and March 11, 1:30-3:30

Elmer L. Anderson Building – 540 Cedar, Room 2370 St. St. Paul Room 2370

Learn basic signs and become familiar with some of the characteristics of American Sign Language. Gain an understanding of the importance of gestures, mimes, and reading facial expressions and body language.

Deaf Panel

Feb. 19, 9:30-11:30

Statewide Video Conference

Deaf panelists will share their “life stories” as individuals with a hearing loss, and their personal philosophies on hearing loss related issues. Learn about the difference between “Big D” and “little d” deaf and what it means to be “culturally deaf” vs. “late-deafened”.

To register, call 651-431-5940 (voice or relay), or email dhhs.metro@state.mn.us

Call or email for location of each class.

If you need hearing or other accommodations, request at least 2 weeks before session

Provide your name, phone #, email address, title and date of session, employer and job title

Loop Minnesota

This is the YEAR of the LOOP!
Make it happen!

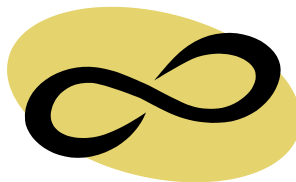
Mark your Calender! **Loop Minnesota** meets on the *second Friday of the month* in the St. Louis Park City Hall Council Chambers located at 5005 Minnetonka Blvd. St. Louis Park. The meetings run from 11:30am to 1:00pm. The Chambers are "looped."

Everybody is invited to join our group and discussions as we set out to Loop Minnesota. First-time guests are treated to pizza. Your ideas and input are both needed and welcome. Visit us at loopminnesota.org and let us know if you plan to attend.

Upcoming Meeting Dates for 2015

Feb 13 2015 - Friday 11:30 am– 1pm

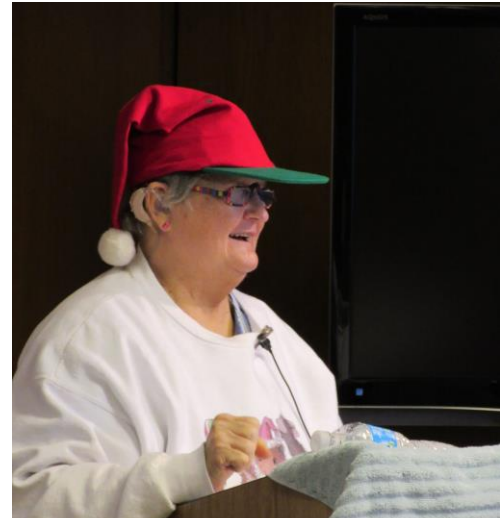
Mar 13 2015 - Friday 11:30 am– 1pm





Cookie Sale!

December HLAA-TC MEETING



Boomerang Speaker Rhoda



Cookie elves
Shannon and
Tiffany

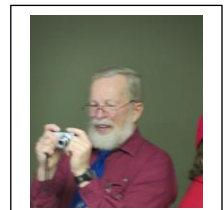


Boomerang – change of
costume!

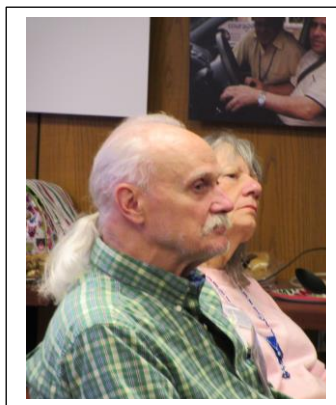
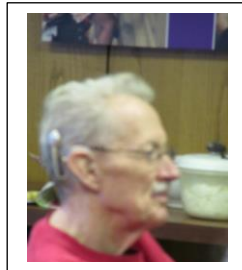
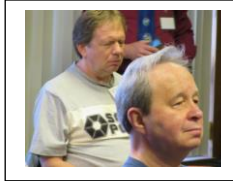


Colleen and Jeanette

Photographer
photographed!



December HLAA-TC MEETING (cont.)




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Our next meeting is January 17, 2015

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Hearing Loss Association

of America

Twin Cities Chapter Welcomes You!

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- Vice President – Lionel Locke**

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- Secretary – Lisa Richardson**

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Dennis Martin

Vicki Martin
- Newsletter Editor -**

Vicki Martin, editor@haatc.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Center in Golden Valley, MN. We gather at 9:30 to socialize and the meeting starts at 10 AM. All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning* (www.paradigmreporting.com). Please visit the chapter’s web-site at www.hlaatc.org or visit us on Facebook: groups/HLAA-TC.