

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Volume 1 Issue #1 June 2006
Formerly SHHH Minnesota Chapter #1

*Self Help for Hard of Hearing
People
is now
Hearing Loss Association of
America.*

*Our local MN Chapter#1 is now
Hearing Loss Association of
America, Twin Cities Chapter.*

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

Our primary purpose is to educate ourselves, our families, friends, coworkers, teachers, hearing health care providers, industry, government, and others about hearing loss.

HLAA provides adults and children with tools for self help; sensitizes the general population about the special needs of people who are hard of hearing; and promotes understanding of the nature, causes, complications, and remedies of hearing loss.

HLAA believes people with hearing loss can help themselves and one another to participate fully and successfully in society.

HLAA promotes self-confidence; empowers individuals with skills to improve their lives; and provides an opportunity for affiliation among people with hearing loss, their friends, families, and professionals.

New officers for 2006 - 2007



President:
Merrilee Knoll



Vice-President:
Dora Weber



Secretary:
Sue Brabeck



Treasurer:
Bob Knoll

Meetings are held at:

**Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422**

**September through May
9:30 AM – Noon
3rd Saturday of each month
(Except June, July & August)**

**See Page 12 for contacts
and more information.**



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

June 17, 2006 - Deaf Day at Valley Fair
10 AM - 4 PM

June 29 - July 2, 2006 -
National Convention in Orlando, FL
Sept. 16, 2006 - Aware Fair at Brookdale Shopping
Mall, 10 AM - 4:30 PM
Oct. 21, 2006 - HLAA TC Meeting: Larry Wigfield
From MN Operation Lifesaver



BITS AND PIECES

In 2006, Josh Aronson completed a new film followup to Sound and Fury six years after the original.

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/soundandfury/> \$27.00
The close captioned vhs is available immediately. The DVD will be ready in about a month. If you'd like one please send a \$27.00 check with your address to: Josh Aronson
35 East 20th Street, NY NY 10003

Cliff Miller - in remembrance of our dear friend, HLAATC made a monetary donation to Feed My Starving Children in his name, another member also filled a FMSC tube which contains about \$10, we are also going to make another trip to FMSC with our members later in the year. We also will continue to save for Cliff's daughter Alida, Campbell's soup can labels and milk bottle lids. Let's keep these things going in his memory which he supported.

Almanac on TPT Ch 2 now has captioning at the Capitol. See it on Wed. at 10 PM and Fri. at 7 PM. Check out the weekly schedule at
<http://www.tpt.org/>

<http://www.tcdeaf.com/events/20060517valleyfair>
Deaf Day Valleyfair 2006, Shakopee, MN, Sat.
June 17

A new invention is helping audiologist to make a better fit of HA to patient. The device is the size of a lapel pin and is worn for one day to see the hearing needs of the patient. It's called Sound Activity Meter (SAM). More info.
www.oticonus.com

Weather Radio - for HOH

<http://www.nssl.noaa.gov/NWR/>
Radio for people with different disabilities.
Vendors of NWR Specifically Packaged for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Harris Communications - 800-825-6758 -
www.harriscomm.com
2 Way Talk - 800-818-6505 -
www.weatherradio.com
Silent Call - 800-572-5227 - www.silent-call.com
Thunder Eagle, Inc. - 1-888-877-8022 -
www.thuneagle.com

Or write:

NOAA, National Weather Service
Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services
1325 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

The 2007 HLAA Convention will be in Oklahoma City, OK.

Time Warner Inc./Walt Disney Co. and others settled a lawsuit by HOH customers who bought DVD's containing bonus items that was not captioned. Under the law the studios will provide more CC, pay to nonprofit groups \$275,000 and as much as \$1.3 million in lawyers' fees.

Sad News: Scott McMahon, age 34, passed away on April 25, 2006. He is survived by his parents, **Terry & Jerri McMahon**, to whom we extend our deepest sympathies. Jerri is a long standing member of HLAA TC, sponsor, speaker, audiologist and friend to many people of our chapter.

Synopsis for May 20, 2006

By Merrilee Knoll

Joe opened saying this would be his last meeting as president as his term was over. There will be no Sept. 16 meeting because of the Aware Fair on the same day. Instead we will all plan to attend the event at the Brookdale Mall in Brooklyn Center.

Debra Hilstrom from district 46B was with us. She also had to be at the capitol at 11:30 for the 24th session so we were lucky to have her with us. She has served in the legislature for six years, and because she has hearing loss in her own family this issue is very important to her.

She said one of the bills on hearing loss is to increase the budget from \$95,000 to \$175,000. The goal of the commission is to improve the success in employment and education. They have had the same amt. For the last 15 yrs.

Another bill was to shorten the 30-day interpreter request if you wanted to attend a precinct caucus.

The newborn bill, to have all babies tested for hearing loss is controversial, as some parents do not want their children tested. Some may fear, "what will this lead to a deaf child, a cochlear implant, or something that needs fixing?"

Ms. Hilstrom said everyone is important!!!! Legislatures care about the people they represent. As a rule when people are happy they do not contact their legislatures. But, if one person calls, writes or emails they pay attention to that issue. If five people call, write etc. that is a ground swell and they need to pay close attention to that issue.

So if Deb gets 100 calls about the stadium does she feel that is the #1 thing of importance? No, it's important but things like education, healthcare and transportation are at the top.

She encouraged us to get to know our legislature.

She then told a story of a blind state representative who uses a machine that reads his paperwork. He does not see blindness as an excuse to hold him back. He is active on the floor, he participates, is chairman of a committee and he's a great legislator.

Deb said that a person coming to the capitol of his or her own free will, has more of an impression than someone who is paid to lobby. It's a lobbyist's job to talk the legislatures into changing her/his mind. She gave us examples of how every vote counts.

Announcements were made about signing up to man the table at the Aware Fair and that we would again go to "Feed My Starving Children" in memory of Cliff Miller later in the year.

Lori said she had contacted Courage Center about taking some magazines. She also is making new nametags with the new logo on them.

Bob is working with Harris to get the discount to include local chapters along with National.

It was voted on that our new name would be officially "Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter."

New officers are, Merrilee Knoll (President), Dora Weber (Vice President), Sue Brabeck (Secretary), and Bob Knoll as Treasurer.

Joe was complimented on the great job and all the years of service he had given to SHHH.



Alfred Tsang at the May Meeting

Presidential Messages

Greetings Everyone!

Well it's kind of ironic that as I step down as President, our chapter will be losing its familiar name. Come October, Merrilee will be the new President and the new name will be in effect. I just want to thank everyone for your support and your dedication to our chapter. I think you will all be very happy with Merrilee and she will serve you proud. Even though my term is ending doesn't mean I will be collecting dust. I recently joined the Crystal Lions Club, I will be serving on the DHHS Advisory Board, as well as working and enjoying life with Lori, our family and friends. Once again I thank you for all your dedication and look forward seeing you very soon.

Happy Summer and see you in October!

The Former Prez, Joe



Thanks, Joe, for serving as our president!

Hello and Welcome to HLAA TC,

Lots of things have changed this year and for the next six months more things will change. Our new name is Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter. We have a new president, secretary and treasurer. They are working hard in your behalf to make this a fun, rewarding, stimulating, educational and supportive club for YOU.

I am happy to say that we are a thriving group of people with no shortage of ideas to keep us going.

One of our biggest obstacles was the fact we had no money to support our CART or newsletter. So over the last year we had t-shirt sales, contacted VFW's, Lion's Clubs and had a steak fry to earn funds. And we did survive. We all know that without CART this would not be the same organization. Because CART is so important to the HOH, please thank your CART person wherever it is used. They are human they like to know they are appreciated.

In looking ahead to my year as your president, I do not come in blindly, as I've been a member for many years and have held the office of everything except treasurer, and now my husband does that. So I guess between the two of us, we have held every position.

Keep in mind that your new time to renew is September 2006. Because we will not be meeting in Sept. (due to the Aware Fair) that date has been extend to Oct. 21. If you come to the Oct. 21 mtg. bring your fee with you. If you are mailing it, please send it in September.

Joe O'Brien is the person who originally asked me step up and become an officer, he has done this with others. One thing that has always clung to my memory about Joe is his continued dedication to

volunteerism. Some people are just like that, they like to serve other people. We should all strive to be like Joe and volunteer more. Thank you Joe for all the years and years of service you have given to SHHH now HLAA TC.

Your President,
Merrilee



Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way to the memory of our dear friend Cliff Miller. The pictures, messages, money to HLAA TC or Feed My Starving Children, continued support of milk carton lids and Campbell's soup can labels, all honor Cliff's memory.



Cliff Miller

A Big **THANK YOU** to the 2005 – 2006 officers:

President Joe O'Brien
Vice Presidents Cliff Miller, Dora Weber, and Merrilee Knoll
Secretary Lori Snyder-O'Brien
Co-Treasurers John Lindlan and Bob Knoll



From the Treasurer

Things are progressing with the name change. I'm working with the IRS, Secretary of State and the post office. Our Bank account has already been changed and new checks have been ordered at no cost to us. New return address stamp and bank deposit only stamp have been purchased at a cost of less than \$40.00

At our October meeting I will have a proposal ready for amendments to our Articles of Incorporation so we can change our name to Hearing Loss Association, Twin Cities Chapter with the State of Minnesota.

Bob Knoll

National Website:
www.hearingloss.org

Minnesota Website:
<http://deafvision.net/shhhmn1/>

MN Contact Information:
shhhmn1@hotmail.com

DEVICE TESTING @ HLAA CONVENTION

Over the next few months, the Walt Disney World Resort will be testing the next generation of their wireless handheld technology for Guests with hearing loss. As you may know, Assistive Listening receivers have been available at Guest Relations for many years. In the late 1990s, Walt Disney World added Video Captioning activators that turn on captioning displays on selected video monitors. Then in 2001, Disney introduced its Handheld Captioning device, which displays text for specific theme park attractions where fixed captioning systems were previously unattainable or impractical.

The updated technology will incorporate the services for Guests with hearing disabilities into one device to include Assistive Listening, Handheld Captioning, and a Video Captioning Activator. This consolidation of services into one device eliminates the need for Guests to have multiple pieces of equipment.

As Disney prepares for the roll-out of this new device, they are looking for feedback from the community. As part of this, they are extending an invitation to 2006 HLAA Convention attendees to participate in a test of the device at selected Epcot locations.

On Wednesday, 6/28, the day prior to the official start of the convention, the first 100 HLAA Convention participants who visit the Device Testing table hosted by Walt Disney World Services for Guests with Disabilities will have an opportunity to take part in this worthwhile opportunity. This table will be located in the Coronado Springs Resort Convention Center Lobby.

Participants in the test will receive a complimentary one-day admission ticket to Epcot along with an evaluation form to take into the park and fill out.

If interested in participating in the device testing, please note the following:

When:

Date: Wednesday, 6/28/06

Morning Distribution

Time: 8 - 11 AM

Afternoon Distribution:

Time: 2 - 5 PM

Where:

Device Testing table hosted by WDW Services for Guests with Disabilities

Lobby-Coronado Springs Resort Convention Center

Eligible Participants:

Registered 2006 HLAA Convention attendees over 10 years old

Contact:

For more information, please contact Mark Jones at Mark.Jones@disney.com

COCHLEAR IMPLANT CORNER

NOTE: There will be no Coffee and Chat at the U of MN in July. The Chats will resume again on August 2. For more information, contact Linda Senechal at cilinda97@yahoo.com or call her at (952) 884-7793.

Did you know....

We do not actually hear with our ears?

In fact, the entire auditory system, from the outer ear to the auditory nerve, just provides the pathway for sound to travel to the brain. We hear in the brain. If a person developed hearing loss after learning language (postlingual hearing loss), the brain will retain the sounds of spoken language. The longer a person is deaf, the more challenging it is to recall these sounds. In the case of a person who has never heard (hearing loss at birth), or who has had very limited benefit from hearing aids, sound through a cochlear implant will be almost entirely new. That person will need to develop new auditory pathways, along with the memory skills to retain these new sounds. This is a huge task.

Being able to detect sound does not mean that an individual will be able to understand words. If the brain has no language, understanding cannot occur. Cochlear Implants may indicate that the person has a hearing range in the 20 dB to 40 dB (the range of a mild hearing loss). However, the ability to understand words can vary greatly from patient to patient, depending upon their previous hearing experience. Adjustments to the cochlear implant will be different for everyone.

Linda Senechal

Elementary Class Learns Cueing For Deaf Classmate

Jeanette Trompeter Reporting

(WCCO) At Deerwood Elementary school in Eagan, an entire classroom volunteered to give up going outside for recess.

They've made that sacrifice since October so they could learn how to communicate with a special classmate. His name is Justin Feeser and he's deaf.

Justin Feeser said his friendships have improved, now that his buddies are learning how to cue.

They're not learning sign language. They're learning cueing -- hand signals that help deaf people to read lips. Different positions of the hand help to provide a visual cue for each sound of each word.

While children are out at recess, Justin's friends take cueing class.

"Especially on a day like today -- it's special. The fact that they've given it up once per week all year, it's not normal," said teacher Amy Voorhees. It's well worth it, after all, these kids go way back.

"I've known Justin since kindergarten and he's been a really good friend," said Kaitlyn Palma, third grader. Justin's twin, Derek Feeser, said the class has changed his brother.

"He's happy and it's easy to talk to him because you like knows how to cue," Derek said.

It takes about 15 hours to learn basic cueing. Justin is learning the skill too.

Wednesday was Justin's birthday and his class had a cake and a special gift, singing happy birthday while cueing. The class has been practicing just for Justin.



Cruise for people who wear hearing aids and/or Cochlear Implant.

Bill and Carol Beitzel Phone (1-204 338-5469)
winnipeg auditory education@shaw.ca

Dear Adult CI and Hearing Aid Users, Traveling Companions and Cruisers Interested in a Mexican Riviera Cruise in January 2007:

Carol and I are in constant touch with Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruise Lines with regards to having Real Time Captioning (CART) during our upcoming cruise to the Mexican Riviera. Everyone at RCCL seems very optimistic that this additional support will be available and they are "looking into the possibilities" that our ship will be able to offer this service. We hope to have a definitive answer within the next few weeks.

Carlson-Wagonlit Travel have agreed to extend the early bird deadline beyond May 31st. Carol and I will be in touch with you as soon as we are assured that Real Time Captioning will be available on our cruise.

We know that the following supports are already on board and available for your use:

- 1) FM infrared systems are located in the Main Show Lounge.
- 2) Portable FM systems will be available on all on-shore excursions as well as in the dining room to more easily speak to and hear your waiters. You will need to provide your own patch cords.
- 3) A portable kit is available upon request. It includes TTY/TDD, Alertmaster and a strobe alarm. The TTY in your stateroom interfaces with the TTY at the Guest Relations Desk to meet all of your in-stateroom needs. The Alertmaster alarm clock features under-mattress or under-pillow vibrator, while lights on the Alertmaster monitor the following: doorbell, telephone ringing, alarms and other sounds.
- 4) Amplified telephones are available in the staterooms and public areas.
- 5) Closed-captioned televisions are available in all staterooms.
- 6) All videos produced by Celebrity are closed-captioned.

If you are planning to join us on this cruise and would like us to contact you directly and personally, would you please respond to this note and let us have your contact/email address? Please extend this offer to any others you know who received our original flyer or might be interested.

Thank you for your interest in our cruise. As we know, this is a great way to spend some winter days together in a warm, relaxed and fun environment where we can meet and build lasting friendships. Carol and I hope to hear from you.

Can You Hear Me Now?

Baseball.



Hot Dog.



Ice Cream.

It sounds like a walk in the park. And metaphorically, it is. Chances are good that you recognize these words as part of the standard speech discrimination test that you were given when being evaluated for a hearing aid. The word list has not changed in 45 years. Yet they are still asking us what we heard, and we are still answering: “baseball”, “hot dog”, “ice cream”. But what are we really measuring here -- how many times we have taken the test? How well we know English? How large a vocabulary we have? How quickly our brains process data?

One thing it does not measure is how well we actually hear spoken sounds. To do that, we would need to use randomly generated nonsense syllables instead of words. And it certainly doesn’t measure how hard we have to work to figure out what the words are.

Picture your brain Googling a vowel sequence. If you can narrow the search (ie: English only; business, social or confidential setting; topic of interest to the known person), you may get a quick hit, and it will seem as if you have actually heard your conversation partner. But without that context, it is like searching the internet for a common string and getting several million hits. It may take some time for you to refine that search in come up with a likely candidate.

On one occasion, I was shopping a yard sale when a person spoke to me. I ignored the cheerful voice, not aware that I was being spoken to. I bought a book, got in my car and was a block away before I got a hit. The words

were: “You’re interested in Godel, too?” He had been addressing me. Of course, it was too late to reply. But suppose someone asked me later if I had heard him. What is the correct answer?

On another occasion, I sat in a conference room with a colleague, reviewing specifications for a programming project. It was just the two of us, face to face across the table. I heard every word she said, or so I thought. Every ‘s’, every ‘r’, every ‘th’ – it was all there in full panoramic sound.

Then she turned to write on the whiteboard. Suddenly I was lost, bobbing in a sea of unconnected vowels with only her vocal intonation for a lifeline. We had to stop. Had I been hearing her? Clearly, the answer is neither “yes” nor “no”.

“Is that loud enough?” is similarly unanswerable. It may indeed be loud enough. In fact, it may be too loud. But to simply answer “yes” invites the expectation that you will understand what is spoken.

Likewise, if you are evaluating audio or assistive listening equipment, “Does that work for you?” nearly always requires a qualified answer. Many things help a little bit. All of them together can be enabling. But nothing “works” in quite the sense that the questioner has in mind.

And then there is my all-time favorite, the original from which all of these useless queries are descended: “Can you hear me now?”

It is the question that has no answer. If you answer “no”, you are obviously lying, because you heard the question, didn’t you? If you answer “yes”, then you have no excuse for your ignorance of whatever business transpires during the exchange.

The fact is, we often don’t know how we know. When you tell your friend you can’t hear her, you know she is going to say “can you hear me

now?" But did you hear her say that? Or did you know from prior experience what she would say? If you heard it, what exactly did you hear? A string of vowels, perhaps, and the lilt of a questioning voice?

Not only is it difficult to describe how we piece these things together, it is unlikely that – when we are successful – we are aware of missing anything.

How about it then? How should we answer this question, or should we answer it at all? We may want to take some time to ponder *that* question.

In the meantime, I have an idea: why not answer in exactly the way we hear?

You know, something like “i-o-uh-oo-eh-uh-i-o-o-ih-i-ur-oo”.

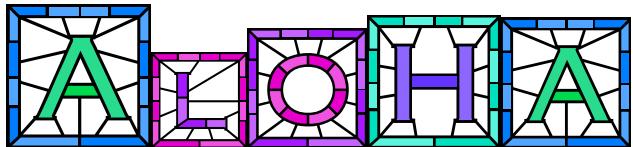


Vicki Martin

Pictures from the May meeting:



Wendy and Jeanette



Hi, Everyone,

(651) 423-2249 (TTY)

ThibodoD@aol.com

Contact Ellen for directions and further info.

June 10 - Jeff & Tracy Blodgett-more info. to come (MITC)

July - possible brunch (MITC)

Aug. 12 - annual picnic, Burnsville (MITC)

Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 11 (MITC)

Dec. 9 Burnsville (MITC)

Ellen



Garv

**Ross
&
Monique**



Strangers

By Dora Weber

Long ago, when I was a hard -of-hearing teenager, I went out of my way to avoid strangers. It wasn't because I was afraid that physical harm might come to me; it was the mental anguish that, unknowingly, they could cause me. I did not want anyone to think I was dumb, a stigma that was associated with deafness at the time.

I began to bluff. It was easy to cover up my hearing loss to my family and friends but not with a stranger. Then, I was given two choices. I could let them think that I was shy, which I certainly was not or I could appear to be not-so-bright, which also was untrue. It was my natural love for people that caused me to appear to be not-so-bright.

Whenever I was caught with a stranger and I could not hear what they were saying, I would pretend that I did and I would usually get away with a sweet smile. Not so, when I was asked a question. Oh, my, those were embarrassing times. I still can feel the blood rush to my face. If I did not understand on the second try I would say, "I don't know" and then walk away.

For a time after such an encounter, I would wonder if others would hear about this one sided conversation and would think that I was strange. I was continuously thinking up ways to cover up situations such as these. Nothing ever came of my worries. Life went on but I was continuously on guard. The feeling of inadequacy followed me into my adult life.

In 1986, shortly after I underwent an unsuccessful revision stapedectomy in my right ear, I became profoundly deaf in both ears. The tinnitus, that I had coped with all my life, became almost intolerable. It rang, it buzzed, it roared, it hissed.

One day, when I could no longer tolerate the sound, I went for a walk. I walked and walked and when I walked, I was frequently asked directions to here and there. I don't know the reason except that perhaps it was because I was outside so much

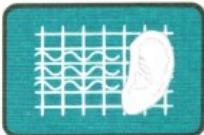
and was a good target. Perhaps it was God's plan for me. He wanted to keep me "In the world". It became an everyday occurrence for a car to stop and the driver would ask, "Can you tell me where" I never heard more than that. Again I had two choices- I could appear to be unfriendly and walk on by or I could bluff. Once again my love for people won out. I chose to bluff. I pretended that I was new in the neighborhood and said I didn't know where they wanted to go.

After I had my cochlear implant, my tinnitus disappeared but I continued to take my walks. Guess what? Everyone knew the directions to where they were going. I had to wait for several months before someone asked for my help!

Early one Saturday morning, I was about to turn onto the street leading to the McDonalds restaurant where I stopped for coffee. A car carrying several teenagers came to a stop alongside me. The window was rolled down and a young man asked, "Do you know where Emmanuel Christian Center is"? Wow, I heard him on the first try and I knew the answer!

I felt like I was about to answer the million dollar question on the, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" show. A smile lit up my face as I walked up to the car and gave him directions. I will never forget that day. Maybe they told their friends about the friendly lady who was so happy to help them.





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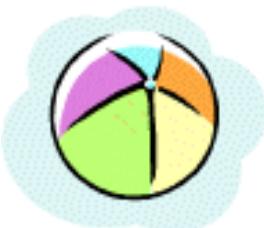


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This space is available for
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people.
Please contact Merrilee at
rknoll5200@aol.com

**MN Chapter #1 HLAA
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First Class**



HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

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HLAA Twin Cities Chapter Welcomes You

President – Merrilee Knoll, (763)537-7558(TTY,V
Rknoll5200@aol.com

Vice President – Dora Weber,

Secretary – Sue Brabeck, tigerlily1@att.net

Treasurer – Bob Knoll, Rknoll5200@aol.com

Aloha Event Coordinator –

Ellen Thibodo, (651) 423-2249 (TTY)
ThibodoD@aol.com

Contact Info. shhhmn1@hotmail.com

www.deafvision.net/shhhmn1

Newsletter Editors -

Linda Senechal, cilinda97@yahoo.com
Merrilee Knoll, Rknoll5200@aol.com

This month's editor is Linda Senechal

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*. Please visit the chapter's web-site at www.deafvision.net/shhhmn1