

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter December 2006
Formerly SHHH Minnesota Chapter #1

Calendar of Coming Events

December 16, 2006 – Holiday Party & Speaker Jerry Yanz from Starkey Labs – Jerry wants volunteers for testing
January 20, 2007 – Dr. Shallop, Mayo
February 17, 2007 – Dr. Kristen Swan from Region's Hospital
Mar. 17, 2007 - Family Panel on hearing loss
April 11, 2007 – HLAA TC Steak Fry
April 21, 2007 - Deaf/Safe Speaker
May 19, 2007 - Elections & Pot Luck
June 21 – June 24, 2007 – HLAA National Convention in Oklahoma City.

[View Hearing Loss Magazine free online](http://tinyurl.com/lormh)
<http://tinyurl.com/lormh>

MN Contact Information:
info@hlaatc.org

Meetings are held at:

Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, Mn 55422

September through May
9:30 a.m. – Noon
3rd Saturday of each month
(Except June, July & August)
See Page 12 for contacts and more information.



**Hearing Loss
Association
of America**

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

December 2006

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National Website:
www.hearingloss.org

Minnesota Website:
www.hlaatc.org

President's Messages



President Merrilee Knoll presenting a poinsettia from HLAA to the Courage Center

Happy and Peaceful Holidays to Everyone,

It has come upon us again, just as it did last year, and will again next year. The happy holidays. But are they really happy for everyone? Maybe not.

What if your son, father, or spouse is in Iraq. How about if you were sickly with a fatal illness. What if your son or daughter had vanished. Times around the holidays are not wonderful for each of us. Try to keep that in mind when rushing to the store to get that last gift on our Holiday list and had to forgo the closest parking spot. Maybe this would be a good time to donate to your favorite charity, if not in monetary value, how about in personal volunteerism? Some places you might consider working over the holidays are CEAP, Feed My Starving Children or Sharing and Caring Hands.

Loneliness is often a side by side event if you are hard of hearing. Family events may make you feel like a foreigner even amongst your own kin if you can't understand what anyone is saying. Can I make a suggestion? Is it time for a change? How about giving up one day to helping to feed the homeless? You'd be

surprised how the loneliness and feeling of isolation disappears. It might even become a yearly/monthly event.

Merrilee

Bylaws change:

Every voting partner of HLAA TC will receive a copy of the By Laws pertaining to our chapter either in the mail or at the general meeting in December. These are the By Laws that we voted on at the November 2006 general meeting. Please pick up your copy which has your name on it, other wise it will be sent to you.

Merrilee Knoll, President

As one of the largest hearing instrument designers and manufacturers in the world, Eden Prairie-based Starkey Laboratories is at the forefront of developing innovative technology for hard of hearing people. Currently they are working on some wireless assistive listening devices and are looking for experienced people to evaluate those products. See our Dec. 16th speaker Jerry Yanz.

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

Angie and Lisa, Paradigm Captioning



Do You Hear What I Hear?

How do you describe the color red to a person who is color-blind? How, for that matter, should you describe the color to me? How do you know that my red is the same as your red? We can measure its wavelength, and we can determine if I can distinguish between it and other wavelengths. But that doesn't tell you how I perceive it.

All of our senses present us with this ambiguity. Sight, taste, hearing – there are some things about these that we can measure, but some things we can't.

If I hear only 10% of what the average person hears, why don't I have only a tenth of the average interest in music? Clearly, there are some factors about hearing that are not diminished even with reduced receptivity.

People used to ask me how I could be a musician if I couldn't hear. I don't have a good answer to that, except to say that I do hear – something. But what I hear is certainly not what most people hear. How do I know that? From teasing playmates ("You talk like a baby!") to professional speech therapists who can identify the sounds missing from my speech, people provide evidence that we hear differently.

I sing with our congregation as long as the pianist plays what is in the book. If she changes the key, I can't sing. Confession time: I can't sing anyway. However, I will at least make an attempt if I recognize it as being what is on the page. If the key is changed, I'm lost. The rest of the congregation, most without professional music training, have no trouble letting the keyboardist lead them from one key to another. But they go where I cannot follow. I have perfect pitch, but I have imperfect hearing.

If nothing else, these things seem to indicate that how we perceive sensory data depends a lot on things internal. I like that idea, sort of. It gives a deeply personal meaning to what we see and hear. But I crave continuity too. I want to know that you and I can talk about something with some assurance that we understand each other.

In the end, we may just have to accept that there are things that can't be proven, and many of these have to do with how we perceive things.

Stratton (1896) and others have shown that if you put on a pair of inverting lenses, everything will look upside-down – for a while. Soon, your brain will adjust your vision to agree with what it already knows about the world. If you have a Cochlear Implant, you may have noticed a similar adaptive process. At first, things sound unnatural, but after a while, you begin to hear things as they are "supposed" to sound.

And we have come full circle: How do you know that what you hear is what you are "supposed" to hear? And how do you know it is the same as what I, or the next person hears?

You would know, I suppose, only if you could get inside of my head and think my thoughts. Scary idea! (for both of us).

And so, maybe I should simply rest assured that, as they say, a rose is a rose (and an A-flat is an A-flat).



Or not.



Vicki Martin

HLAA TC Meeting 11/18/06

By Monique Hammond, Vice President



President Merrilee started the meeting at 10:00 AM. She reminded us to turn on our T-coils. She wondered if anyone would be interested in getting information - or if we should have a speaker - on looping large areas such as churches in order to serve the needs of the hearing disabled. Let her know if this is of interest to you.

Merrilee also thanked Paradigm for their continuing support of our meetings. This time we had Angie on CART, and we thank her so much for a great job.

We had the pleasure to greet a new member: **Dorothy Aho**. She lives in Savage. We met her at the Aware Fair last September. Dorothy teaches 7th grade. A warm welcome from all of us!

Merrilee reminded us of our project – *Feed My Starving Children*. A red tube was passed around for the purpose of collecting quarters. A full tube finances 93 meals. Amazing! If interested in helping, sign up on the sign-up sheet or let Merrilee know.

Next **Linda Senechal** took the floor. She gave more information about our *Feed My Starving Children* activities on December 28th from 6 PM to 7:30PM in Brooklyn Park. She also revved us all up for our Christmas Party on December 16th. For details consult your November issue of our HLAA TC newspaper: Details for the *Feed My Starving Children* can be found on page 5, for the Christmas Party on page 9 and both are repeated in this issue on page 6.

Most importantly though, Linda talked about the Hospital kits that she has assembled for quite some time for the Deaf and Hard of hearing who face a hospital stay. The contents of the kits are

geared to identify the hearing disabled to hospital staff and to make communication easier. With great success, Linda has provided these kits to the U of M for cochlear implant patients. She brought some samples for our inspection. Quite an effort!! Could this project extend to other areas besides the University? Could HLAA TC get involved? Your thoughts?

Next, **VP Monique** gave a brief summary of the MCDHH meeting on Friday 11/17/06. The item that will be on the agenda again this year is hearing screening for newborns. Mary Hartnett will fly to Colorado in order to talk to some of their special education staff and to their newborn hearing screening specialists. Colorado has apparently great successes in both areas. Maybe we can learn what works and what does not and apply it to Minnesota.

Monique also introduced us to Lifetrack Resources which connects parents of a deaf or hard of hearing child with other parents who face the same situation. If interested access www.lifetrackresources.org. Voice phone: 651-265-2435; TTY: 651- 265- 2379

Secretary Sue tried to round up more surveys. Without them we do not know what the group's wishes and wants are. What about signing up for the T-shirts? We need design and color input. Sue also mentioned that at the Christmas Party, Jerry Yans from STARKEY we will give a brief presentation. He will talk about testing methods and is apparently looking for volunteers!!

Treasurer Bob promoted the Steak fry set for April 11th 2007. The tickets should be paid for in cash rather than in checks. Show Bob the money!! The more dollars we have, the more projects we can do to help others.

Also, we voted for the by-law change and are now *officially* HLAA TC. More paperwork for Bob!

Our main speaker was **Gloria Thompson** of the Insurance Professionals of Greater Minnesota. She talked about identity theft. This is a crime where someone uses our personal information and commits crimes in our name. Gloria gave loads of information and illustrated her talk with

real life stories that almost sounded unreal. 25% of identity thefts are committed by people whom we know: family, friends, contractors, people who have access to our home and whom we trust!

Never give out any personal information to people who contact us by phone. Debit cards are a big problem (no liability limit). Cash or credit cards are best. Use checks sparingly and do not put all of your information on the check. Checks can be whitewashed and information altered. Be suspicious of wait/sales personnel who talk on the phone while they do your payment transaction. Might they communicate your credit card number or other personal information to an identity thief outside??

Before applying for a loan, check your credit history with one of three Credit Bureaus*. You may be amazed what you find out. Some information may be inaccurate. One woman learned that she was “dead”!!

Thank you Gloria, for this most interesting and riveting talk.



*

Equifax Credit Bureau, PO Box 105, Atlanta, GA 30348-0241 www.equifax.com

Experian Credit Bureau, PO Box 2104, Allen, TX 75013-2014 www.experian.com

TransUnion, PO Box 390, Springfield, PA 19064-0390 www.transunion.com

More Tips from Gloria Thompson:

=> If you are tired of the credit card offers that come in the mail, call the 800 number listed on the letters and they will stop. It is probably a good idea to stop them as, if your mail is stolen, someone might open an account for you.

=> When doing business online, not only should you look for the little padlock to indicate a

secure site, but the address should be “https”. The “S” on the end indicates it is a secure site.

=> Another clever scheme going around: You get a call that goes like this: “Hi, this is VISA. Someone just made several charges to your card in Paris. I am just checking to be sure they were authorized.” You respond: “No, I don’t know anyone in Paris that should be using my card.” The caller then advises that they will stop any further charges from Paris, and cancel the ones just made. However, they need to be sure that you have the card in your possession, so would you turn it over and give the three secure digits on the back? Chances are they already had your credit card number, and they just need that number on the back to use your card.

=> As Monique mentioned, don’t ever give out any information if someone calls you. Take their number, look at your bill and see what the 800 number is that is on your bill, and check that against the number that the caller gave you. If it matches you can call them back.

=> Google your own phone number including area code (no dashes) and see what comes up!

=> You can check your credit report once a year for free with the three credit bureaus. Call 8-877-322-8228 and request the reports. They will be mailed to you.

=> To remove yourself from junk mail lists: Send a letter or postcard asking to be removed to Mail Preference Service, Direct marketing Assn, PO Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512

=> DON’T carry your social security card in your purse or wallet.

=> DON’T mail items from your home mailbox

=> DO keep personal information locked up

=> DO keep track of monthly bills and statements

=> DO shred documents with personal information including credit card offers

=> DO make sure no one is looking when you enter personal ID numbers.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

HOLIDAY PARTY ON DEC 16

You won't want to miss the HLAA Holiday Party at our regular meeting on **December 16**. Here's what to expect.

Food: Lots of it! It's pot luck. Bring something to share.

White Elephant Gift Exchange: Each person that brings a gift will be eligible to take one home. Please make sure your gift is suitable for either a man or woman. Keep the cost at \$10 or less. Wrap it up and bring it to the party.

Cookie Donation and Sale: Bake one batch of your holiday best (buy them if you are not a baker), and the donated cookies will be shuffled into boxes so each one will have a nifty assortment. We then offer these assorted cookies for sale to members and guests, and the proceeds are donated to a worthy cause.

The Christmas Party is always an enjoyable event!!

Feed My Starving Children Volunteers



Our HLAA group has been scheduled for 12/28/06 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM in Brooklyn Park.

**For Directions, please go to:
<http://www.fmsc.org/Locations/default.asp>**

CapTel Phones

Captioned Telephone Service (CapTel)

What is it? It is a special phone made by Ultratec that allows people with hearing loss to place a call the same way they would with a traditional phone. CapTel users can hear all that is being said using their residual hearing. However, when they dial a number using the CapTel phone, the call automatically connects with the captioning service. Using **voice-recognition technology**, a specially trained operator transcribes everything said by the person on the other end and those words appear on the display window of the CapTel phone almost simultaneously with the spoken word.

Features: adjustable tone and volume control, speed dialing and last number redial, adjustable ring, 500 character memory caption, audio jack for assistive listening devices, easy access to voice mail, software upgrades can be transmitted over your phone.

How can I get one? For information about purchasing a CapTel phone, contact the MN Relay Consumer Relations Office at 1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY). If you meet certain eligibility requirements, you may qualify to receive a phone at no cost through the State Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) program. To see if you qualify for the TED program, call 1-800-657-3663 (voice), 1-800-657-3513 (TTY) or visit the website at www.tedprogram.org.

Benefits:

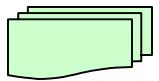
Calls are easy to make; just pick up the phone and dial.

Listen to the person that you are talking to and read the text display. You don't talk to the CapTel operator.

Free and confidential service round the clock.

FEEDBACK FROM USERS PLEASE??????

BITS AND PIECES



ASL PRACTICE

If you are interested in conversing in ASL this group (free & not a class) meets at the Barnes & Noble bookstore at Har Mar 6 PM, every Friday of the month, Har Mar Mall, 2100 North Snelling Ave. Roseville, MN 55113, 651-639-9256

Call the store to confirm or check this web site:
1) www.BarnesandNoble.com
2) Left side - Find Your Local Book Store - type zip code
3) Left side - Find An Event
4) Type in info. EX. # of miles, type of event (Conversational Group if you want ASL), date range (this wk, this month, next 3 months).

BAD WEATHER AND OUR MEETINGS - In case of bad weather use your best judgment or call one of the officers. A decision will be made by 8 AM on the day of the meeting.

Here's a neat idea. If you click this web site at (<http://www.letssaythanks.com>) you can pick out a thank you card for a service person in Iraq, the Xerox Corporation will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving, You can't pick out who gets it, but it will go to some member of the armed services. It is FREE and it only takes a second.

CapTel phones are available in all but 8 states. See if you qualify for a free phone.
<http://www.captionedtelephone.com/availability.shtml>

Gallaudet update: The deadline for applications for interim president was Nov. 27. Applicants will be interviewed over the phone. The interim president will serve for 18 months to

two years, allowing the Board of Trustees enough time to select a permanent president.

Placido Domingo's latest project is music to the ears of hearing-impaired people. The tenor, paired with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, is speaking for a global effort called "Hear the World" to raise awareness about hearing loss. <http://www.placidodomingo.com> and <http://www.hear-the-world.com/>

Read about cochlear implants in Russia.
<http://www.van-mourik-medical.com/en/cohlar.html>

The text transcript of I King Jordan talking on "Talk of the Nation" on Nov. 28, 2006 tells what he plans to do after he retires from Gallaudet, and about Jane Fernandes, former provost who was to follow him as president, but was removed from that position.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6551118>

Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (**CEPIN**)

<http://www.cepintdi.org/>

The Community Emergency Preparedness Information website is designed to promote awareness in emergency preparedness activities. We encourage networking among emergency responders and deaf and hard of hearing consumers for the purpose of creating such programs in local communities.

Feed My Starving Children will be Dec. 28th from 6PM to 7:30 PM at 6750 West Broadway, Minneapolis 763-504-2919 see for directions <http://www.fmsc.org/Locations/default.aspx> and for more info. on FMS www.fmsc.org/

Universal Signs staring Anthony Natale did not get accepted into the 2007 Sundance Film Festival. 996 films applied to the festival's dramatic competition and only 16 films were selected. They are trying other avenues to get the movie done www.universalsignsmovie.com

ARE YOU TOO TIRED TO WORK?

Excerpts from *The Fatigue Factor: How I Learned to Love Power Naps, Meditation, and Other Tricks to Cope With Hearing-Loss Exhaustion*, David Copithorne, author, *Healthy Hearing*, 8/21/2006

Are you too tired to work? According to a European survey done by the Danish Institute for Social Research, as many as one in five people with hearing loss gives up on the job market, and of those who work almost 15 percent get so run down that they have no energy left for active leisure pursuits. Among those seeking work, the unemployment rate is 50 percent higher for people with hearing loss than for people without. And the most common reported reason for the lost productivity is exhaustion.

There are multiple causes of the fatigue that comes when you must cope with hearing loss in the everyday world.

Depression Can Wear You Out

People who suddenly lose most or all of their hearing commonly go through the five stages of grief identified by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross in her famous book *On Death and Dying*. The stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Doctors will tell you that deep fatigue is one of the most common symptoms of clinical depression. The problem with hearing loss is that it's not just a single isolated event. After you experience the depression that is part of the acceptance of your initial hearing loss, there are endless additional opportunities for disappointment, and the losses you have to accept are frequent and often unexpected. People who are hard of hearing, especially those who are late-deafened, have to go through this cycle of grieving, mourning and accepting time and time again.

Coping is Hard Work

Think of the last time you took an escalator ride where the escalator was next to a set of stairs. While you were standing still, the people

climbing the regular stairs next to you were working pretty hard just to keep even with you, right? Now imagine that every day you practice a little tap-dance routine for your company's talent show as you ride that escalator. Just think how much more work you would have to do if you had to walk up the stairs, practice your tap dance routine on the way up, and still get to the top in the same time it takes you on the escalator.

All this extra physical work is very similar to the extra cognitive work people with hearing loss have to do just to keep up with the normal flow of interactions that take place all day long. The extra effort required to comprehend speech in noise when your normal mechanisms for filtering out background sounds are impaired can put an overload on the brain that makes it harder to perform other mental tasks at the same time. The result can be poorer performance on work-related tasks and extra work keeping up with others than if your brain didn't have to go through extra cycles trying to comprehend and communicate.

Stress: Too Many Shots of Adrenaline

The stress and anxiety from coping with hearing loss in everyday situations can also wear you down. When you are in a conversation but cannot keep up, especially in business, missing out on the information you need can be extremely threatening.

When this kind of anxiety extends to other situations -- stress when you can't negotiate a simple transaction at the store, difficulty communicating on everyday matters with family members, or getting about safely in the car --you often end up in an extended state of "hyper-vigilance." Burnout and complete exhaustion are the natural consequence.

How to Fight Back: Relax!

When stress, anxiety, struggle, and depression conspire to lay you out flat, what's the best way

(continued on page 9)

(continued from page 8)

to respond? Thankfully there are ways to work through your fatigue and re-charge your batteries.

Meditation and breathing disciplines have been shown to provide real health benefits, relieving stress and restoring energy. Many say the current popularity of yoga is directly tied to people's growing need for both physical and mental restoration in an increasingly stressed-out culture.

But the solutions that work best are also the easiest -- regular aerobic exercise and preventative "power" napping. Thirty to forty-five minutes of day of easy jogging relieves stress and fights depression, in part through releasing endorphins in the bloodstream, which contribute to a general sense of well being. Taking a quick nap in the middle of the day, before you get run down, helps prevent the kind of complete depletion that would otherwise knock you out for 12-to-24 hours.

These healthy living practices may require a change in lifestyle, but the good news is such changes can be learned. Samuel Trychin, Ph.D., (trychin.com) has spent more than 20 years helping people cope effectively with hearing loss. His "Living With Hearing Loss Program" provides a comprehensive schooling in everything from how to manage work and personal relationships to how to practice proven relaxation techniques.

The biggest benefit of Dr. Trychin's services and others is the sense of perspective they give you. When I started asking questions about my own mysterious fatigue I discovered I was not alone. I discovered that others have lived through the same experiences and coped with them quite successfully.



Hearing Aid Problems

If the Aid Does Not Work At All

- Make sure the aid is turned on (don't laugh; this happens!) and make sure that the T-switch is correctly positioned (not in the "T" position).
- Check if the battery not dead and is inserted correctly (+ and in the right place). If you have to force the battery, you probably have it wrong. If in doubt, try a new one (where you have to remove the sticky paper flap off the battery surface). A dead battery is the most common reason for "dead aids".
- Check battery contacts to be sure they are not corroded.
- Check tubing to be sure it is not clogged with moisture (shown by water or condensation in the tube).
- Check mold to be sure that sound bore is not clogged with wax.

If Sound is Weaker than Usual

- Check battery. Replace if necessary.
- Check tubing for cracks, fraying, moisture, etc. Replace if necessary.
- Check that the earmold is not clogged with wax. Reposition the mold for a tighter fit; it may have been whistling (feedback) at a pitch you cannot hear.

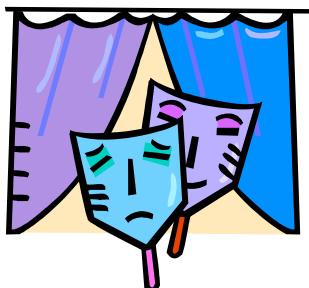
If Aid Goes On/Off or Has Scratchy Sound

- Flick on/off switch back and forth, in case dust or lint has collected in the controls.
- Check battery contacts and the tubing from earmold to the hearing aid and replace it if bent, cracked, frayed.
- Think where you have been. If in a very humid environment or have experienced excessive perspiration from vigorous activities, moisture may clog the aid and distort sounds. Use a hearing aid dehumidifier overnight and try again.

If the Aid Whistles ("Feedback")

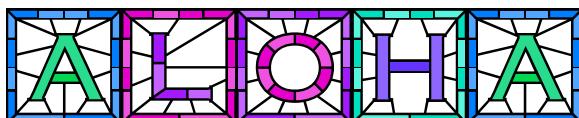
- Probably an earmold problem. Remove the aid, put a finger over the earmold hole. If the whistling stops, the earmold was not properly inserted in the ear, or is not a good fit. Try it again in the ear; if the whistle continues, consult your hearing aid dispenser.
- Sometimes feedback may occur when you have a blockage of wax in the ear canal, a stiff eardrum (from a cold, for example) or any condition that causes sound to be reflected from the ear canal. In these cases, the earmold may be fine, and the feedback will disappear when the condition is corrected.
- Check volume control; it may have been turned too high.

Entertainment



Movie Info.? To find a movie theater near you that has captions, simply type in your zip code at this Web site www.Fomdi.com

STEAK FRY
The Steak Fry will be April 11, 2007 (Wednesday), from 5 – 7 PM at the Crystal Lions Club. This is a major fundraiser for our group.



Aloha is a social group of adults of all ages that share a hearing loss. They usually have an event on the first Saturday of the month. For Aloha events, contact Ellen Thibodo at ThibodoD@aol.com

Science Museum of Minnesota

offers Rear view captioning and DVS for most films in the Omni theater or the 3D Cinema. The Omni Theater is located at 120 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul. Show times vary but are approximately hourly during regular museum hours: Monday-Wednesday 9:30-5:00, Thursday-Saturday 9:30-9:00, Sunday 12:00-5:00. TTY 651-221-4585; info@smm.org; www.smm.org/visitorinfo/hours/showtimes_dynamic.php or www.smm.org/info/accessibility.php.

CAPTIONED THEATRE IN MINNEAPOLIS

The Mixed Blood Theatre has a captioned and interpreted performance of each play that they present. Deaf and hearing impaired patrons sit in front on the left side of the theatre. Interpreters stand at the foot of the stage. The script of the play has already been typed into a laptop computer and it is connected to another laptop which is placed in view of the hearing impaired patrons. CART is not required. A non-technical person simply hits the enter key when the dialogue advances. The script is in a line with the view of the stage. Hearing patrons are not bothered as the special equipment and interpreters are not in their line of sight. I thought this was very effective!

I would like to see the Guthrie and the Ordway offer this same service. Since there are 28 million hearing impaired people in the U.S. and only 500,000 of them can use ASL fluently, there is a large audience not being served.

Linda Senechal

New! The Sonic Alert **SBA475SS** has an analog design with cool blue back light and a powerful bed shaker.

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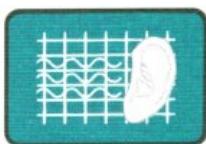
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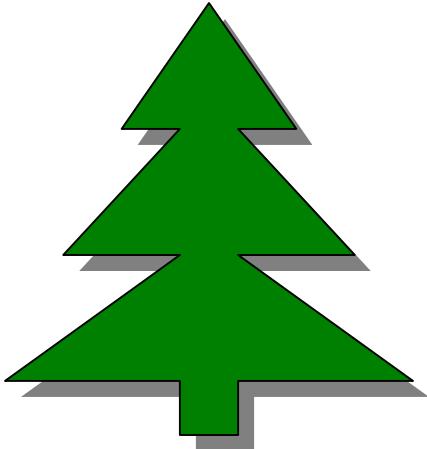
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Mention of goods or
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HLAA Twin Cities Chapter Welcomes You

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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* (www.paradigmreporting.com). Please visit the chapter's web-site at www.hlaatc.org