

# **H L A A T C**

# **January 2011**

## **January 15, 2011** –

Mary Hartnett MCDHH

## **February 19, 2011** - Canine

Speaker (tentative)

## **March 19, 2011** –Judi Swan, Being Your Own Advocate

## **March 25 – 26, 2011** – MN State Hard of Hearing Conference, Holiday Inn, St. Cloud

## **April 13, 2011** – Steak Fry

## **April 16, 2011** – Marie Koehler DHHS

## **May 21, 2011**—Rhoda Nelson, Blind and Deafblind services

## **June 16 – 19, 2011** – National Convention, Hyatt Regency in Crystal City, Washington, DC



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### **Officer's emails**

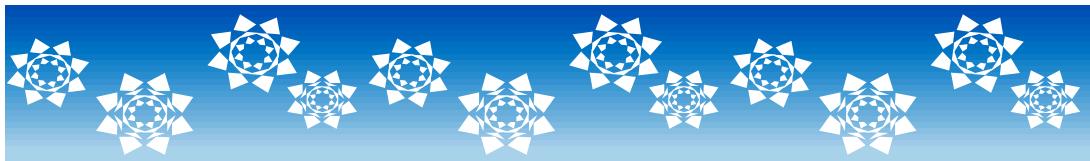
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**Steak Fry tickets available at  
the January meeting from  
the treasurer. Steak Fry  
event is Wednesday,  
April 13, 2011.**



# Message from our President



Carole Blowers

## **Noise Induced Hearing Loss and Hearing Protection Products**

### **What Is Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL):**

NIHL is related both to the decibel level of a sound and to the amount of time you are exposed to it. The distance you are from the sound also matters. A sound gets louder as you move closer to the source and softer as you move away from it. If you are far away from the sound, its intensity and its potential to cause damage are much lower. In addition, the impact of noise adds up over a lifetime. If you are exposed to loud sounds on a regular basis, your risk for permanent damage adds up as you age.

NIHL is also related to a person's genes. Some people are more likely than others to develop NIHL when they listen to certain sounds. Scientists are working to determine which people are more at risk for NIHL and which are less at risk. For this reason, we all need to protect our hearing when we are exposed to loud noise.

The cochlea has two types of hair cells, inner and outer. The outer hair cells appear to provide the ear's sensitivity to hear quiet sounds. Inner hair cells appear to provide all the information to the brain. It has been suggested that high-intensity noise causes extensive damage to the *inner and outer* hair cells; long-term lower-level noise causing the same audiometric loss may show predominately *outer* hair cell loss. What this implies is that the *type of noise* a person is exposed to may determine the severity of communication problems he/she eventually demonstrates.

When noise is too loud, it begins to kill the nerve endings in the inner ear. Prolonged exposure to loud noise destroys nerve endings. As the number of nerve endings decreases, so does your hearing. There is no way to restore life to dead nerve endings; the damage is permanent. The longer you are exposed to a loud noise, the more damaging it may be. Also, the closer you are to the source of intense noise, the more damaging it is.

Exposure to excessive noise from gunfire, motorcycle and auto race tracks, dental drills, sporting events, fireworks, rock concerts, marching bands, and music from a player's own instrument or nearby instruments can cause hearing loss depending on the intensity and duration of the noise. Some persons seem more susceptible to hearing loss from high-level sound than others.

Researchers who study hearing loss in the workplace have found that a person who is exposed to noise levels at 85 decibels or higher for a prolonged period of time is at risk for hearing loss. For this reason, these workers are required to wear hearing protectors, such as earplugs or earmuffs, while they are on the job. Think of all the people exposed to high noise levels every day: people working on assembly lines, loggers, shipbuilders, army tank operators, farmers, airplane maintenance workers, coal miners, pipeline workers, wind tunnel facility workers, lawn care workers, construction workers, heavy equipment operators, and people working in data centers/computer rooms.

Then think about the noise that children today are exposed to. Many devices that children use today have noise levels much higher than 85 decibels. For example, an MP3 player at maximum level is roughly 105 decibels. That's 100 times more intense than 85 decibels! Scientists recommend no more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure to sounds that are 100 decibels. In addition, regular exposure to sounds at 110 decibels for more than one minute risks permanent hearing loss.

Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and temporary hearing loss can occur from a single concert, sporting event or sudden loud noise like a firecracker. In rare cases, permanent hearing loss results from such auditory insults. Even if a temporary hearing loss recovers over a period of hours to days, there is a risk that repeated exposure to loud noise will result in permanent hearing loss.

Your ears can be your warning system for potentially dangerous noises. The noise is too loud when:

- \* You have to raise your voice to be understood by someone standing nearby.
- \* The noise hurts your ears.
- \* You develop a buzzing or ringing sound in your ears, even temporarily.
- \* You don't hear as well as you normally do until several hours after you get away from the noise.

To avoid NIHL:

- \* Block the noise (wear earplugs or earmuffs).
- \* Avoid the noise (walk away).
- \* Turn down the sound.

## **What are hearing protection products?**

When I think of noise-canceling hearing protection, about the only thing that comes to my mind are earmuffs! There are various styles of hearing protection most suitable to anyone's needs. Earmuffs fit over the entire outer ear (over-the-head or behind-the-head) to form an air seal so the entire circumference of the ear canal is blocked, and they are held in place by an adjustable band. Earmuffs will not seal around eyeglasses or long hair, and the adjustable headband tension must be sufficient to hold earmuffs firmly in place. There are also hard hat or cap mounted models. These devices protect employees in many professions mentioned above.

Earplugs are small inserts that fit into the outer ear canal. They must be sealed snugly so the entire circumference of the ear canal is blocked. An improperly fitted, dirty, or worn-out plug may not seal properly and can result in irritation of the ear canal. Plugs are available in a variety of shapes and sizes to fit individual ear canals and can be custom-made. For people who have trouble keeping them in their ears, the plugs can be fitted to a headband.

Hearing protectors enhance speech understanding in very noisy places. Even in a quiet setting, a normal-hearing person wearing hearing protectors should be able to understand a regular conversation. They do slightly reduce the ability of those with damaged hearing or poor comprehension of language to understand normal conversation. However, it is essential that persons with impaired hearing wear earplugs or muffs to prevent further inner ear damage in very noisy places.

If a worker is already hearing impaired, he or she needs expert advice about how to protect against further damage. In some cases hearing aids can and should be used under earmuffs. It is important that hearing protection is carefully selected for each individual, based on the intensity level, duration, and type of noise exposure.



**Aloha!**

Message from Ellen Thibodo

Chris Lano has graciously offered to take over and keep the group up and running. Chris has been an active member for several years now and I'm sure most of you, that regularly attend, know who she is. She will continue the prospect of finding people to host Aloha in their homes on the 2nd Saturday of the month. For those months a host can not be found, Chris has agreed to host the party in her Bloomington home. She will be sending an email to everyone to introduce herself and let you know how she plans to manage Aloha.

It's amazing this group has been going strong since 1992 and to see how much it's grown over the years. So many friendships have formed, not to mention a few marriages. Some of my best times have been with you people and I can honestly say that each and every month I looked forward to getting together with you

# **Synopsis from the Meeting December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

## By Monique Hammond

The HLAA TC December meeting is always a busy one, full of activities. We had our potluck lunch, cookie sale and the white elephant gift exchange. Audiologist **Dr. John Coverstone** was our last guest-speaker for the year 2010.

John's talk focused on the area of hearing aid dispensing practices in the State of Minnesota. Who is serving us as we step into a hearing instrument store in search of improved quality of life? Two professions are active in hearing device dispensing: audiologists and HIDs or Hearing Instrument Dispensers.

An audiologist has a doctorate degree in audiology (AuD) which amounts to 8 years of college education. Candidates sit for a standardized national exam and must complete over 2000 hours of supervised clinical practice before they can work independently. They are licensed to practice by the State. In order to keep their license active they must also comply with a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education per year. The American Board of Audiology certifies those who meet or exceed professional standards.

Audiologists have a wide choice of professional opportunities. They do extensive *diagnostic* hearing tests, fit and adjust instruments. They work with implanted systems such as cochlear implants, middle ear implants and BAHAs (Bone Anchored Hearing Aids). There are those who find their calling in industry, education and research while others take an interest in programs aimed at tinnitus and hyperacusis retraining and at balance rehabilitation.

As the name implies, the practice of HIDs is limited to dispensing hearing aids. They do hearing tests for the purpose of *detecting* a hearing loss - not for diagnosing it. Based on the findings they can recommend an instrument, take ear impressions, fit and adjust the device. If a hearing loss is found the patient is referred to a specialist for further evaluation.

HID educational requirements vary from State to State and are generally not clearly defined. Some States do not have any pre-requisites for entering the field of hearing device dispensing. The candidates train in a store or clinic under the guidance of an accredited dispenser or audiologist. They take a State examination and, upon passing, are certified to practice in that State. However, the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS) also conducts national competency exams and certifies those whose additional training and education meet its standards of practice. The Minnesota State Department of Health is currently leading an effort to review and upgrade the credentialing process for prospective HIDs. John and Monique are both involved with that workgroup.

John also gave us some general tips for hearing aid success.

- Fitting and adjusting an instrument is not done in one session. Inquire about follow-up visits.
- What extras are provided with the instrument? Are they free of charge? Beware of creeping costs. It is best to be forewarned.
- Be clear on the allowed trial time. In Minnesota it is 45 days although the store or clinic can further extend it. How will that period be affected by the days spent waiting for adjustments?
- Get all agreements in writing and read all of the paperwork such as sales contracts and warranties.
- The practitioner must meet the needs of our hearing loss. Verify practitioner credentials.
- In the end the patient and the hearing expert must be able to work together as a team. Personality conflicts and distrust undermine our efforts for getting better hearing.

# A word from our National Executive Director

Twenty years ago, HLAA members came out in force when it was time to comment on rules under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Our comments helped shape the way the rules were written. We need you to do that again to push for captioned movies.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) published a notice that it is considering changes to its regulations to require movie theater owners and operators to show captioned movies. DOJ is inviting written comments from members of the public.

## **If movie captions are important to you, tell the DOJ!**

**The DOJ proposes to require movie theater owners and operators to show films with closed captioning. DOJ proposes to limit this requirement to no more than 50 percent of the films shown, and DOJ is willing to give owners and operators up to 5 years to get to the 50 percent mark.**

HLAA believes that "full and equal enjoyment" of services under the Americans with Disabilities Act means that people with hearing loss must be provided the kind of accommodations that would allow us to attend any movie anytime. For people with significant hearing loss, that means 100% captioning. We believe that an across the board industry cap of 50% is arbitrary and inconsistent with the law.

**HLAA's position on movie captioning is:**

- **All movies should be made accessible to movie goers with hearing loss through captioning.**
- **People with hearing loss should be able to see any movie at any time on any day.**
- **There are many ways to caption movies today. HLAA does not specify the method used to caption the movie so long as it provides effective communication.**

DOJ is seeking comments in response to 26 questions. The entire document with all the questions can be accessed at <http://www.regulations.gov>. You can reply to some or all of the questions. We suggest at a minimum, that you respond to DOJ Question #1:

1. DOJ is proposing that the percentage of movie screens offering closed captioning be set at 10 percent after one year and increased 10 percent a year until 50 percent is reached. Does this approach provide a proper balance between providing accessibility to consumers, on one hand, and giving owners and operators time to acquire the necessary equipment, on the other hand?

## **Send your comments to the DOJ today!**

Comments sent by U.S. mail must be postmarked and electronic comments must be transmitted on or before **January 24, 2011**.

- State the question(s) you are responding to. You can focus all your comments on question #1 or add more.
- State why you are interested in responding. For example, that you have a hearing loss and cannot attend movies without effective closed captioning.
- State what you want to see: 100% captions, 5 years or less, no later than January 2016.
- State how lack of captions has impacted you. State why you think 100% captioning is needed.
- Thank the DOJ
- Sign your name.

[Use this link to see our Sample Letter](#). You can use this **Sample Letter** as a guide to draft your own letter. It's best if you do more than just copy and paste this sample letter onto the DOJ form. We believe you will have a greater impact if you **write about your own experience** going to the movies, and tell the DOJ why movie captioning is important to you.

We did it for the ADA. Let's do it again for movie captioning. Send your comments to the DOJ!

Thank you!



Brenda Battat  
Executive Director



HLAA Twin Cities: [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)  
(contact info@hlaatc.org)

HLAA National [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

## *Our Mission Statement*

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



## **Open Captioning or Assistive Listeningthrough February 2011**

**On the web**, accessible performances are listed at  
<http://www.vsamn.org/calendar.html> or <http://www.accesspress.org>.

### **Mary Stuart**

by Gaetano Donizetti. (Sung in Italian)

**Performed by:** The Minnesota Opera.

**Location:** Ordway Center for Performing Arts, 345 Washington St., St. Paul.

**EnglishCaptions** projected above the stage at every performance: January 29, February 1, 3, 5-6, 2011.

**Website:** [www.mnopera.org](http://www.mnopera.org).

### **Shrek: The Musical**

**Performed by:** Touring Company.

**Location:** Historic Orpheum Theatre, 910 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis.

**Captioning:** Sunday, February 6, 6:30 PM. Captioning by c2.

**Tix:** \$28-78. Limited seats are available at the lowest price level to patrons using ASL interpreting or Captioning services on a first-come, first-served basis. Prices apply for up to two tickets for each patron requiring ASL interpretation. To order, email [Nichole.Cassavant@BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com](mailto:Nichole.Cassavant@BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com) or [accessible@broadwayacrossamerica.com](mailto:accessible@broadwayacrossamerica.com); phone: 612-339-7007 or 612-373-5639; hotline 612-373-5650.

**Website:** <http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org/accessible>

### **The Winter's Tale**

By Shakespeare, directed by Jonathan Munby.

**Performed by:** Guthrie Theater.

**Location:** Guthrie Theater's Wurtele Thrust Stage, 818 2nd St. S., Minneapolis.

**OpenCaptioning:** Friday, March 11, 7:30 PM by c2 inc.

**Tix:** Reduced to \$20 (regular \$24-64); phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626.

**Website:** <http://www.guthrietheater.org>

**ACCESSIBLE MOVIES:** Several technologies are available to make movies accessible for people with vision or hearing loss.

### **Rear Window® Captioning**

#### **Open captioning**

The website [www.captionfish.com](http://www.captionfish.com) lists cinemas with these access features.

Put in your zip code and the site will give current listings of nearby movies with open or closed captioning, an audio description track, or English subtitles in foreign films.

The following movie complexes in Minnesota offer captioning or description services:

**Science Museum of Minnesota Omnitheater –**

**Shows to Feb. 17, 2011:** The new Omnitheater film ***Hubble*** 45-minute film Rear View **Captioning** (CC). [www.smm.org/hubble](http://www.smm.org/hubble)

**Jan. 7 to Feb. 17, 2011:** *Omnifest* will show 4 films in addition to "Hubble"; details at **Web:** [www.smm.org/omnifest](http://www.smm.org/omnifest). Their accessibility features are:

**Tropical Rainforest:** Amplification;

**Old Man and the Sea:** Amplification;

**Wild Safari:** CC and Amplification;

**Sea Monsters:** CC and Amplification.

**Phone:** 651-221-9444, option 2 for film times, reservations or questions; **TTY** 651-221-4585; **E-mail:** [info@smm.org](mailto:info@smm.org); **Web:** Accessibility:

[www.smm.org/accessibility](http://www.smm.org/accessibility); **Hours & Showtimes:** [www.smm.org/hours](http://www.smm.org/hours);

**Tickets:** <https://www.smm.org/tickets>.

**AMC Block E 15**, 600 Hennepin Ave., third floor, Mpls. 55403; Accessible films in Auditoriums 2 & 12. **Phone:** 612-338-1466, **E-mail:** [6630@amctheatres.com](mailto:6630@amctheatres.com). **Web:** <http://www.amcentertainment.com/welcome> or [http://www.fandango.com/amcblocke15\\_aaups/theaterpage](http://www.fandango.com/amcblocke15_aaups/theaterpage) (Scroll down the lower right-hand column every Fri. morning to see what two films will have rear view captioning that week at Block E.)

**AMC Showplace Inver Grove 16**, 5567 Bishop Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076. (formerly Kerasotes). Open captioned films generally Wed.-Thurs.

**Phone:** 651-453-1916; **Movie Times:** 1-888-AMC 4FUN. **Web:** <http://www.amctheatres.com/InverGrove/>

**AMC Eden Prairie Mall 18 Theatres**, 8251 Flying Cloud Drive Suite 4000, Eden Prairie 55344 (Eden Prairie Shopping Center, Hwy 212 & 494), Accessible films in Auditorium 7 **Phone:** 952-656-0010; **movie listings:** 888-262-4386 (888-AMC-4FUN). **E-mail:** [0650@amctheatres.com](mailto:0650@amctheatres.com) **Web:** [www.amcentertainment.com](http://www.amcentertainment.com)

**AMC Rosedale 14 Theatres**, 850 Rosedale Center, Roseville 55113 (Rosedale Center, Hwy 36 & Snelling Ave.), Accessible films in Auditorium 14. **Phone:** 651-604-9347. **E-mail:** [0651@amctheatres.com](mailto:0651@amctheatres.com). **Web:** [www.amcentertainment.com](http://www.amcentertainment.com)

**Oakdale Ultrascreen Cinemas** (Marcus Theatres), 5677 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale 55128 (I-694 & Hwy 36 next to Fleet Farm); **Phone:** 651-770-4992; **recording:** 651-770-4994. Subscribe to Open Caption weekly e-mail at **Web:** [www.marcustheatres.com/opencaption.cfm](http://www.marcustheatres.com/opencaption.cfm) or [www.marcustheatres.com/theater.cfm?theater\\_id=2506](http://www.marcustheatres.com/theater.cfm?theater_id=2506).

**Regal Brooklyn Center 20**, 6420 Camden Ave North, Minneapolis, MN 55401. Able to present films with open captioning. **Phone:** 763-560-6300.

**Web:** [www.fandango.com](http://www.fandango.com)

**Regal Eagan 16**, 2055 Cliff Road, Saint Paul, MN. 55122; in Auditorium 15; **Phone:** 651-452-8329. **Web:**

[http://www.fandango.com/55122\\_movietheatershowtimes](http://www.fandango.com/55122_movietheatershowtimes)

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**Our next meeting is Jan 15, 2011**

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This month's editor is Vicki Martin

**Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.paradigmreporting.com)). Please visit the chapter's web-site at [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)**