

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter February 2009

NOTE!



Calendar of Events

Feb. 21, 2009 – Lisa McDonald, Cochlear Implants

Mar. 27-28, 2009 – State Convention in St. Cloud, See page 3 for information
NO March meeting at Courage Center this month

April 8, 2009 – Steak Fry

April 18, 2009 - Catherine Riedel Jons, Better communication with your audio.

May 16, 2009 - Rubin Latz, Dept. of Vocation Rehabilitation, Upgrade of his Dec. talk.

June 18-21, 2009 - National convention Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee

September 19, 2009 - Becky French, HR State of Minn. (tentative)

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

THE NEXT MEETING IS
February 21th at 9:30 AM
Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422-4249

Everyone is welcome to attend!

- HLAA TC Website
www.hlaatc.org
- HLAA National
www.hearingloss.org
- MN Contact Information
info@hlaatc.org

In this issue~

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| ☑ Bits and Pieces | Page 6 |
| ☑ Entertainment | Page 9 |
| ☑ Legislative Day Details | Page 7 |
| ☑ Officers & Editors | Page 12 |
| ☑ President's Message | Page 2 |
| ☑ State Convention | Page 3 |
| ☑ Sponsors | Page 11 |
| ☑ Steak Dinner Details | Page 7 |
| ☑ Synopsis of Jan. Meet | Page 4, 5 |
| ☑ Why Can I Hear but Not Understand? | Page 8 |

HLAA State Convention

see page 3 also

Date: March 27 (Fri.) and 28 (Sat.) 2009

Where: Holiday Inn St. Cloud, MN 37 and Division St.

More info: 1-800-456-4690 Rich Diedrichsen

Trip time: From Courage Center to the hotel is 1 hr. 10 min. so judge your time arrival with that.

A Message from our President

Just Where do You Think You are Going in that Hand basket?

Yes, these are times when even people with jobs and savings accounts are justifiably nervous. Jobs are going away, banks are failing, businesses are closing.

And hearing aids cost money. A lot of money. CART costs money. Interpreters cost money. ALDs cost money. Relay services cost money, even if we aren't paying them directly.

But is it all about money? Now, I am not an economist, and I have never quite understood how a company's stock can plummet even while the company increases sales and profits. It seems to have more to do with what people are thinking than with actual performance.

And that's the key: how we think. We can't do anything about the rest. So let's start with some thoughts. Here are a few ideas to help us hear better without breaking the bank. (That's our piggy bank, by the way. The others are already broken).

Technology has proliferated faster than most of us could keep up with it. And certainly faster than we could maintain our gadgets. Who hasn't bought a device, and before you fully figure out how to use it, something (purportedly) even better comes along? If you were still employed, chances are you bought the next thing too, and if it was smaller, better, or even just less complicated, you probably never took the old one off the shelf again.

If you are not employed when the next thing comes out (that might be now), here's the

opportunity to approach things differently. Take the old one off the shelf. Read the instructions. Have it fixed. Learn how to calibrate it, how to use it with a T-coil or a neckloop, where it works best, and where it doesn't work. And why. You've got the time now, since your job is gone, right? This goes for hearing aids too. A \$250 repair is a lot more affordable than a new \$2500 hearing aid.

If you are the possessor of both older and newer technology, you could pass some of your unused equipment on to someone else. Have you kept the old hearing aids you replaced a few years ago? Do you have an old pocket talker? How about a pair of TV ears that you aren't using? A TTY machine or volume-control phone that you replaced with a Captel? Or maybe that ear trumpet that's been gathering dust in the attic (um, just kidding. We don't go back *that* far...).

So, to summarize: repair instead of replace. Use what is available or pass it on. Seek simple solutions. Be creative!

It may not turn the economy around, but it could buy us a little time before we hail that handbasket.

Vicki



CONFERENCE



Me and My Hearing Loss, That's Okay!

When?
March 27 & 28, 2009

Where?
**Holiday Inn
37 Ave &
Division St.
St. Cloud, MN**



Presenters:

Mary Bauer,
-DHHS

Rebecca Crowell
-SCSU

Kristen Swan
-Regions Hospital
HWP



Registration Cost:

\$40./Person

\$70./Couples

\$100./Family of 3 or more

✓ **Saturday lunch included with the registration**

» **Luncheon will be Buffet Style** «

Make check payable to:

HLAA -St. Cloud

Mail to: DHHS

Attn: Rich Diedrichsen

3333 W. Division St. #209

St. Cloud, MN 56301

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Meeting Synopsis, January 2009

**Mary Hartnett, Executive Director,
Commission serving Deaf, DeafBlind
and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans**



MCDHH was founded 235 years ago by people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Mary's job is to "help frame and listen to what your stories are of discrimination in education, employment, access to services, and to help provide training in how to be engaged civically". Mary keeps the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people on the radar of the Minnesota legislature. She is a watchdog for the enactment and enforcement of laws that affect us.

MCDHH is a small, non-cabinet agency whose purpose is to advise the governor, the legislature, and all branches of state government in the best policy, the best way to use our money.

For MCDHH, 2008 ended a five-year cycle. During which nearly all of its targets were reached.

Mandate was passed to require captioning of all political ads on TV for elected offices. This

law does not apply at the Federal level, though there are some requirements there as well. MCDHH provided training to all candidates via a website (www.prettygoodcandidate.org) in how to caption their ads. It can be done for as little as \$10 per minute. Self captioning on youtube is also demonstrated, and this costs nothing. MCDHH also contacted every candidate for a national office with this information. CART was used at all Minnesota candidate forums.

Two major pieces of legislation that were passed in 2008 broadened the scope of MCDHH (adding DeafBlind to Deaf and Hard of Hearing), and increased its power (advising all state agencies).

Airport accessibility is another area in which MCDHH has made big inroads. In the Airline Carrier Act, the DOT has declared that all airports must be accessible by May 9. Look for visual messaging and captioning in all areas of the airport. If you don't see it, ask!

MCDHH has also done a lot of work in facilitating voting procedures for deaf and deafblind voters, and in encouraging them to vote.

Infant hearing screening in Minnesota has gone of to 98%, taking us from the bottom five to the top five states in the nation, with 96% follow-up.

Future goals of the commission include hearing aid for children and, eventually for adults; monitoring education results for deaf and hard of hearing kids; maintaining educational supports for them, including those with cochlear implants; preserving the jobs of deaf/HH drivers of commercial vehicles; defining and enforcing standards of accessibility on the internet; oral signing history project (teaching of self-advocacy through success stories); setting acoustic standards for schools.

Submitted by Vicki Martin

Notes and Scenes from the January Meeting

Monique suggested that we all send announcements or short articles to our local newspapers or community message boards regarding the Hearing Loss Convention in March. Maybe something similar could be posted in our audiologists' offices. It would be free advertising – the best kind!

Mike Cowell (below) gave an interesting report on his experience with a BAHA (bone-anchored hearing aid). Although he now hears things that he could not hear before, Mike says that the sounds he hears do not seem distorted to him, and there was not a learning curve, such as people with cochlear implants go through. He also mentioned a bit of a “discussion” he had with his insurance company, which at first denied payment for the BAHA because he is over 18, but later decided they would cover it.



Dave Lovell (“member spotlight”) seems to have gone through a long period of denial, in which he took on punishing hearing-dependent jobs, such as security guard (using two-way radios), auctioneer, and an airport job right next to runway 29ER8. He now works in the unemployment office, where he is one of the few people these days with plenty of work to do.



Bits and Pieces

☑ **"One Implant Made an Impact. Might Two Do Even More?"** January 6, 2009 in the Washington Post newspaper, tells of an 8 yr. old that had a CI and then had her second. Insurance said yes to the 1st CI, but no to the 2nd. They contacted "Let Them Hear Foundation," now her 2nd is history. She is doing beautifully. <http://tinyurl.com/7cj6v5>

☑ **Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD)** with headquarters in SD received \$1 million from the FCC, fearing that millions of people will lose their analog TV signal on Feb. 17th. FCC gave out more than 8 million to 12 different organizations, the money is to be used to get the word out.

☑ **Transcripts of National's chat room** guest speakers are available for you to read at your convenience, go to <http://www.hearingloss.org/Community/transcripts.asp> people have included Roger Goldblatt (DTV Transition), Sam Trychin (Surviving the Holidays), Michael Seidman (Tinnitus) and Deanna Baker (CART). The speaker on Feb. 17, 2009 will be Paul Hammerschlag, MD, Otolaryngologist

☑ **Face Me Buttons** are now available on the free tables at our meetings. These were furnished by the Dry & Store Company that makes the box that helps keep your hearing aids clean and wax free.

☑ **DeafNation Expo** will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center Exhibit Hall A on March 28 from 9 AM to 6 PM Free Admission - Pre Register <http://deafnation.com/forms/view.php?id=6>

☑ **President Obama's bio**, completely captioned (about 2 hrs.). Tells the story of how his parents met, his upbringing, living in Hawaii, schooling, marriage, the birth of his children, campaigns. <http://www.dcmp.org/obama/captions-only.html> Only available until Feb. 7, after which you can become a free member of dcmp and watch it online at any time.

☑ **Digital TV to be delayed.** The changeover that was scheduled for TV's on Feb. 17, 2009 has been postponed until June 12, 2009.

☑ **Whenever possible you should attend each meeting.** We try to have a **variety of speakers** to hit on every topic related to hearing loss. If you can suggest a new speaker; please tell one of the officers, and be sure to have the contact information available. If you reach the point where you think you know pretty much everything there is to know; maybe its time to be the helper for someone else that hopefully HLAA was for you when you first sought help.

☑ http://www.pluralpublishing.com/web_flyer_jerger.htm

New book: **"Audiology in the USA,"** by James Jerger, PhD, \$65, gives the young audiologist some history of the profession, very interesting read with pics and graphs, see some of it online.

☑ In the **A G Bell Volta Voices** magazine online read "How to Buy a Cell Phone When You Have a Hearing Loss" by Janice Schacter, Jan. 2009. <http://tinyurl.com/cqgv3x>

☑ **"Restaurant Hearing Tips (Not the kind you leave for the waiter)"** from Healthy Hearing Mag. Jan. 26, 2009, read online with pics. <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/bhNEWS/message/42114>

For OIF and OEF Vets

☑ **Complimentary Membership in HLAA for Vets of OIF and OEF**

Membership includes [Hearing Loss Magazine](#), a helpful resource on the latest in technology, medical issues, legislation, personal stories, and more. For more information about a free one-year membership, contact the [Membership Department](#).

☑ **Free HLAA Convention 2009 Registration**

HLAA would like to show its support of veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom by offering a one-year membership as well as a convention registration at no charge. HLAA's Convention 2009 is June 18-21 in Nashville, Tennessee. For more information about registering for the convention, contact [Nancy Macklin, Director of Events](#)

☑ **Check out this new and expanding website for Vets:**

<http://www.hearingloss.org/veterans/index.asp>

Crystal Lions Club Steak Dinner In Support of HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

Where: Crystal VFW Post 494
Address: 5222 Bass Lake Road, Crystal, MN
Time: 5 PM to 7 PM
Date: April 8, 2009
Cost: \$9.00



Dinner Includes: Steak, Baked Potato, Cole Slaw, Garlic Toast and Coffee

Can you help at this fundraising event for our chapter? Please contact Bob and Merrilee Knoll – Rknoll15200@aol.com

Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind Minnesotans, Families and Supporters Unite to Support This Year's Issues



Legislative Day March 4th!

8:30 to 9:00 a.m. – Coffee and Rolls
9:00 to 11:00 a.m. – Capitol Lab Training
12:00 Noon – Rally at State Capitol – Rotunda
Afternoon – Meet with your Legislators

Why is 2009 the Most Important Year?

Minnesota is facing its worst budget deficit since the 1930s. Cuts of 2% to 3% have been made to programs for deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. We are lucky. Other disability and minority groups had entire programs eliminated.

Right now the deficit is \$4.8 billion. On March 3, The Governor will announce what is called the February forecast. Some expect the budget to rise to \$7 billion. He will need to make more cuts. It is VITAL and URGENT that you come to the Capitol and talk to legislators about keeping the programs we fought so hard to get.

On the web:



Books

The Consumers Guide to Hearing Aids

This guide is a 31-page (newly published for 2009), color booklet illustrating the different styles of hearing aids and comparing different models and features. Illustrates the technology pyramid and hearing aid pricing.

- Explains about conventional Analog, Entry Level Digital, Basic Digital, Advanced Digital, and Premium Digital Hearing Aids and compares the differences.
- 27 Worldwide Brands Compared
- 10 reasons SLIM is in: Receiver-In-Canal Hearing Instruments
- Directional Microphone Hearing Aid Technology
- Explains why two hearing aids are better than one.
- 6 Questions to ask When Buying Digital
- Hearing aid battery basics
- Explains what you can expect from your hearing aids
- Provides a glossary and definitions so you understand hearing aid terminology.
- A must-have before you buy your next pair of hearing aids

Price: \$4.65

Order at

<http://www.hearingloss.org/bookstore>

ALOHA

Aloha events are held on the second Saturday of each month. They are social gatherings in the homes of members of the group, usually including dinner, socializing, cards and games. For information on the monthly schedule, contact the coordinator, Ellen Thibodo at ThibodoD@aol.com.



From the **Deafness Research Foundation** website:

Over 37 million adults and over 1 million children in the United States suffer from some degree of hearing loss. Of adults who suffer from hearing loss approximately:

- 55% are male
- 45% are female
- 8.4 million are between the ages of 18 – 44 years
- 14.3 million are between the ages of 45 – 64 years
- 6 million are between the ages of 65 – 74 years
- 8.3 million are 75 years and over

These numbers are increasing every year due to aging baby boomers (ages 41-59) and Generation Xers (ages 29-40).

In addition to being the leading national source of private funding for research in hearing and balance science, DRF also publishes Hearing Health magazine, which recently won an APEX 2008 Award of Excellence for Magazine & Journal Writing. This valuable consumer resource provides information on technology, treatment, research and issues affecting people with hearing loss.

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



Accessible Entertainment

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612-338-1466 www.kerasotes.com

MNOCFILMES

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<http://www.mnocfilms.org/index.html>

Upcoming Live Performances with Open Captioning

Reduced prices are offered by the theatres themselves or by the Access to Performing Arts Project to encourage broader participation in live arts events by people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or of low vision. It is a joint project of VSA arts of Minnesota, the Minnesota Association of Community Theatres and the Guthrie Theater.

A Delicate Balance by Edward Albee

Performed by: Guthrie Theater

Captioning: Friday, February 20, 7:30 PM

Tix: Reduced to \$25 for captioning users (\$20 for subscribers); phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626

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

The Adventures of Pinocchio by Jonathan Dove
Sung in English with English **captions** projected above the stage

Performed by: The Minnesota Opera at the Ordway Center

Tix: phone: 612-333-6669; TTY 651-282-3099

Website: www.mnopera.org

This family opera is an American premiere, suitable for children who aren't afraid of the dark.

Run: February 28 – March 8, 2009

The Two Gentlemen of Verona by William Shakespeare

Performed by: Guthrie Theater

Captioning: Friday, March 13, 7:30 PM (captioned by c2 Inc.)

Tix: Reduced to \$25 for captioning users (\$20 for subscribers) (regular \$24-70); phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626

Website: www.guthrietheater.org/accessibility

Sweet 15 (Quinceañera) by Rick Najera

Performed by: Mixed Blood Theatre

Location: History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St., St. Paul

Captioning: Thursday, March 19, 7:30 PM

Captioner: Matt Riggs

Tix: Reduced to \$12 access rate (regular \$22, student/senior \$18, group \$14); phone: 612-338-6131

Web: www.mixedblood.com or

<http://www.historytheatre.com>

The Barber of Seville by Gioachino Rossini

Sung in Italian with English **captions** projected above the stage

Performed by: The Minnesota Opera

Location: Ordway Center for Performing Arts

Tix: 612-333-6669; TTY 651-282-3099

Website: www.mnopera.org

Barber is the perfect opera for first-time opera-goers.

Run: April 11-19, 2009

Now playing at the Omnitheater:

Science Museum of Minnesota Omnitheater –

“Grand Canyon Adventure”. It will play with Rear View Captioning and Audio Description (DVS) through June 11, 2009.

Have you tried:

Oakdale Ultrascreen Cinemas (Marcus Theatres), 5677 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale 55128 (I-694 & Hwy 36 next to Fleet Farm); 651-770-4994; Rental & Meeting info: 651-779-3795. This cinema uses DTS® (Digital Theatre Systems, Inc.) to superimpose open-captions over the bottom of select movies. Subscribe to an Open Caption weekly e-mailer at www.marcustheatres.com/theater.cfm?theater_id=2506.

Why Can I Hear But Not Understand Speech?

Most hard of hearing people have a high frequency hearing loss. On your audiogram the low frequencies are shown on the left and the high frequencies on the right. A person with normal hearing has a line that goes across the top on or near the 0 dB line. A person with no hearing at all has a line that goes across the bottom. However, most hard of hearing people have a high frequency hearing loss so their audiogram shows good low-frequency hearing which declines to little or no high frequency hearing.

Most of the volume in speech is in the low frequencies which you probably hear fairly well—so you hear these low frequency sounds quite well. Also, low frequency sounds travel quite well through air so you can hear them at a greater distance.

However, most of the understanding in speech is in the softer high-frequency sounds which you don't hear much of at all. To compound the problem, high-frequency sounds rapidly drop out of the air as they travel.

Because you can still hear low-frequency sounds reasonably well, you can hear people talking, but because you can't hear the softer high-frequency sounds well, if at all, you have great difficulty understanding what people are saying. You need to hear those high-frequency sounds in order to understand speech.

It becomes harder and harder to understand what the speaker is saying with increasing distance. High frequency sounds rapidly drop with increasing distance. The mid-frequency sounds travel farther, while the low frequency sounds travel best.

So the farther your ears are from the speaker's mouth, the fewer high-frequency sounds you hear and consequently, the less you understand of what he is saying. If you want to hear the intelligence in speech, you need to be close to the speaker's mouth.

There are two ways to get close. If you get physically close, such as in a one-to-one situation, this may help.

However, in groups, you need to get electronically close through the use of assistive listening devices like T coils and neck loops, pocket-talkers and FM devices. The speaker wears a microphone that is very close to his mouth. The result is that all the high frequency sounds reach the microphone and are captured.

When you are listening with an ALD, you hear as clear as your damaged ears will permit. Hearing aids by themselves cannot do what ALDs do because your hearing aids' microphones are at your ears, not at the speaker's mouth—and the high-frequency sounds from his voice still does not reach your ears.

High frequency sounds are generally the consonants, and low frequency the vowel sounds. However, there are exceptions. Try making these sounds to better understand what is easier or more difficult to hear.

Low frequency sounds: M, U, O, D
Mid frequency sounds: P, H, Ch, Sh
High frequency sounds: T, Th, F, S

Linda Senechal





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This month's editor 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