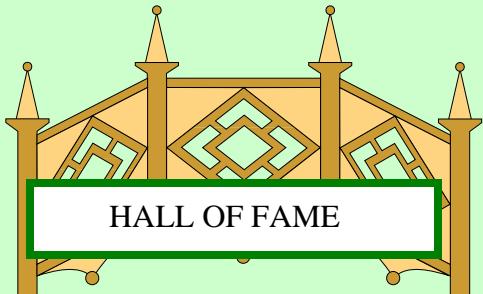


# HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter April 2009



## Thank you to our sponsors

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- **Harris Communications**

## Calendar of Events

**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, July, August** – NO MEETINGS

**September 19, 2009** – Jacqueline Hoppenrath, Audiologist from SoundPoint on Tinnitus

**September 27, 2009** – CI Picnic - more information to come-Page 6

**October 17, 2009** – Donna Fowler, Health East-how to talk to people in the medical field



THE [NEXT MEETING](#) IS  
April 18th at 9:30 AM  
Courage Center  
3915 Golden Valley Road  
Golden Valley, MN 55422-4249

- [HLAA TC Website](#)  
[www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)
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[www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)
- [MN Contact Information](#)  
[info@hlaatc.org](mailto:info@hlaatc.org)

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## BAHA

Last month your editor (Merrilee) for the March paper made a huge error. When running the great story on the **Bone Anchored Hearing Aid** she mistakenly gave credit to the wrong person. The author should have read **Mike Cowell**.

It is being run again on Page 5. Sorry Mike.

## **President's Message April 2009**

Vicki Martin

### **Can Hearing Aids Make Us Lazy?**

My friend Sandy, who has a mild-to-moderate hearing loss, had recently gotten new hearing aids. Like many hearing aids sold these days, they are all in the ear, with a built-in telecoil that automatically switches on when she raises the telephone receiver.

She could not use the telephone with her old hearing aids because they did not have telecoils. But she was able to use the phone if she removed the hearing aid and turned up the telephone volume.

She was eager to try the T-coil feature.

Her new telecoil-equipped hearing aids seemed to work well for her. But an interesting thing happened after using them for a few months. She picked up the phone one day without using her hearing aids – just as she had been doing before she got them – and found she was unable to understand speech on the phone any more.

Was it the phone? Was her hearing suddenly deteriorating? Or was she just getting lazy since acquiring hearing aids that didn't make her work so hard? We still don't know the answer, but she's betting on #3. And the question naturally arises then: are hearing aids (or any device that makes it easier to hear) a good thing?

The short answer is, Yes. Here is why:

First, although making it easier to hear may reduce our need to work so hard at figuring out the words, it also frees up our minds to consider other important things, such as the meaning and import of what we are hearing. So there is no reduction in our mental activity, it is just being shifted to another area.

Secondly, it is important to maintain not only mental but also physical activity. Without the hearing aid, there is less stimulation of the cochlea, because the sound may not reach a volume sufficient to be heard.

It has been observed that failure to use a hearing aid when one is needed can, over a period of time, result in the loss of ability to discriminate sounds. That is one reason why two hearing aids are desirable for people with bilateral hearing loss, even if one would suffice. If sound is not reaching one (or both) of your ears, that ear is not being exercised and trained to recognize sound.

I think most of us would agree that we work very hard to hear, even if we are using a hearing aid. So hard, in fact, that we often become exhausted before we can courteously end the conversation. When it comes to listening, we are more in danger of overwork than under-use.

So: No, Sandy, hearing aids do not make us lazy – they just make us more efficient. And that is a good place to be.

*Vicki*



## **Fourth Minnesota Hard of Hearing Conference**

### **“Me and My Hearing Loss, That’s Okay!”**

By Linda Miller

As a first time participant of the Hearing Loss Conference held in Saint Cloud, I must say it was a complete success!! I want to especially thank our Conference Chairperson, Rich Diedrichsen, our fabulous speakers, vendors, our sponsors, CART (Thanks Lisa), ASL interpreters, Bob Knoll who set-up the Loop System, Photographer, Ross Hammond and all the volunteers involved in making everyone comfortable and welcome.

Our first speaker was Kristen Swan: Licensed Psychologist, who spoke about the psycho-social impact of our hearing loss. As individuals with hearing loss, we know very well about grieving the loss of our hearing and the emotional difficulties of interacting with friends and family members. The cognitive, emotional, behavioral, physical and vocational impact on our lives becomes a reality. Kristen reminded us of the importance of educating ourselves, practicing good self-care, treating mental health issues appropriately and learning effective communication strategies and problem solving techniques. She used the term “Radically accept” the reality. Freedom of suffering requires acceptance. We also were reminded that changing communication behaviors is difficult for people. Acceptance and behavior change requires time...perfection is NOT the goal...perseverance is. Any movement you make toward change is a success!

Our next speaker was Mary Bauer: Consultant, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services, MN. She talked about, “Me and My Hearing Loss, That’s Okay!” As a Hard of Hearing individual herself, Mary knows the importance of coping strategies and practical everyday insight and humor to better learn to live more easily with our hearing loss. She encouraged us to gather as much information from our doctors, audiologist and other professionals. Attend HLAA meetings to talk to others with hearing loss who are realistic and have a positive attitude. Learn about and try Assistive Technology. When it comes to communication strategies, tell people you have a hearing loss when appropriate and what you need to improve communication. Anticipate the listening situation you maybe in and assess the speaker, listener, and environment. Confirm or clarify the information you heard. The importance of thanking those people in our lives who make communication easier. Mary suggested using appropriate humor as a way to build bridges. She shared with us some of her own hearing bloopers which we all can attest too! She had many of us laughing so hard we were tearing! Thanks Mary! After your speech, we are no longer in Denial!

Our third speaker of the day was Dr. Rebecca Crowell, Aud.D., CCC-A Audiologist/Assistant Professor at St Cloud State University. Dr. Crowell spoke on cominclude Conductive, Sensorineural, or mixed. The many causes of hearing loss include, Cholesteotoma, Otosclerosis, Meniere’s disease, Ototoxic medications, Noise-induced hearing loss, acoustic neuroma, and Presbysusis. For Questions, you may contact her @ 320-308-2092 or Email: [ricowell@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ricowell@stcloudstate.edu).

Thanks to the wonderful hospitality of the Holiday Inn and see everyone again in 2011.



## A big thank you to Ross Hammond who snapped all these photos in St. Cloud.





## **BAHA (Bone Anchored Hearing Aid)**

**By Mike Cowell**

I wanted to provide information on this type of hearing aid from a patient's point of view to help others understand this technology. I began to lose my hearing over several years due to tumors that damaged my ears. After several surgeries to remove the tumors, I was left with greatly reduced hearing. The audiologist fitted me with the traditional behind the ear hearing aids, which helped, but provided limited improvement because of the problems I had with damage to the ear drum and bones of hearing. I discussed this with my ENT doctor, who recommended that I be fitted for a BAHA.

Having never heard of a BAHA, I had lots of questions about what it was, how it works, and what was involved in the procedure to attach one. I asked my doctor the questions and got general information, the BAHA seemed like it was a good solution and the improvement in hearing I could expect was exciting. However the thought of having another surgery was not very exciting to me and based on my experience with traditional hearing aids I was not sure what to expect. I was also concerned to have something attached to the side of my head. So I began to research the BAHA for myself. I got information from the internet as well as the manufacturer and here's what I found.

The BAHA works for people who have functional nerves in the inner ear, but damage to the outer ear. The BAHA is attached to the skull with a titanium stud that is implanted by the doctor. The implant surgery takes about 45 minutes for the doctor to place and is done as out-patient surgery. The implant needs to heal for 60 to 90 days to allow the implant to fully bond with the bone. After the implant heals the BAHA is simply snapped on and adjusted for your hearing. The way the BAHA works is to capture the sound and convert it to a vibration that is transmitted into the bone behind the ear. The vibration is picked up by the nerves in the inner ear. To determine if a BAHA is right for you, you should discuss this with your ENT and testing can be done by an audiologist who can test a patient's ability to hear by bone conduction.

For me the BAHA is a good solution and my experience so far is that it works great for me. The surgery was very minor and I was back to my regular activities in a few days. The wait for the implant to heal was not that long. When I was fitted for the BAHA, I could hear very clearly and naturally right away with the BAHA and at least in my case it is a great solution. There still are limitations to the BAHA, like noisy crowds, where it's still hard to understand all that's said, but it's a much better solution for me. The BAHA is not very noticeable when it's worn, as the case of the BAHA is very small and offered in several colors to match your hair. In fact, I had a person at work ask me if I have left the hearing aids at home and asked if I could hear them, so it's not very noticeable when worn.

# Bits and Pieces

**D-Pan** which brings music to ASL users  
[www.d-pan.com](http://www.d-pan.com)

**"Hands of My Father"** by Myron Uhlberg. Born in 1933 to Deaf parents, he tells of his life, his parents lives, and how during the depression his father worked as a printer. For over 40 yrs. he worked with people he did not really know. His proudest moment was when he received his union card, and that made him equal to the hearing co-workers that stood beside him.

**"The Hearing Journal - March 2009"**  
"Americans with Disabilities Act paved the way for CapTel and Web CapTel" by Frank Endres. Title IV of the ADA recognized that there are approximately 55 million people in the United States with some degree of hearing loss. This groundbreaking legislation sought to provide people with assistive technology, and services, that would be available in any state, at any time, and, most importantly, at no cost to the end user. See complete story - <http://tinyurl.com/cm2zj9>

The Spring 2009 issue of **"Hearing Health Magazine,"** a publication of the Deafness Research Foundation, is now online. FREE! Read "Driving Safely With Hearing Loss" By: Neil Bauman, PH.D. To read the entire magazine:  
<http://www.drf.org/magazine/35/Spring+2009+Issue>

**The 2010 Nat. Convention will be held in  
Milwaukee, Wisc.**



**Report from Cochlear Celebration** 2009 -  
March 26-29 at **Disneyland**  
<http://cochlearimplantonline.com/site/>  
\*\*\*\*\*

In **Mason, Ohio Hope Church** all services are available on the internet via streaming video, with downloads of the program as well. Captioned and written.  
<http://www.hope-church.org>  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Lifetone HL Bedside Fire Alarm and Clock**

[http://www.lifetonesafety.com/pages/lifetone\\_alarm/38.php](http://www.lifetonesafety.com/pages/lifetone_alarm/38.php)

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- Alerts to AC power loss and low or no battery
- Hears your existing T3 smoke alarms
- Functions as a standard alarm clock
- Includes a bed shaker
- Alerts to unplugged or improperly connected bed shaker
- Two year limited warranty
- Lifetone HL and bed shaker are UL certified

\*\*\*\*\*

**From National – Brenda Battat**

With the focus on health care in Washington, DC, this is perhaps the best time to make our voice heard in support of tax credits for hearing aids. The **Hearing Aid Tax Credit** legislation now before Congress provides up to \$1,000 for two hearing aids for dependents and adults 55 years and over. Make your voice heard at  
<http://www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org/>

\*\*\*\*\*

**Cochlear Implants**, people who have had them or if you are interested in them, join us at Brookview Park in Golden Valley on September 27, 2009 for good fun, food and entertainment. This CI picnic draws a lot of interested people. More information to come as the time gets closer.

## **Press Announcement: Survey to Address DTV Captioning Issues**

Thanks to Lisa Richardson for this new tip.

Originally the date of conversion was set for Feb. 17 now it is June 12th. When 421 stations converted on the org. date the captioning problems began and are expected to only get worse as the new date comes upon us. CSD chief executive officer, Benjamin Soukup, said "From that point on, deaf and hard of hearing consumers have been contacting the FCC and TV stations directly, imploring them to address these captioning glitches. This survey should arm the FCC with information that doesn't come from the industry or TV stations, but directly from those frustrated consumers."

There are presumed to be 118 million captioning customers in the US right now.

The survey is broken down into 4 sections, general information, isolating the problem, signal path (how the signal is received) and equipment type. Those without Internet access can call (877) 388-4968 and a Help Center agent will assist them with the survey. The Help Center can receive traditional phone calls, TTY, relay, video relay, videophone and CapTel calls.

<http://dtv.c-s-d.org/> In lower right hand corner see FCC click there.

## **International Association of Administrative Assistants North Suburban Chapter**

On March 19, 2009, **Carole Blowers** gave a speech about dealing with deaf and hard of hearing co-workers, family, friends, and acquaintances to her local chapter of the **International Association of Administrative Assistants-North Suburban Chapter (IAAP)**. Thirty members of the association were present for the speech.

Carole explained that deafness/hard of hearing is a communication disorder between two or more people. The speech outlined a number of things including: definitions, causes, signs, and symptoms of deafness; statistics worldwide, nationwide, and statewide; HOH famous people; the three causes of every communication problem (speaker, environmental, and listener factors); most frequent problems reported for communication breakdowns; categories of communication breakdowns (unawareness, not understanding, and misunderstanding); avoidance behaviors; responses to communication breakdowns (behavioral, emotional, cognitive, physical, interpersonal, and mental health); strategies for improving communication (captioning, special equipment for home/work, volume/rate, and tone of speech, etc.); items available for help (hearing aids; assistive devices, cochlear implants, BAHA procedure, sign language, TDD, oral interpreters); support groups (highly recommended attending and joining HLAA Twin Cities Chapter!!); hearing conventions; tips on how to talk to deaf/hard of hearing individuals; ADA and new regulations; and what's ahead for us by 2013, by 2018, and by 2058.

Her closing remarks were: Remember, be kind to one another; you never know what kind of battle the person next to you is fighting.

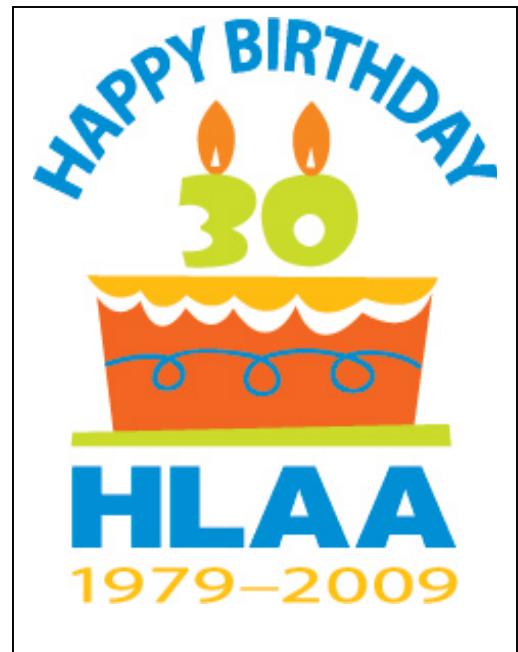
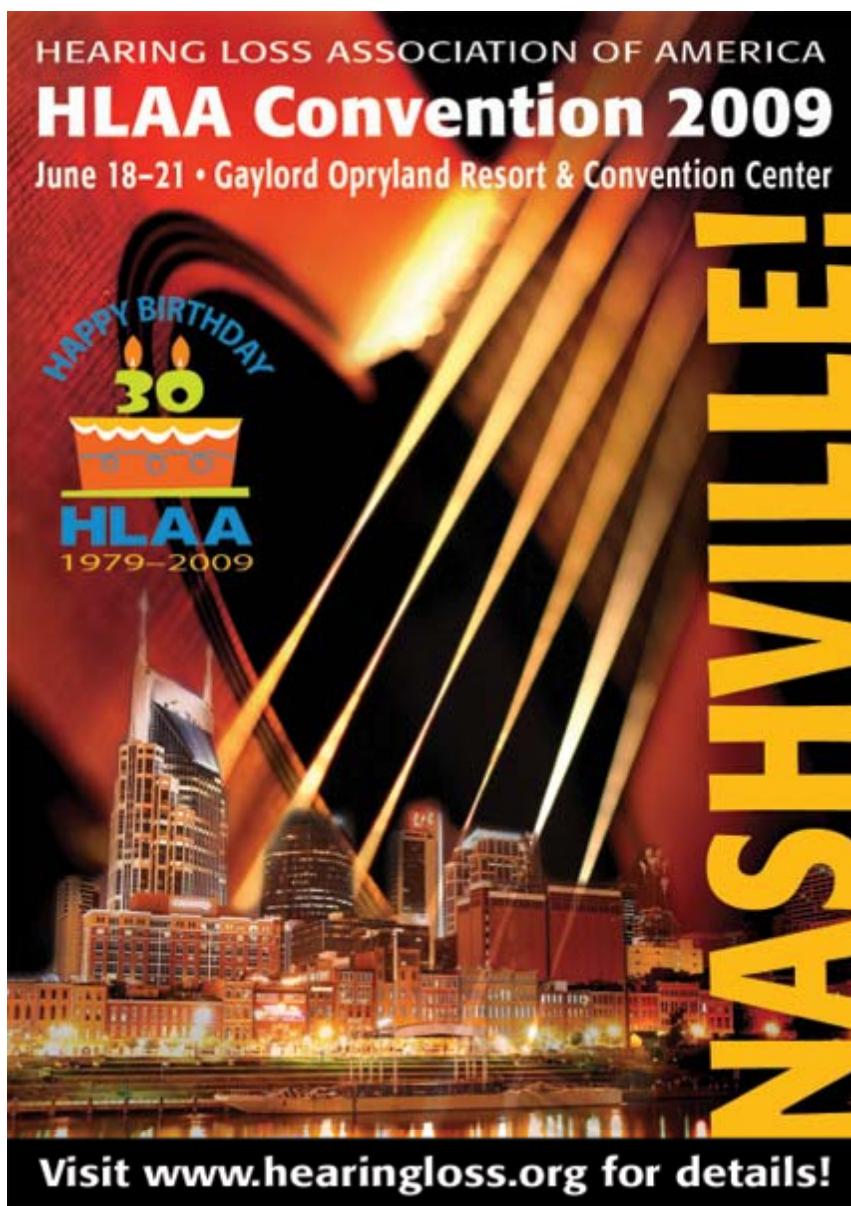
Association members informed Carole that they had never had anyone ever speak to them before on this topic, so the audience was very attentive and felt they learned a lot.

Carole plans to do a similar presentation to her "Amazing Grays" senior group at her church in the near future.

## Convention 2009 ~ Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, June 18-21, 2009

### Schedule at a Glance

- ❑ Please check program book for final schedule when you register.
- ❑ Large Exhibit Hall
- ❑ Newcomers Orientation
- ❑ Happy 30th Birthday Celebration
- ❑ There are over 40 workshops to choose from
- ❑ Opening Session, Vinton Cerf, Ph.D. Keynote Speaker
- ❑ Registration is open each day
- ❑ Government Employees who work with the HOH
- ❑ Awards Breakfast
- ❑ Research Symposium (update on hair cell regeneration)





## Accessible Entertainment

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612-338-1466 [www.kerasotes.com](http://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.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Golfers, Beware !

Source: Hearing Loss Web, January 2009

Being caught in a thunderstorm or hit by a ball ought to be the only real dangers in a round of golf. But players of this most relaxing of games are being warned they are at serious risk of shattering their eardrums when they tee off. Modern titanium clubs create a "sonic boom" when they connect with the ball, say scientists. The risk of going deaf is so great that doctors are advising golfers to wear earplugs while they play their tee shots.

Experts have identified at least one case of a golfer of 55 who they believe has damaged his hearing as a result of using one of the new drivers three times a week for the last 18 months. Tests were carried out on six titanium clubs and six thicker-

faced stainless steel models and sound levels measured. While the steel clubs produced the agreeable "tink" of a well-hit shot, the titanium ones were much louder, described by some as similar to a gun being fired. Dr. Malcolm Buchanan, an Edinburgh-trained ear, nose and throat specialist-and a keen golfer- said: "Our results show that thin faced titanium drivers may produce sufficient sound to induce temporary or even permanent cochlear damage in susceptible individuals.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

**ALOHA**

**When: Saturday, April 11 at 10 am**

**What: Aloha Brunch**

**Where: 14150 Nicollet Avenue  
Burnsville, MN  
952-435-6511**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A BRUNCH  
STARTING AT 10 AM AND NOT  
DINNER AT 5:30!!!!**

**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. Call or email Ellen (# on last page) for more details.

**Name: Tiger Breed: Chihuahua**

Tiny Tiger was nine months old when he was donated to Hearing Dogs for Deaf People by his owner. As he had lived in a home and was not a puppy, he progressed into the advanced soundwork training very quickly and was placed with his first recipient. Unfortunately after a few years, Tiger's owner passed away and he returned to Hearing Dogs to be rematched, and was partnered with severely deaf Carol Hopkins in Wales.

Tiger has now been with Carol for almost six years and has made a huge difference to her life. Despite being one of the smallest hearing dogs to be trained, his huge personality and zest for work has been a real help to Carol, who suffers from poor health. Carol, who had been a music teacher, lost her hearing very suddenly, and just as she was coming to terms with that shock, she was struck down with a severe illness which resulted in her being permanently confined to a wheelchair. This left her feeling extremely depressed and knocked her confidence to the point that she never thought she would be the same person again. Tiger changed all this, and restored Carol's confidence in herself as well as in human nature.

One of Tiger's unique characteristics is the fact that he is missing a few teeth which sometimes means his tongue sticks out of his mouth. This endearing feature attracts people to him like a magnet, especially children, and he loves the attention! Carol says: "We are always greeted with such warm welcomes, and wherever we go everyone is so pleased to see Tiger." Having Tiger as her constant companion has meant that Carol feels confident enough to go out and about, and she now regularly attends operas and concerts. Tiger, of course, accompanies her everywhere, and this has made Carol feel so much better about herself.

As Carol has limited mobility, Tiger has had to be trained to alert her to the household sounds while she is in the wheelchair, and he does this with enthusiasm. However, he has also acted above and beyond the call of duty, quite possibly saving Carol's life. When Carol lies down, she sometimes suffers a reflux problem which means she can vomit and choke, and this often happens when she is asleep. Not long after Tiger went to live with Carol, she had one of these episodes in her sleep. She woke suddenly to find Tiger scrabbling frantically at her face and licking her constantly to wake her up. Carol is in no doubt that had he not been there she could have choked to death. On another occasion, Carol had an accident with her electric wheelchair and she fell out bringing the chair down on top of her. Tiger instantly sensed the danger and ran out to the garden to alert Marion, Carol's carer. Marion put a blanket over Carol to keep her warm until the paramedics arrived, but Tiger's caring nature took over. He wanted to make sure that Carol was all right, so he lay on the blanket and comforted her until help arrived. The paramedics had to gently lift him off as he wanted to stay as close to Carol as possible, and was a real comfort to her.

Carol sums up her feelings for her tiny companion. "I'm very proud and privileged to have Tiger. He is a little bundle of fluff who has changed my life. I think the world of Tiger and couldn't imagine life without him. If I didn't have Tiger with me, I really don't think I would have the will to live. He is a real star."





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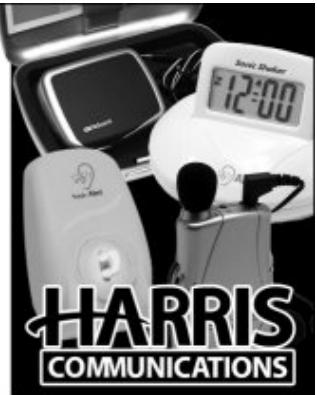
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## **First Class**

***Next meeting: Saturday, April 18, 2009***

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[president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)

**Vice President** – Linda Miller  
[vicepresident@hlaatc.org](mailto:vicepresident@hlaatc.org)

**Secretary** – Sue Brabeck,  
[secretary@hlaatc.org](mailto:secretary@hlaatc.org)

**Treasurer** – Bob Knoll,  
[treasurer@hlaatc.org](mailto:treasurer@hlaatc.org)

**Aloha Event Coordinator** –  
Ellen Thibodo, (651) 423-2249 (TTY)  
[ThibodoD@aol.com](mailto:ThibodoD@aol.com)

**Contact Info.** [info@hlaatc.org](mailto:info@hlaatc.org)

**Website** [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)  
**Photos** Ross Hammond

**Newsletter Editors** –  
Linda Senechal, [cilinda97@yahoo.com](mailto:cilinda97@yahoo.com)  
Merrilee Knoll, [Rknoll5200@aol.com](mailto:Rknoll5200@aol.com)

This month's editor Merrilee Knoll

**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)**