

# HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter April 2010

The next meeting is Saturday, April 17 at the  
Courage Center.

## Where Do We Meet?

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

When: September through May

Time: 9:30 AM – Noon

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month

(No meetings - June, July and August)

## Events for 2010

April 14, 2010 – **Steak Fry** – see page 3

April 17, 2010 – Pharmacist **Monique Hammond** speaks on Ototoxic Drugs.

May 15, 2010 – Open Mic, Pot Luck and Jerry Pouliot will be giving a short demonstration on the CapTel 800i phone.

June 17 – 20, 2010 - Convention 2010 - at the Hilton **Milwaukee** City Center and Midwest Airlines Center. Great opportunity for those of us in the Midwest to attend a national convention! Keynote speaker is **Bill Barkeley**, who recently completed a climb of Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa. He's deaf-blind and a real inspiration!



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

## Contents

× Bits and Pieces	Page 3
× Speaker Synopsis	Page 4
× Please Don't Define Us	Page 6
× Captioning	Pages 7&8
× Cochlear Implant 4 U?	Page 7
× Captioned Arts	Page 9
× Hearing Aid Cost	Page 10

**Alfred Tsang** passed away on March 10, 2010. He was 86 years old.

We will remember Alfred for being a tireless advocate for enabling hearing impaired people to fully participate in all church and community activities. He was a WWII veteran, retired Lt. Col. of the US Air Force, mechanical engineer and former Deputy Attorney General for the state of Indiana. Interment at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

Brian Farrell and Rich Diedrichsen at the 2009 conference want you to put in your date books for 2011.....this

March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2011 (Friday and Saturday)



← **2011**

**2011 Conference in St. Cloud**

\*\*\*\*\*

Rich is also busy this year doing a Walk for Better Hearing in conjunction with what national has done at various locations around the country. He plans to walk 50 miles, 25 miles over a two day period, May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2010. If you would like to pledge something for his walk, see the sign up sheet at the next meeting (April). This is a great undertaking, and we wish him the best of luck. He also said he will split the money between what our chapter pledges and the national organization.



← **2010  
Walk A Thon  
May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2010**

## Bits and Pieces.....

Proud, first time grandparents Bob and Merrilee Knoll: Janis and Jason Lajon had their baby - Daphne Elizabeth Lajon, born March 27, 2010, weight: 7 lbs. 12 oz.

September 19, 2010 has been selected as the date of the 2010 Cochlear Implant Picnic. It will again be held in Golden Valley at Brookview Park, rain or shine as we have reserved the shelter. This picnic is to give people a chance to talk with other individuals and families with cochlear implants, whether to learn more about them, or just connect and compare notes.

**Rich Diedrichsen** has reserved the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud for the 2011 Minnesota State Hard of Hearing Conference, Friday and Saturday March 25-26, 2011. Think about topics you would like to have addressed at the conference, and if you have suggestions, make sure Rich hears about them!

**Sign** a petition to have all airlines show **captioned movies on flights**

<http://www.petitionspot.com/petitions/subtitles/>

For more information about the Association for Airline Passenger Rights <http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com>

Have you tried the **Webinar at HLAA**? See, hear and read the speakers. Best viewed with high speed internet connection. Look it over before the event. This started in Jan. 20, 2010 so all seminars are written only before that date. All (W) are captioned and have a text copy later. Speakers were: Carissa Moeggenberg, M.A., CCC-A February 25, 2010 at 9 pm (EST), Judy Sexton, Executive Director Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech, March 25, 2010 at 9 pm (EST) [http://hlaa.convio.net/site/MessageViewer?em\\_id=8681.0&dlv\\_id=20121](http://hlaa.convio.net/site/MessageViewer?em_id=8681.0&dlv_id=20121)

**I King Jordan** former Pres. of the only Deaf College in the world, talks about diversity. This video is captioned, voice and ASL..

<http://kokonutpundits.blogspot.com/2010/03/video-dr-i-king-jordan-on-diversity-and.html>

You might be familiar with his saying, "The only thing Deaf people can't do is hear."

**Sponge Bob hearing aids.** Children ages 0-13 can enjoy more "fashionable" HA's from shows like ICarly, Go Diego Go, Dora the Explorer and Sponge Bob. <http://losangeles.bizjournals.com/losangeles/stories/2010/03/08/daily6.html>

**Dr. Philip Zazove** in 1981 became the 3rd certified Deaf doctor in the US. Read his amazing story.

<http://tinyurl.com/ybzlceu>

**Kerasotes** Movie goes - recent media report on increased rates to go to the movies does not affect 3D showings of Disney's Alice in Wonderland, Dream Works' How to Train Your Dragon or Fox's Avatar.

<http://celebritybabies.people.com/2010/03/26/joey-mcintyre-introduces-son-rhys-edward-and-opens-up-about-his-severe-hearing-loss/>

Joey McIntyre from the rock group "**New Kids on the Block**" talks about his HOH son born Dec. 2009.

## HLAA NATIONAL CONVENTION, MILWAUKEE

**JUNE 17 – 20, 2010**

**COME TO MILWAUKEE AND BE INSPIRED**  
Milwaukee is more than just the beer capital of the country, it is a beautiful city along the shores of Lake Michigan filled with amazing architecture, parks, museums, shopping, world-class restaurants, and of course breweries. But it's the people there – the Midwestern friendliness abounds among people whose ancestors came from Germany, Ireland, Poland and many other countries. According to one of our members, the convention is a "transforming experience," so come join us for Convention 2010 and be inspired!

### Steak Fry Wednesday - April 14

Those people selling tickets should contact Bob Knoll to let him know how many you have sold.

Call: 763-537-7558

or email: [rknoll5200@aol.com](mailto:rknoll5200@aol.com)

**Where:** Crystal VFW Post 494

**Address:** 5222 Bass Lake Road

**Date:** April 14, 2010

**Time:** 5 PM to 7 PM

**Dinner includes:** Steak, baked potato, cole slaw, garlic bread and coffee

**Cost:** \$10

## Synopsis of March Meeting



Submitted by Carole Blowers, Vice President

Our March, 2010, speaker was Sheri Gingerich, currently the Deputy Chief Operations Officer for Metro Transit. Sheri's career at Metro Transit includes being a bus driver, instructor, Safety Specialist, Assistant Transportation Manager, Garage Manager, and Rail Supervisor.

Currently Sheri oversees the entire light rail division for Metro Transit's Hiawatha Line, which serves about 30,000-32,000 people/day. She oversees 160 employees in operations, track, light rail vehicle maintenance, and all system functions. She was one of the first people to get the opportunity to operate the light rail vehicles and participated in all the testing of the light rail cars.

Sheri explained that in June of 2004, Metro Transit had 12.3 miles of light rail, serving 10 million people per year.

Sheri discussed aids for hard of hearing people, such as the red light flashing, reader boards with scrolling to the bottom every five minutes for important messages like shutdowns, and emergencies. If there are red train symbols flashing, do not cross. There are cameras on platforms at all times. People should not be wearing headphones around trains. Watch the "LOOK" yellow signs with black letters.

The **Hiawatha Line** starts downtown Minneapolis near the Target Center and goes past the Metrodome along Hiawatha Avenue to the airport and then to the Mall of America. It carries 30,000-32,000 people a day. This line runs from 4 a.m. to 1 a.m., and trains

run every 7 minutes during rush hours, every 10 minutes during non-rush hours, and every hour at night. At the airport, you can go downstairs where the big schedule is or call ahead to find out the train schedule.

Fares are \$1.75 for non-rush hour, and \$2.25 during rush hours. You can purchase a rechargeable card which deducts the appropriate fare when you present it, or you can get a 31 day pass, or use cash. The Go-To Card can hold up to \$400 on it. If the card is lost, it can be stopped. You can re-load it at vending machines on the platforms or reload them through their website. The Metro Pass is a pre-authorized amount (base fare) type of card. 80% of North Star riders use the express fare card. There is a significant fine if someone boards without a ticket. There are 12 Police Officers working light rail who do random checks and occasional sweeps. At sporting events, every single ticket is checked.

A video was shown during Sheri's presentation. There are high voltage overhead wires from which the light rail trains are run so they are not noisy. Bells do ring on occasion. Yellow bumpy strips on the ground mean to stay back. Cross only at marked areas; be sure to look both ways. Trains get up to speeds of 55 mph. Hold onto overhead poles if you cannot find a seat. Keep arms and legs away from opening/closing doors. There are phones to call 911 in an emergency. No beverages or disorderly conduct is allowed. Patience and courtesy is needed while waiting in line. There are spaces for luggage, bikes, and wheelchairs. Numerous brochures are available today at our meeting.

Sheri advised when going to Target Field, go early and plan to stay late. Use park and ride lots at 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Bloomington, or near Fort Snelling or Lake Street or take a bus to the train.

Construction will begin later this year on the newest line. **Central Corridor** will go from Minneapolis through the University of Minnesota via University Avenue to St. Paul to the Capitol, to downtown St. Paul, to 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Union Depot. Construction cost is expected to be \$954 million. It will take 3 years to finish. Estimated riders for this line: 45,000/day!

Another future line will be the **South West Corridor**, serving Eden Prairie Shopping Center to Chaska, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, etc. and is expected to begin in 2017, with an estimated cost



of \$1.5 billion. Along Bottineau Boulevard, it has not been decided if this will be a rapid bus line or a light rail line.

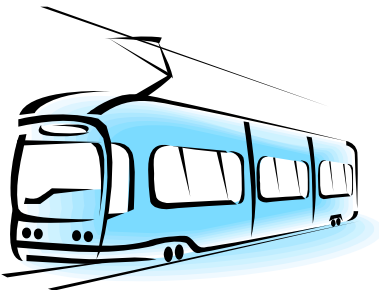
Commuter railways use existing freight tracks (like Amtrak). Light rail operates from overhead rails and an electrical system. Heavy rail would be like the NY City and Chicago subways.

The Met Transit has updated their website to include schedules, NorthStar corridor information, Light rails bus schedules, tips on riding the light rail, and GPS trip and bus tracking capabilities. The maintenance facility is located on Franklin Avenue.

The last light rail street car was in 1954. There were over 200 miles of track in the 1940's and 1950's—it was the only way to get around! So in 2004, almost 50 years to the day that streetcar services ended, the light rail started. Other statistics: 80% of light rail riders are 1<sup>st</sup> time riders. The light rail cars can hold 175-200 people per car during sporting events. A 3 car train can carry 600 people. That is the longest they can go so as to not obstruct intersections.

In the U.S., regular freight trains use a centralized dispatch center in Fort Worth, Texas. Sheri explained we buy a three hour window to run our trains. Our light rail system does slow the Burlington Northern and Amtrak down some.

It was questioned why underground lines couldn't be used to minimize traffic and improve safety. Sheri stated that it is cost: 1.8 miles of tunnel under the airport cost \$84.5 million. There are sewer pipes, storm pipes, electrical lines to move and deal with. When you have a tunnel, there are more demolition and ventilation issues. She went on to explain there are four electric substations for TDT Minneapolis at Nicollet and 5<sup>th</sup>.



## Simple Daily Maintenance for Ears and Hearing Aids



Daily maintenance can keep hearing aids working properly for five to seven years. Experts recommend taking the hearing aids off each day and wiping them with a soft cloth or tissue. Many devices come with a brush or wire pick to remove earwax from the hearing aid.

It's also a good idea to remove the batteries and leave the battery compartment door open, both to prolong battery life and to allow moisture to escape.

Next, you may want to store hearing aids in an electronic dry-aid kit. They absorb moisture to ensure that the device stays dry.

It helps to keep the ears clean too. Wax is productive for ears, but too much is a problem for both hearing and keeping a hearing aid working properly. Consult your physician before cleaning your own ears for the first time.

Research indicates that 75 percent of all hearing aid repairs are due to earwax and moisture and almost 100 percent of these repairs are preventable with proper maintenance.

When traveling or going to the hospital, it is wise to have a case along in which to store your aids so they don't get lost. It has happened that hearing aids were put in a tissue beside the hospital bed and thrown away by maintenance people.

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

## Please Don't Define Us

By Sue Brabeck



In a column I wrote months ago, I told you about my cat Sesame. But I haven't told you about my other cat, Nilly. Just bear with me for a bit, I promise to get to the point. Really.

Nilly was an 11-week old kitten when I first saw her at the Humane Society, asleep in her cage in the middle of her litter box. I was attracted to her right away, and I wanted to get to know her better to see if I wanted to adopt her. After a lengthy process, I did (they don't make it easy!). This was 13 years ago.

Nilly is a dainty princess, with tiny paws and delicate features. She's a bit overweight, and her belly wobbles from side to side as she walks. Nilly is what is called an "odd-eyed white". Her fur is pure snow-white, all over. Her left eye is green, her right eye is sky-blue. A little bit startling at first, indeed.

Her personality is sweet, always up for a lap and a good tummy-scratch. She loves to be lifted to the bathroom counter while I do my hair and make-up in the morning, and always has to sleep in the EXACT same spot every night on the bed. She's partial to a certain white afghan, preferring that I lay it across my lap before she hops up on the recliner for a cuddle. And oh boy, is she

ever LOUD – "MEEEE- OW-OW"!

Why am I writing about my cat in a newsletter for a hearing loss organization? I told you I'd get to my point, and here it is. Nilly is completely deaf.

I figured this out as soon as I saw her as a kitten in the Humane Society cage. The genetic package of white fur and blue eyes in cats often comes along with deafness in at least one ear. It's a mutation that results in the cochlea deteriorating within days after birth. Nothing unusual was noted in her medical bio clipped to her cage.

I took her out of her cage and held her. I had a friend drop a metal lunch-box to the concrete floor behind me to test her reaction. Any self-respecting cat would have ripped me to ribbons to escape the loud crash. She didn't budge.

Note that it took me three paragraphs to describe Nilly, and only at the last did I mention that she's deaf. I don't think of her that way, I just know her as Nilly and that she purrs a lot and likes to snack on blueberry bagels. She's not my deaf cat – she's my happy kitty, who just happens to be deaf.

I think those of us in HLAA are much the same way. We're not defined by our hearing loss. It's just one attribute of who we are, not our whole person. We're fat, skinny, tall, short, happy, crabby, smart, silly, friendly, surly, generous, kind-hearted, pretty, talented --- you get the idea.

Hearing loss isn't our most important attribute, and sometimes we have to remind those around us that we are more than our ears.

## Wondering if it is time for you to consider a cochlear implant?

Not everyone with hearing loss is a candidate for a cochlear implant. It is not a solution for every individual.

### Physical Qualifications

1. Hearing tests show the loss is 70 dB or less in **both** ears.
2. You must score 30% correct or less in sentence-recognition testing using the best fitted hearing aids.
3. You are in good enough health to go through the cochlear implant surgery.

Now you need to determine **your motivation**.

1. Do you live among people with normal hearing or does the world of sound have little meaning to you? How motivated are you to hear better? Will your family and friends support you and help you with this?
2. Do you have the patience and desire to adjust to hearing with an implant? Some people achieve success rapidly, while others take a long time to obtain some degree of benefit. "Success" for one person may not satisfy another. You may need auditory rehabilitation which will involve more time.

Two other considerations are:

**Cost:** Will your health insurance cover the cost of a cochlear implant? The procedure is too expensive for most people to pay out of pocket. However, if you do have insurance, the manufacturers will work with you to get coverage included. Don't refrain from pursuing an implant because your insurance does not currently cover it; the manufacturers have been able to secure coverage for many people.

**How well can I expect to do?:** People with a recent history of onset of deafness can expect to do much better with a cochlear implant than adults who have been deaf since birth. Also, those who have been deaf since birth but have worn hearing aids are likely to perform better than those who never wore hearing aids.

The best person to help you decide if you are a candidate for a cochlear implant is an audiologist who is familiar with them.



## Closed Captioning on your TV a problem?

For captioning problems during non-emergency programming, you may file a written complaint with either the FCC or your video programming distributor (i.e., your cable or satellite TV service, or the TV station if you do not pay for cable, satellite, or another subscription video service). If you file your complaint with the FCC, the FCC will forward the complaint to your video programming distributor.

Your written complaint must be filed within 60 days of the captioning problem. After receiving a complaint, either directly from you or from the FCC, the video programming distributor will have 30 days to respond to the complaint. If you filed your complaint with your video programming distributor and they do not respond within 30 days, or if a dispute remains, you can send your complaint to the FCC.

You can file your written complaint by using the on-line complaint form found at [esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm?sid=&id=d1e3](https://esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm?sid=&id=d1e3). You can also file your complaint with the FCC's Consumer Center by e-mailing [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov); faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554.

### What to Include In Your Complaint

- your name, street, city, state and zip code, and other contact information such as a videophone or TTY number or e-mail address;
- the television channel number, call sign, and network;
- the name of the subscription service, if you pay to receive television;
- the location of the TV station or subscription service;
- the date and time when you experienced the captioning problem;
- the name of the program or show with the captioning problem;
- a detailed description of the captioning problem.

## FCC FOCUSED ON CLOSED CAPTIONING RULES – MARCH 25, 2010

CONDENSED FROM AN ARTICLE BY Kathleen A. Kirby, Partner, Wiley Rein LLP IN

RADIO TELEVISION DIGITAL NEWS ASSOCIATION



The FCC adopted rules mandating closed captioning of video programming in 1998, establishing benchmarks for a phase-in of captioning over the years that followed. The closed captioning rules apply to video programming distributors (“VPDs”), such as television, cable and direct broadcast satellite operators and other multichannel video programming distributors.

Today, all “new” programming, whether English or Spanish language, must be captioned, unless the programming is subject to one of the FCC’s specific captioning exemptions. In addition, certain captioning benchmarks apply to older programming. The FCC defines “new” programming as programming that was first exhibited on or after January 1, 1998. “Exhibited” includes any public showing—in a movie theater, on pay cable, home video, etc., not just on broadcast television.

The FCC is in the midst of an ongoing review of its closed captioning rules, now that more than a decade has passed since the rules were first adopted. Recently, the Commission revised the rules with an eye toward making them more consumer-friendly. The FCC’s new requirements, which became effective in February 2010: (1) provide additional means through which consumers may lodge closed captioning complaints (*see previous page*); (2) tighten the timelines for filing and responding to complaints; and (3) obligate VPDs to provide specific contact information to the public and the FCC. The deadline for submitting contact information to the FCC was Monday, March 22, 2010.

At present, only the major national broadcast television networks (i.e., ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC), affiliates of those networks in the top 25 markets, and national nonbroadcast networks serving at least 50% of all homes subscribing to multichannel video programming services must use real-time captioning in order to comply with the closed captioning rules.

Others may still use the so-called “electronic newsroom technique” (“ENR”) to caption their news programming. Even though only the scripted portions of newscasts will be captioned under this option, the FCC will consider the entirety of the program captioned for purposes of compliance with the closed captioning rules. Note, however, that the FCC is re-evaluating the use of ENR captioning, and a real-time captioning requirement may ultimately be adopted.

**If emergency information is disseminated during an unscripted portion of the newscast (e.g., during the weather segment), the station must comply with the rules governing accessibility of emergency information.** Those rules require that emergency information (i.e., information about a current emergency that is intended to further the protection of life, health, safety and property) be accompanied by an aural tone and be made accessible to persons with hearing disabilities either through closed captioning or by using an alternate means of visual presentation.

The FCC’s rule provides the following non-exhaustive list of examples of the types of emergencies covered: tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus schedules resulting from such conditions, and warnings and watches of impending changes in weather.

“Details” include, among other things, specific details regarding the areas that will be affected by the emergency, evacuation orders, detailed descriptions of areas to be evacuated, specific evacuation routes, approved shelters or the way to take shelter in one’s home, instructions on how to secure personal property, road closures, advisories to viewers on possible health concerns from air pollution caused by wildfires, and how to obtain relief assistance. Emergency information should not block any closed captioning and any closed captioning should not block any emergency information provided by means other than closed captioning.

The FCC has issued stiff fines for failure to comply with its rules governing closed captioning and the accessibility of emergency information.



## Performances Presented with Open Captioning through July

**Salome** by Richard Strauss.

Sung in German with English **captions** projected above the stage at every performance.

**Performed by:** The Minnesota Opera.

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

**Run:** April 10, 15, 18, 20, 24, 2010.

**Tix:** **Reduced** to half-price for AD patrons (regular \$20-200); phone: 612-333-6669; TTY 651-282-3099.

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

**Description:** Strauss's infamous opera tells the Biblical story of obsession and vengeance. Salome lusts after the imprisoned prophet John the Baptist, who rejects her advances.

**The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity.**  
by Kristoffer Diaz.

**Performed by:** Mixed Blood Theatre.

**Location:** Alan Page Auditorium at Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Minneapolis 55454.

**Captioning:** Thursday, April 22, 7:30 PM.

**Tix:** **Reduced to \$10 access rate** (regular \$22, \$18 student/senior, \$14 group); phone: 612-338-6131.

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

### **M. Butterfly**

**Performed by:** the Guthrie Theater.

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

**Captioning:** Friday, June 4, 7:30 PM (by c2 inc.).

**Tix:** **Reduced to \$25 for Captioning;** phone: 612-

377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626.

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

**Description:** Tony Award-winning and Pulitzer-nominated *M. Butterfly* traces lines of race, gender and power through love and deception.

### **Dollhouse**

**Performed by:** the Guthrie Theater.

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

**Captioning:** Friday, July 9, 7:30 PM.

**Tix:** **Reduced to \$25 for Captioning;** phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626.

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

**Description:** What looks like the perfect life is woefully incomplete, propped up by dark secrets and bitter betrayals.

## **Movies**

Cinemas having captioning are:

Kerasotes Block E Stadium 15, AMC Eden Prairie Mall 18 Theatres, AMC Rosedale 14 Theatres, Oakdale Ultrascreen Cinemas (Marcus Theatres), and Lakes 10 Theatre offer captioned shows. See

[www.moviewatcher.com/index.html](http://www.moviewatcher.com/index.html)

Science Museum of Minnesota Omnitheater –

Films shown at the Omnitheater often offer accessible features (CC: Closed Rear View Captioning; AD: Audio Description; or Spanish translation).

Tickets are \$8 adults (first film), \$7 senior/child, with 15% discount for each additional film on the same day. To request accommodations for exhibits, call at least 72 hours in advance: 651-221-9406. Open Monday-Wed. 9:30-5:00, Thurs.-Sat. 9:30-9:00, Sun. 12:00-5:00. Contact info: 120 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul 55102, **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>.

## Why Do Hearing Aids Cost So Much?

Please allow me to respond to an article in the March HLAA newsletter comparing the cost of hearing aids to GPS systems. As an audiologist for 25 years, I have often been asked the question, “Why do hearing aids cost so much?” There are several factors:

1. The research and development on how to replicate natural hearing is difficult and expensive, and still falls short, unfortunately.
2. The training and education to properly diagnose hearing loss, fit hearing aids (this includes orientation, rehabilitation and verification) and maintain their optimal functioning is expensive. It took me 5 years of post-graduate study to learn this and my patients teach me new things every day.
3. It is expensive to maintain a business; anyone who has attempted entrepreneurship knows this. I give free recheck visits for the life of the hearing aid-this cost MUST be bundled into the cost of the hearing aid, or my patients may hesitate to make recheck appointments down the road, which I know they will need. There are already too many hearing aids in the drawer.
4. Hearing aids don't have to cost \$3000. I often fit aids that cost \$3-4000/pair and for some, they work just great. It depends on your needs and how important your hearing is to you. An over-the-counter \$30 device won't help anyone and is a waste of money.
5. The actual product is less important than the provider helping you. GPS systems and golf ball locators don't require professional consultation.
6. Hearing aids last 5-8 years. 5 years=1825 days, this divided by \$3000= \$1.64/day, which is not that much to hear better, in my opinion, even if it is per ear!
7. When I started dispensing, aids were about \$450 each. The prices have not increased that much for basic technology. Again, if you want and need the best technology you should buy the best you can afford, from someone well-trained. Ask for an audiologist!

I hope this information has been helpful and I know that it is a hardship to spend the money. When I started in this field, I hated the idea that it wasn't “free” to hear better. But then I realized that I have specialized skills and a calling to do this work and that if I gave hearing aids away for free, I wouldn't be able to help very many people. Thanks for listening!

*Shirley Fors, Au.D*

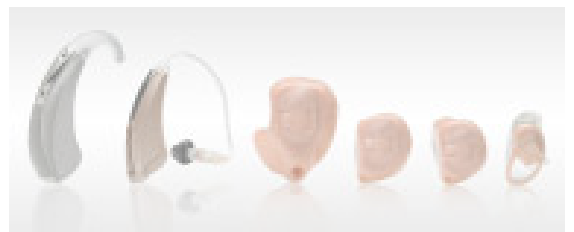


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This month's editor is Linda Senechal

**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)*. Please visit the chapter's web-site at [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)**