HLAATC

April 2011

April 13, 2011 – Steak Fry
April 16, 2011 – Marie Koehler (tentative or sub) DHHS
May 21, 2011—Rhoda Nelson, Blind and Deafblind services
June 16 – 19, 2011 – National Convention, Hyatt Regency in Crystal City, Washington, DC

Steak Fry

Wednesday April 13, 2011 - tickets should have been counted and reported back via email or phone to treasurer Bob Knoll by Saturday, noon April 9. 2011.

Contents

- **Officer's emails**
- **Carole Blowers** - president@hlaatc.org
- **Hunter Sargent & Shannon Turley** - vicepresident@hlaatc.org
- **Holly Sargent** - secretary@hlaatc.org
- **Bob Knoll** - treasurer@hlaatc.org

Message from our President

Carole Blowers

A REVIEW OF EVENTS DURING MY PRESIDENCY

As my Presidency of HLAA-TC comes to an end, I find it most appropriate to look back at all we have accomplished this past year.

On August 14, 2010, the HLAA-TC board met to discuss new roles of officers and plans for the next year.

The HLAA-TC chapter met on the following dates since I took over as President:

September 18, 2010
October 16, 2010
November 20, 2010
December 18, 2010
January 15, 2011
February 19, 2011
March 19, 2011

Our last two meetings of my Presidency will be April 16, and May 21, 2011.

The following speakers presented these topics:
October, 2010: Dennis Martin spoke on Hard of Hearing On-Line
November, 2010: Paula Schwartz spoke on Tinnitus
December, 2010: John Coverstone spoke on Differences Between an Audiologist & Hearing Aid Dispensers
January, 2011: Mary Hartnett, MCDHH spoke on items of interest from the state
February, 2011: Ron Wolff and Laurie Carlson spoke on Can Do Hearing Dogs
March, 2011: Judi Swan spoke on Being Your Own Advocate

In April, Marie Koehler (or her representative) from DHHS will be speaking, and in May, Rhoda Nelson, from Blind/Deaf Blind services will be speaking.

It should be noted that in September, we did not have a speaker, but held an "Open Mike" time for members to discuss items of personal interest.

HLAA-TC was the recipient of a $1500 award from Williams Sound Corporation in November of 2010. This is the second time our chapter has been awarded such an award. We also received donations from families who had deaf or hard of hearing family members who passed away.

Membership has held strong. At the time of this article, we currently have 40 members, up from last year.

In October of 2010, I wrote a letter to Joyce Larson, Compliance Officer from the State of Minnesota regarding lack of captioning in political ads. This letter was written in response to our chapter members' discussion on this subject in September. In October, Hunter Sargent, Vice President, attended the MCDHH/DHHS event.

In November, Hunter Sargent, Vice President, represented our chapter at the 25th Anniversary of the Deaf Commission.

In December, we had our usual cookie exchange, white elephant exchange, and pot luck. It is a special time for members to socialize during the year and have some fun.

Legislative Lobby Day was held on March 2nd. Several members were able to attend: Merrilee and Bob Knoll, Monique and Ross Hammond, and Sue Brabeck. We thank you for your presence at this event. Rich Diedrichson from the St. Cloud Chapter was also present at Lobby Day.

HLAA-TC had its first visit ever from the national office. At our March, 2011, Rebecca Lander, the Walk 4 Hearing Coordinator visited our chapter meeting and then held an informational meeting for interested members about the Minneapolis walk from our chapter following. About 20 people attended this meeting. Rich Diedrichson from the St. Cloud Chapter also attended this information meeting; Rich has also attended our chapters meetings at various times throughout the year.

Now for the thank yous! I wish to thank Lisa Richardson and her associates from Paradigm Captioning for their live captioning of all our chapter meetings this past year. You continue to provide such a valuable service to our chapter members.

Thanks to the Courage Center of Golden Valley for providing us with our meeting room each and every month, and accommodating us for the recent Walk4Hearing meeting which was held immediately after our chapter meeting in March.

I wish to thank all the board members---Shannon Turley, Hunter and Holly Sargent, and Bob and Merrilee Knoll for all their assistance this past year in making our HLAA-TC one of the best chapters in the state.

I do not want to forget our newsletter editors (Vicki Martin, Merrilee Knoll, and Linda Senechal) who also put in numerous hours each month to make sure our newsletter gets assembled, proofed, and copied. I find our newsletters very educational, informative, and just plain good reading. Topics have covered "Why I joined HLAA-TC, to listings of captioned plays, to items of personal interest. Thank you for doing this for our chapter!

Throughout the year, I have written monthly articles for our newsletter, which I hope you have found interesting. These topics included a summary of the HLAA National Convention in Milwaukee (which Linda Miller and I attended in June, 2010), Precious People—Precious Times, Noise Induced Hearing Loss and Hearing Protection Products, Sounds of Christmas, Tips for Taking Care of Hearing Aids, and Hearing Loss in Children.

Our annual steak fry will be held on April 13th, and I anticipate it will be a huge success thanks to many members selling lots of tickets ahead of time! Special thanks to Bob Knoll for his role in setting this all up and "training" the helpers the day of the event.

Looking back, much has been accomplished, and yes there is still much more that can be done. HLAA--- and what we stand for---says a lot: Information, Education, Advocacy, and Support. I trust our new co-Presidents Hunter Sargent and Shannon Turley will carry on these tasks in the coming year for our chapter.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Blowers
HLAA-TC President

WALK4HEARING -- Remember this date!

Saturday October 1, 2011, 10 AM Thomas Beach, Lake Calhoun Minneapolis.

Let's have every member – and anyone who is willing to join you – register for the Walk4Hearing! Each person should go to website www.walk4hearing.org and Select the Minneapolis Walk. Enter your name and email address. You will need to choose a user name and password the first time you log in. You can select "Join a team", "Start a team", or "Walk as an individual". There is no required walk distance. You set your own pace and your own limits. Your presence and support is what matters – not how far you can walk!

If people do not have access to a computer they can register on Walk day on site. There will be a check-in/registration table at the site on Walk day. In addition, if donors do not want to donate online then they can write a check payable to the Walk4Hearing and they need to give/mail it to the walker who they are supporting/donating to.

And another perspective on a familiar topic:

I know that one must take some of this with a grain of salt, and I know that newborn screenings have clearly done more good than harm, but this is just a look at the flip-side of those results.

http://www.cnn.com/2011/HEALTH/03/10/ep.neuropathy.kids.hearing/index.html?hpt=C2

(Submitted by Sue Brabeck)

Summary of meeting March 19, 2011

President Carole Blowers introduced **Dann Trainer**, president of Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens, who spoke about the upcoming MADC conference June 24 and 25 at St. Catherine's College. Dann would like to see greater interaction between HLAA-TC and MADC, because many of our goals are the same. They are looking for feedback on what type of workshops people want. If there are hard of hearing issues you want on the table, they would try to arrange for that. They want to accommodate people in the way that is best for them, so you need to let them know if you will need CART.

Rich Diedrichsen: Last year when ADA standards were revised, HLAA, national association for the deaf and other participants in giving feedback to the Department of Justice on how to revise our standards. As a result, a lot of your internet screening, although not captioned, is now subtitled. When you get online, it says click here for a video, look on the bottom of the screen that's showing the video, and often you're going to see a click menu, and one of them will say subtitles. If you click that, you will get subtitles. And they're really quite good.

When people ask "What does HLAA do? – this is what they do. HLAA National collaborates with NAD, just as Dann is asking us to collaborate with MADC. It gives you that large population that you represent, and sometimes we can make a bigger impact.

HLAA National is working on a summary of responses to a survey regarding cell phones, to be presented to the FCC. HLAA also submitted comments to the Department of Justice regarding captioning of movies. Their position is that movies should be made accessible to people with hearing loss through either open or closed captioning. To date, close to 1,000 comments have been sent to the Department of Justice.

HLAA also signed on to a petition to the FCC requesting universal TV captioning. This means that consumers are asking that all exceptions to the captioning rules such as advertisements, trailers, and
late night TV be eliminated.

Another thing that HLAA has been involved with is working in preparation for upcoming elections and to ensure that barriers that stop people with disabilities from voting will be removed.

So as you can see, HLAA is out in the community, always working on some project to help benefit all of those of us that are hard of hearing.

Treasurer Bob Knoll: Steak fry. It looks like we're going to have a real bumper on the steak fry. Holly and team, the Hunter and Holly team have sold 46 tickets to date. And they took another 15. (Applause.) Mary is another big seller, and Joe O'Brien is too. So it should be a really good steak fry this year. We'll probably be in the 200's hopefully. It could be our biggest one ever.

Advocating for Hearing Loss Accommodations

Judi Swan

Our guest speaker was **Judi Swan**, who spoke about being your own advocate. Judi has been hard of hearing since childhood, due to head trauma brought on by abuse. She has been with HLAA-TC for the past five years. She has begun an advocacy program in the past year.

“One year ago, in May, I was at a narcotics anonymous retreat up in Northern Minnesota with my husband, David. I had been going there each summer for about six years. They have wonderful speakers there -- but I've never heard one.

“When the speakers would come on, I would go to my cabin and read. After the speech was over, David would come back to the room and tell me how wonderful it was. I always felt left out. I always felt like everybody enjoyed this person's story and where they have been -- the narcotics anonymous theme that they were there for.

“And so last year, when we arrived and signed in, I saw a table with about seven people seated. They looked like they were busily at work. It was a board meeting.

“I said, I have a request, and they invited me to sit down. I knew none of these people, but I told them how much I enjoyed the retreat, but that I didn’t know what was going on much of the time because I am hard of hearing. I told them I had never heard a speech given there.

“That very evening, a special table was reserved for deaf and hard of hearing people, so we could be seated near the speaker. I was so moved I started to cry. They were saying ‘okay, you matter. One person matters’.

“Later, I talked to them about the possibility of using real time captioning at the retreat. They were very open to this, despite the expense. I offered to try to arrange for CART at the retreat the following year – this year.
“We have hope now that the retreat will be captioned this year, in 2011.

“But my real dream inside was to allow someone to caption in my church. A woman in my church who is 96 years old, would sit with me each Sunday after church and we would piece the sermon together. We must have looked like a couple of odd men out but we would sit there, and she would say this is what I think, and this is what I heard. And I would say, this is what I heard. And so we redid the sermon.

"She's a gorgeous white haired lady with bright blue eyes, and she would look at me and say, oh, I wish, I wish we could come to church and understand the sermon. And I said, you know, I'm going to do something about that. Sadly, my beautiful friend died before this could become a reality. So when I was looking for a name for this advocacy, I decided to call it 'Elsie's Wish'. It seemed so right because she said that every time I saw her: 'I just wish…'

"One night when I couldn't sleep, I did a search for Mark Ross on my computer, and I sent him an email. He responded immediately. His willingness to help has meant so much. That should mean so much to you too, that when we ask for help, it's out there. The resources are out there. The people are out there. We just have to find them. And I just really am thankful."

Elsie's wish is now more than a dream.

Before You Panic….

Ever since the research connecting hearing loss to an increased likelihood of dementia came out a few weeks ago people have been asking me what I thought of it. Honestly, not much.

The key thing to realize is that this research was done with people who had <u>untreated</u> hearing loss. In Thus, it is possible that hearing loss is only one possible factor in the increased risk of dementia like symptoms for the people in the study. Most people with untreated hearing loss also have a much higher than normal risk for isolation and depression. What does this prove?

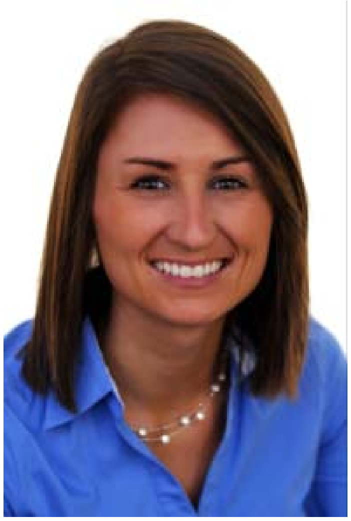
Isolation: I noticed that there were no signing Deaf people mentioned as part of the study. In fact I do not know of any studies that show that Deaf people have a higher than normal rate of dementia like symptoms! Maybe that is because people who are Deaf, and use ASL as their primary language, do not have the drastic reduction in communication that leads to isolation and lessens the likelihood that they will engage in conversations and social interactions. Socialization and communication require mental processing and exercise. There is tons of research that shows that keeping the brain active can delay the on-set, or reduce the severity, of dementia like symptoms. Is it possible the real cause of the increased risk is that there is reduction/lack of mental activity?

Depression: For many years research studies have shown a strong link between untreated hearing loss and depression. A lot of reliable research studies have also shown a strong link between depression and dementia like symptoms. Again I ask… could the real risk factor be something other than the hearing loss – that is the factors that the untreated hearing loss itself causes.

I had a clinical psychology professor in college once who told us; "when you work with someone in your office years from now, you can treat any of the symptoms they have, discuss any of the problems you, or they think they have, but if what you treat or discuss is not the cause of the behavior or thinking you are trying to change, that behavior or thinking will likely not change."

Maybe this is a good time to for me to note that HLAA meetings and involvement is a great way to reduce isolation and depression. It was for me!

Rich Diedrichsen, St. Cloud



Rebecca Lander, Walk4Hearing program assistant at the National Office

Walk4Hearing meeting summary:

History: The walk4hearing began in 2006 with a pilot program with about 6 locations. It has grown to 23 sites. Funds at the national level have been used for advocating for rights for people with hearing loss, information, referral, education and coping resources through the hearing loss website.

How it works: to raise the funds, we have local sponsorship and we have walker fund-raising. How to find sponsors: When you go to a company to ask for money , talk to the receptionist at the front desk and explain why you're there – to talk to someone about local sponsorship opportunities for the HLAA Walk4Hearing. The receptionist can direct you to the right person.

Registering: Go to www.walk4hearing.org to register or create a team. When you register at the walk site, click "join a team" or "start a team". To start your team, register yourself first. You can walk as an individual, but teams make it more personal and more likely that others will support you.

Alliances: The more alliances you have, the more teams you have, the more walkers you have, the more funds you have!

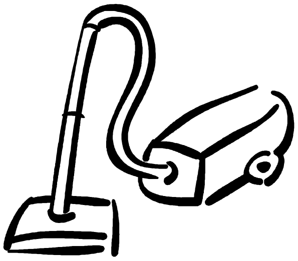
Donating: You write, email, or ask people face-to-face. You will have a personal page on the website and you can send anyone you know there to donate. Donations can be by credit card or check. The credit card donations go to the national side. Cash and check donations that are received by walkers. Walkers should let their contacts know that they should make the check donation out to the walk4hearing and they should give it to the walker.

The kickoff: kickoff event is an informational and motivational meeting. We're going to have it at the Old Spaghetti Factory down in Minneapolis. The date is August 14 from 1:00 to 3:00. Mark that on your calendar -- and let others know. Invitations will be sent out through the mail and through e-mail.

Walk site: The starting point will be Thomas Beach at Lake Calhoun. You'll walk around Lake Calhoun and come back to the starting point..

Walk4Hearing contact person: Rebecca Lander, Rlander@hearingloss.org. If you want to call, the phone number at the office is (301) 657-2248.

Shannon Turley



Nature May Abhor a Vacuum, but Babies love it!

A new grandmother among us wrote for advice: "My granddaughter Daphne had the hearing test when she was born, and everything looked OK. My concern is this: she loves it when the vacuum is running and cries when it stops. Back (in the olden days!) when I was a mom, my daughter hated the sound of the vacuum. She would run to her room and close the door.

"It's very concerning to me why a baby would like this sound. I hate to bring it up to my daughter, and have her worry that something maybe wrong, but I'd like to know if this is something to worry about. Any ideas would be greatly appreciated."

Mom #1 answered: "As a parent of three kids, all with hearing loss, I have to tell you: sometimes parents don't know best -- even when they should! Of all people, I should have been able to tell that my kids couldn't hear, right? But no, the day before every last one of them was tested and found to be hard of hearing, I was saying they were all fine! And I believed that.

"I think you are right to be concerned, but should not be too worried about what Daphne likes, if the hearing tests are OK. I mean some kids have their security blankets, Daphne has her vacuum cleaner. If the vacuum is loud enough to damage the baby's hearing, then it's a problem. If not, it probably isn't.

"That's just my highly subjective opinion, so please go with whatever your heart tells you."

Mom #2 wrote: "I supposed as hard of hearing people, that we would be ultra-tuned into anything that might seem unusual. But Mom #1 just blew that theory right out of the water, with her story about not knowing her own kids were hard of hearing.

"I'm guessing that the vacuum sound is soothing to the baby, maybe like all of the WHOOSHING sounds that must happen in the womb. I think this is a whole lot better than being terrified of the noise as some kids are.

"One of my daughters loved the sound of running water, like the shower or even the noise of the dishwasher. Again, each child is different. As time goes on, you will be able to watch for more signs of anything unusual or of concern.

"You're a good Grandma to notice this and to question it!"

Grandma wrote back: "Thank you! It is comforting to know there are people who have gone the route already with their own children. I haven't been there before, as my own hearing loss occurred when I was in my early 20's."

As it turns out, Daphne isn't alone. It is fairly common for babies to love the sound of a vacuum cleaner, or other noisy objects. One of several suggestions for "how to comfort a sick baby" (EHow.com) is "Run the vacuum cleaner to comfort your baby. Babies respond to white noise because it reminds them of the sounds of your blood flow and amniotic fluid when they were in the uterus."

"20 ways to comfort a crying baby" (life123.com/parenting) says this: "For some unknown reason the sound of a vacuum cleaner has comforted many babies. Turn it on and vacuum your floor whether it needs it or not. White Noise is particularly effective for comforting a crying baby. In the womb, the prominent sound your baby heard was the "whoosh" of blood flowing through the placenta. This "whoosh" is a little louder than the noise of a vacuum cleaner running."

Even the child psychologist at Fisher-Price.com agrees (though presumably, he'd rather sell you toys than a vacuum cleaner): "Some parents put their babies in an infant seat near a running washing machine. Others keep a vacuum cleaner running. Some babies will calm at just the recorded sound of a vacuum cleaner. No one knows why this works, but it's worth a try."

The danger level for noise-induced hearing loss is about 85 DB. Though vacuum cleaners are typically well under that (around 70 DB), one has been clocked at 90 DB. And it is possible that a sustained noise level of only 65 DB can harm hearing.

More than one person (a Mom, we think!) with an entrepreneurial spirit has come up with a great solution -- a "Babies' Vacuum Cleaner" CD ($12.95 at www.amazon.com/Babys-Vacuum-Cleaner-Sound-CD/dp/B000RWJ2NW, and others). This allows the parents to adjust the volume to a safe level while still giving the baby the soothing sounds she craves. It could be the answer for those who would like to save a little wear and tear on their carpets – and their baby's ears.

By Vicki Martin

From Marie Koehler

911 Emergency Services for Individuals with Disabilities Survey Released

Marcie Roth, Director, Office of Disability Integration and Coordination would like to share the link to the FCC's 911 Emergency Services for Individuals with Disabilities Survey below.

On March 16, 2011, the FCC's Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) released a national on-line survey to determine the most effective and efficient technologies and methods by which persons with disabilities may access Next Generation 9-1-1 emergency services systems. Among other things, the survey asks about accessing emergency services via video, text, and voice. The results of the survey will inform the EAAC as it develops recommendations for the FCC to draft rules to ensure that people with disabilities can access NG 9-1-1 services. The survey is available in English, Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) video).

This survey will be available until April 24, 2011. We encourage people with disabilities to complete this survey, and share information about the survey with other people with disabilities and organizations that represent persons with disabilities.

Link to the survey in English and ASL: http://fcc.eaac.sgizmo.com/s3
Link to the survey in Spanish: http://fcc.eaac-es.sgizmo.com/s3

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Our next meeting is April 16, 2011

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HLAA Twin Cities Chapter **<u>Welcomes You</u>**

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This month's editor is Vicki Martin

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