

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter June 2009



Hearing Loss Association of America

HLAA Twin Cities Calendar of Events 2009 - 2010

2009

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

September 19, 2009 - Jacqueline Hoppenrath,
Audiologist from SoundPoint speaking on
Tinnitus

September 27, 2009 - CI Picnic Brookview
Park in Golden Valley 11AM - 3:00 PM

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

November 21, 2009 - Patty Cowell, Home
Safety tips for the HOH

December 19, 2009 - Open Mike and Potluck
2010

January 16, 2010 - Mary Hartnett

February 20, 2010 - Rich Diedrichsen,
technology for the HOH person, including cell
phones, text messaging, communication
devices Bring along your communication
devices to the meeting for Rich to look over.

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

REMINDER:
**NO MEETINGS IN JUNE, JULY AND
AUGUST!!**

• [HLAA TC Website](http://www.hlaatc.org)
www.hlaatc.org

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

• [MN Contact Information](mailto:info@hlaatc.org)
info@hlaatc.org

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NOTE:

We have a new sponsor this month –
Sonus Hearing Care Professionals of
Roseville. Please see information
concerning this new sponsor on page 9.

A Message from our President



Vicki Martin

Dear Sir or Madman – the year in emails

One of the duties of HLAA board members is to check incoming emails on the organization website, and respond to them as needed. Or ignore them, if that is the better choice. Sometimes it is.

My Nigerian friends, for example, close relatives of the President and heirs to their family fortunes, keep trying to contact me. So does my pharmacist, with urgent messages about Viagra. These I left unopened, along with a message from Nykophoti (“Electric Man Electrocuted!”).

Sometimes people want my opinion about things I know little about. I do my best to oblige, but with the caveat that I probably know no more than they do.

I get the sales pitches too: hearing aids, assistive equipment, silent alarms.

Then there are the announcements. I get a lot of those, mainly the same ones that come to my home in-box: enthusiastic plugs about Walk 4 Hearing, special HLAA online chat room discussions, and information about the national convention.

You can see where this is going. We are hitting every level of importance, from the annoying to the urgent.

People have written to offer their expertise as speakers to our group. They have written to offer us an award, including monetary support. They have written to share their excitement about a new chapter, a new publication, or a new hearing aid.

They have asked to interview us for school projects, and to sound us out regarding new hearing technologies.

And they have asked for help.

Sometimes they need information. Sometimes, they are already pursuing their quest for better hearing and accommodations and just need a few pointers. Sometimes they are devastated by their loss of hearing and are groping for a safety line anywhere they can find it.

At first, I didn’t get it. I thought an occasional look at email would suffice. I would pitch the spam and respond to a handful of accumulated emails monthly or so. And that would actually be often enough – for 90% of the email.

But the other 10% is critical. It’s what we’re here for. We listen. We encourage. We share. And for someone who is waiting for that encouragement, a month can be a very long time.

So I learned by experience, as we all do. And now as we pass the titles and responsibilities on to another group of leaders, they will do the same. They will receive annoying letters, informative letters, and heartfelt pleas for help. And they will respond appropriately.

So, as you undertake this important task -- greet my Nigerian friends and online pharmacist for me when you have time.

Don’t hurry, though. Because there may be others waiting to hear from you too. You don’t know it yet – but you could be their lifeline.

Keeping your Pet or Service Animal During Hard Times

by Merrilee Knoll

Is there ever a time when your beloved pet is not a member of the family? When the times get rough, and you are struggling to keep food on your own table let alone the doggie dish, there may come a time when you "consider" turning over your animal to others who can take care of him/her better than you can.

Imagine if you can, a puppy who has lived with you, eats when you eat, sleeps when you sleep at the foot of the bed. He loves to run with you and play catch. He has only known life with you and your family. He knows only love and kindness. He lives to hear your kind voice of reward, "good Smitty, good dog." "I love you Smitty."

His new life at the Humane Society is so different, he has no bed or person to curl up with, just the hard cold floor. His meals are not what they used to be, no variety no treats. He has no exercise or play events outside. No one talks to him or tells him he is a good dog. He never hears his name again, Smitty.

Unfortunately, with so many people out of work or worried about their jobs, the animals become part of the things we consider getting rid of. That does not have to be. Animals learn by their masters about love, loyalty, devotion and sharing. When times get rough, now is not the time to let them go, as they give you all the things mentioned above that you so desperately need during a crises. Sometimes they save lives. Who can refrain from the beady little eyes searching for yours that say, "I love you."

Below are some places in Minnesota that will help you hold onto your beloved animal during the hard times. They do not give you services for the life expectancy of the animal, but rather a certain amount of time set up by you and the organization. Getting a pet so they can administer the funding for its care is not their intent, they are there only when you need desperate help to keep an animal that has been a member of your family for some time.

Minnesota

Hiawatha Animal Humane Society – Lake City (Pet Food, Spay/Neuter Assistance, Veterinary Medical Care Assistance)
<http://www.petfinder.com/shelters/MN225.html>

Camp Companion – Rochester (Spay/Neuter Assistance)

<http://www.campcompanion.org>

Minnesota Spay Neuter Project, Inc – Minneapolis (Spay/Neuter Assistance)
<http://mnspayneuter.org>

Northeast Community Lutheran Church – Minneapolis (Pet Food)

<http://www.neclchurch.org/outreach.aspx>

Pet Haven – Minneapolis (Spay/Neuter Assistance)

<http://www.pethavenmn.org>

Tri-County Humane Society – St. Cloud (Spay/Neuter and Vaccination Assistance)
<http://www.tricountyhumane.org>

Access Rights In Minnesota of Persons Using or Training Assistance Dogs

<http://www.ccimn.org/forms/MN%20DA.pdf>



2008 – 2009 Officers



New Pres. & Vice President



Music! Music! Music!

By Sue Brabeck

Not long ago I went to see “Grease” on Hennepin Avenue, at the Pantages Theater, and used one of the theater’s ALDs. While that adequately amplified the sound, I have lost my ability to “understand” any music. The famous song “*You’re the One That I Want*” was about ¾ of the way through before I recognized the tune.

I do have a heavy musical background, with mandatory piano and violin lessons throughout my childhood and adolescence. You’d rarely find me without my radio on, or a tape/CD in the stereo. Attending concerts of all varieties was something I enjoyed – anything from Queen to Santana to the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Since my hearing seriously tanked about 4 years ago, music is nothing but an atonal mess. Even with my ear right next to a stereo speaker, I can’t tell if someone is singing *Happy Birthday* or *The Star Spangled Banner*, or even if a man or a woman is singing. The best analogy I can think of is if you took 100 different colors of Play-Doh and squished them all together in your hand, that’s what music sounds like to me. Its flat and mushy - I absolutely can’t distinguish one note from another.

I’ve truly come to terms with this loss. About a year ago I packed up all my CDs and pushed them to a high shelf in my closet. No point in having them get dusty in my living room if I can’t use them, right? I even gave away my stereo.

Recently I was given an MP3 player as a gift. Not sure if I could make any use of it, I decided that I had nothing to lose by giving it a try. Optimistic, aren’t I?

I’m not a techno-person, so I had my daughter load a random CD to the player. I removed my HA from my ear plugged in the earbud, and pressed “Play”. But lo! The first delicate guitar riffs of “*Hotel California*” came through to me loud and clear. I sat stunned while tears streamed down my face, I was so grateful to hear music! After repeating the song over and over, and wallowing in the delight, I dashed upstairs and found the dusty box of CDs and dumped them all out. I scrabbled through them and took an enormous, towering pile to my daughter to load on to the MP3. More! More!

I’m like a greedy kid in a toy store now – I flit from song to song to song, hardly having the patience to wait for a single song to complete, much less an album. Anything classical is still gone to me, the sounds smeary beyond recognition. But if it’s a vocal with a real tune, and its one that I learned years ago, my auditory memory fills in the blanks, and I’m happy. Why the earbud “works” for me and nothing else has, I don’t know and frankly I really don’t care. All that matters is that Neal Diamond and I are friends again!



Bits and Pieces

Starkey Hearing Foundation board members want to sponsor a free hearing aid mission for the children of Minnesota. Sponsors have raised enough money to help 100 children, ages 3-25, receive the gift of hearing. The Starkey Hearing Foundation and Starkey Labs., Inc will host this one day mission on Thursday, July 9th 2009 at our Starkey World Headquarters in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. The school year is coming to an end quickly; therefore we are offering Starkey's audiological services to the families in preparation for this amazing event. Families can call direct to the Center for Excellence to schedule an appointment for hearing assessments. All children will be receiving digital technology hearing devices on Thursday, July 9th at the Starkey Campus.! If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email or call 1-800-279-6799.

Remember **Deanna Bray**? The Deaf actress who played "Sue Thomas FBI" she has her own website. She tells about Animal Planet, life as an actress, her new baby, the real Sue Thomas and her current events. <http://www.deannebray.com>

Claudia Gordon, born in Jamaica is the first deaf, African American, female lawyer in the United States.

<http://deafness.about.com/od/deafwomen/p/claudiagordon.htm?nl=1>

Deaf MD -All your medical questions answered in ASL and text below picture.

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

www.opentable.com

Restaurant reservations with no hassle for the HOH?

Yes, this site can do that. There is no charge for this service.

http://www.armytimes.com/news/2009/01/army_hearingtest_011209w/

Statistics say 25% of returning Vets have a change in their hearing skills. In some cases the test to see if damage was done, needs to be done soon after returning. Read this website to see more about it.

Visit
http://www.pepnet.org/newsletter/2009_spring for the Spring 2009 edition of **PEPNet Perspectives**, the twice yearly publication of the Postsecondary Education Programs Network

Hearing Review (**The Insider**) says that "Estrogen Controls How Brian Processes Sound"

http://www.hearingreview.com/insider/2009-05-14_02.asp

Hearing and Service Dogs of MN Spring 2009 issue said, "Volunteering In America" recently reported that Minneapolis-St. Paul is *again* ranked No. 1 in the nation: is has the highest volunteer rate in the country: 39.3%! Doesn't it make you feel proud? Visit www.hsdm.org

10,000 new cases of **hearing loss** among **Chinese children** are found each year due to medicine misuse. In China, 24 percent of the population suffers from hearing loss.

Advanced Bionics launches 'Connect To Mentor' web site for prospective cochlear implant recipients

<http://www.BionicEar.com/CTM>

A very long list of **HOH Glossary and Acronyms**
<http://www.nc hearinggloss.org/gloss.htm>

Synopsis of May Meeting

By Merrilee Knoll

Vicki opened the last meeting May 16, 2009, for the season with our guest speaker Rubin Latz. He is returning with an upgrade after speaking to us in December. Rubin is from the Department of Vocation Rehabilitation (VR).

When the microphones went on the blink (thank goodness for CART) Vicki told us about an article that she read (Listening to People with Disabilities) from the Pioneer Press written by our own Hunter Sargent. His article was in the May 10th editorial section. If you look on the Pioneer Press website you can read the entire thing.

Vocational Rehabilitation was established in 1918 to help returning World War I veterans. Minnesota happens to have been a Pioneer in Vocational Rehabilitation Services. In 1915 they established the Minnesota labor bureau. Names from long ago like; Petra Fandrom Howard, Bob Lorison, Len Schumacher, and Harry Goddard were advocates then.

In order to get assistance, you must qualify, that begins with an application. The VR does a comprehensive assessment of your needs. They need to know your disabilities, what prevents you from preparing for a job, getting a job and keeping a job. They need to know your education, work history and experiences. If you are in tip top shape with no disabilities this is not the office you should be looking for.

After 90 days of being out in the work force your case is considered closed. If new needs appear, call VR back and your file then can be reopened called "post employment service."

Here are some of the questions Rubin answered from the audience:

Q. Are there any residency or citizenship requirements? A. You must live in MN, length does not matter.

Q. With the bad economy do you find more people coming to you? A. Yes, we are very busy, even before the doors open people are waiting for us in the parking lot. The staff and resources are challenged. Computers at all locations are busy.

Q. How do you deal with hesitation of an employer hiring a person with a disability? A. Having the VR working with you helps. Even with the ADA passed 19 years ago, it is not a perfect word.

Q. I work in an area that fellow employees stop to chat, pick up mail or are on their way to a mtg. This talking distracts me and my work suffers. A. Talk to your supervisor about this, but don't make it a hearing loss issue, tell him/her that you are distracted by all the chatter and your work suffers. This annoys hearing people too. Ask if you can be moved in a quieter location or if things can be moved to give you a barrier

An example was brought up of how a HOH person needs an amplified phone; Rubin said that by showing the perspective employer your positive attitude and that you can do the job (Author:: be reasonable, if phones are not your thing, faking it will not work) and the small fee of lets say a CapTel phone paid by the employer, you would make the perfect employee out of the 400 people sitting in the lobby waiting to be interviewed. He might think you would make the perfect fit.

VR has 19 teams across the state with 19 geographic regions. Check out their website
<http://www.mnwfc.org/field> Another resource <http://www.deed.mn.us/rehab/deafandhh.htm>

To contact Rubin Latz see his contact information on Page 8.

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.

The June Aloha party will be held at Barb Johnsen's home in Shoreview on June 13. To receive more information, contact Ellen.

For information on the monthly schedule and summer events, contact the coordinator, Ellen Thibodo at ThibodoD@aol.com.

Contact Information: Rubin Latz

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See story
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Lessons from Sam Trychin: **ARE YOU COPING WITH YOUR HEARING LOSS? OR AVOIDING IT?**

Sam Trychin has this to say: "Coping does not mean success or mastery; it means doing ones best to address the problem."

You won't always be successful with your coping behavior, but you will have done your best.

How do people sometimes avoid confronting communication problems?

- Not telling people you have a hearing loss
- Bluff

- Dominate conversations
- Withdraw from social situations
- Not getting appropriate hearing aids
- Not using hearing aids
- Not using assistive listening devices
- Becoming dependent on family and friends

Sometimes family members contribute to the problem as it is easier to just help than to confront the hearing impaired family member and encourage them to develop coping skills. In the long run, this just decreases the hearing impaired person's self esteem.

Why do people avoid confronting communication problems according to Dr. Trychin?

1. They **don't know** what to do. They will say "huh?" or "what?" rather than give feedback on what they did hear and instruct the speaker on how to make himself better understood.
2. They do **KNOW** what to do, but **they haven't practiced** it enough to actually do it.
3. **They can't do it** – they believe it isn't polite to ask others to make changes for them.
4. They believe that having a hearing loss means **there are things they just can't do**. "I can't" renders people powerless. You can make a choice not to do something, but saying "I can't" means you are giving up control and being powerless.

Think about it. Wouldn't it be worth the long term payoff to learn and practice coping skills? You'll improve your self esteem in the long run, and others will respect you as well. It may be difficult at first, and even embarrassing, but the long term benefit will far outweigh the cost.

One important strategy in reducing communication problems is

Learn to Relax

Relaxation is a powerful antidote to stress. Deep breathing, yoga, meditation, progressive relaxation are just some ways to learn to relax.



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

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Captioned Films go to

<http://ncam.wgbh.org/mopix/nowshowing.html#mn>

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.

At the Guthrie:

Caroline, or Change: A Musical

Captioning: Friday, June 19, 7:30 PM

The Intelligent Homosexual

by Tony Kushner

Captioning: Saturday, June 20, 7:30 PM

When We Are Married

by J.B. Priestley

Captioning: Friday, August 21, 7:30 PM

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



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).

Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk (AD, CC) and *Super Speedway* (CC, Spanish) are being shown through June 11, 2009.

Please watch for captioning as you vacation this summer, and share your experiences with us when you return.

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Documentary profiles family's tough choice

By Karen Meyer

May 17, 2009 (CHICAGO) (WLS) -- Cochlear implant is an amazing technology that enables children and adults who have severe to profound hearing loss to hear. But, at the same time, it is controversial for many people in the deaf community, especially deaf parents with deaf children.

Every parent wants the best for their children, even if it means giving them the opportunity to hear. A Chicago-area family is profiled in an upcoming documentary that shows their life as they struggle with cochlear implants.

"Louder than Words" is a feature documentary that explores the real life drama of the Stark family. Parents Michael and Jill were born deaf. Their two children were also born deaf. Jeffrey, who is almost 3, and 7-month-old Melissa.

"We decided to have both kids implanted. We wanted them to use the phone," said Jill.

Jeffrey had a cochlear implant when he was 17 months old. "The results are amazing...Jeffrey is babbling, speaking words, 25 to 30 clear words. It's amazing," said Jill. Melissa will be implanted this month and mom Jill will also have the same procedure this summer.

Director Saj Adibs got involved with the family after working on a different project.

"At first I didn't understand the controversy," said Adibs, "but after a little bit of time passed and I heard a lot of different stories-- I've met a lot of deaf families and I listen to them and I really try to put myself in their shoes, and now I could understand, it's a culture, and I could understand, if you get a cochlear implant and you become hearing just like everyone else, I could see how that, you know, could take away from that culture that has been established."

University of Chicago's pediatric otolaryngologist Dr. Dana Suskind explains the significance of implants.

"It doesn't stop them from being deaf," said Suskind. "It allows them to develop auditory access which allows them to develop listening and spoken language skills."

It is highly recommended for young children.

"The FDA has approved it down to the age of 12 months, but more and more centers are implanting children earlier and earlier," said Dr. Suskind.

"Louder than Words" is expected to be finished sometime next year.

"I am going to stay with the family, see them through their cochlear implants for the baby and for the mom," said Adibs. "I think when it's done, it's going to be a complete story that's going to be beyond just, you know, deaf culture and cochlear implant, it's going to be a story of parents and doing what they believe is right for their children."

"We found that this is a family who is able to bring together two different cultures and it wasn't a matter of choosing one over the other. It was the matter of bringing it together, and it's a beautiful story," Adibs said.

"We hope for our children to be born hearing makes life easier. We don't want them to have the same struggles that we had. We knew that cochlear implants are much better now than 10 years ago. I know technology changed so much. Why do we have to miss that opportunity? Let's grab that," said Michael Stark.

"Louder than Words" will not be out until next year, but if you want to know more about cochlear implants, go to <http://www.louderthanwordsdoc.com/>



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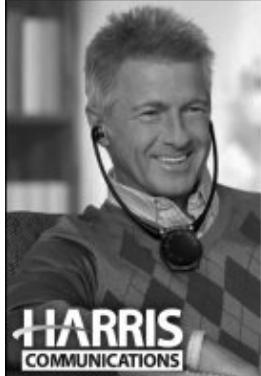
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This month's editor Linda Senechal

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