

HLAA TC

MARCH 2013



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

March 16, 2013 - HLAA TWIN CITIES CHAPTER meeting
Judi Swan, HLAA-TC president and hearing support specialist

April 10, 2013 Steak Fry

April 20, 2013 - HLAA TWIN CITIES CHAPTER meeting
Donna Savage, Cochlear Implant binaural user.

June 27-30 HLAA NATIONAL CONVENTION Portland, Oregon.

September 22, 2013
Cochlear implant picnic
Brookview Park, Golden Valley

September 28, 2013
HLAA Walk4Hearing. 5K walk.
Lake Calhoun (Thomas Beach)

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Officers' emails

★ Judi Swan -	president@hlaatc.org
★ Monique Hammond -	vicepresident@hlaatc.org
★ Bob Knoll -	treasurer@hlaatc.org
★ Candi Meinders -	secretary@hlaatc.org

HLAA TC Website - Minnesota
www.hlaatc.org

HLAA National - Maryland
www.hearingloss.org
MN Contact Information - Minnesota
info@hlaatc.org

Hearing Loss Association of America **Twin Cities** Chapter (HLAA TC) is held the 3rd Saturday of the month (except June, July and August). We meet at The Courage Center, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442

President's Message



By Judi Ann Swan

This column was actually started the evening of our February meeting. I was so filled with many emotions, and I wanted to get them onto paper so that they never slipped out of my mind.

I can call it magical! To start with, there was just something about the combination of a larger attendance (while missing our regulars who could not attend); the excitement of three visitors; a coffee table, bursting so much so that we had food left over; the genuine and interesting mike time; all in all, it brings to mind the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child."

In like manner, it takes everyone, no matter how small a part you play, or think you play. If you are a sound tech, an officer, a set up/tear down person, coffee supplier, or if you come, sit and listen invite people; each of YOU are critical and appreciated in our organization. There is no rank or status here, we are all together for a common cause...and we all can and do hopefully enjoy our times together and learn from HLAA/TC.

Above all, the one thing that inspires/astonishes/surprises visitors is our CART. Those of us who are deaf or HOH almost drool at the opportunity to go to an event that is going to be understood by us. Hey, a monkey talking to a donkey, if its captioned, would probably get me to attend the event. (no not at HLAA-TC).

I am personally excited at the response to the

beautiful color flyers, plus the fact that no one has turned down my request to post the sign and leave the flyers. When time permits, I will once again be doing community outreach, telling people about us, likely over summer.

And then one night I was thinking again of the meeting which brought such enthusiasm, and the lyrics of a song I have long enjoyed kept bouncing in and out of my mind. ("Time in a Bottle").

I am paraphrasing the lyrics a bit, and hope that you, too felt a sense of unity, joy and being right where you were meant to be.

If I could save time in a bottle
The first thing that I'd like to do
Is to save every meeting, its memories
Its thoughts, spending them there with you (all).

If I could make days last forever
If words could make wishes come true
I'd save every meeting like a treasure and
Then I could visit them again.

But there never seems to be time
To do all we want to do
But once you find us (HLAA)
I hope that you want to return
Bring others with you, let the whole world know
The best kept secret in the TC can change lives
forever.

Hope to see you at our monthly March meeting on the 16th.
Remember the Steak Sale Tickets are on sale.
Please, join with me in continuing to promote our
HLAA/TC.

Happy Spring!!





Speaker Rachell Westby

HLAA TC Meeting February, 2013

Synopsis by Monique Hammond, VP

President Judi Swan called our meeting to order promptly at 10 a.m. She welcomed members and guests and thanked Lisa Richardson, our CART expert of the day.

VP Monique Hammond then introduced our speaker **Rachell Westby**.

As a child Rachell had deaf friends who introduced her to the deaf culture. She learned to sign by the age of 4. This early immersion eventually became a motivating factor when she chose her profession: what could she do to help ease communication for those with communication difficulties? She decided to become a **speech-language pathologist** or **SLP**.

Speech-language *pathologists* are experts in the area of communication disorders and swallowing problems. They work with people of all ages, from infants to adults. They have either a Master's or Doctoral degree. They are licensed by the State. Once they are certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) with the **Certificate of Clinical Competence** they can include the letters CCC in their professional title.

Speech *therapists* differ in that they hold a Bachelor's degree and are not ASHA-certified. They often work under the guidance of a speech pathologist.

SLPs work in a variety of settings. They care for those with communication challenges due to numerous causes, such as stroke, cerebral palsy, brain injuries, developmental or acquired hearing impairment, ALS, autism, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease and head & neck cancer – to only name a few.

We learned that communication disorders are of different types and can be very complex. Voice afflictions may impede how we make sounds. Articulation problems interfere with how we say sounds and put them together to form words. People might have trouble keeping their speech fluent due to hesitation and stuttering. Cognition, language and literacy problems also make for communication obstacles. SLPs evaluate patients and devise treatment strategies aimed at the cause(s) of the communication difficulties.

In a school setting, as part of aural rehabilitation, SLPs work together with audiologists in order to help children maximize their communication potential. In consultation with specialists, parents may consider various options that are best for the child and for the family. *ASL? Cued speech* – a serious of hand signals and hand positions favored if speech-reading (lip-reading) will be the major mode of communication? *Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT)* – a method that involves both speech and listening? AVT therapy teaches children to use their own hearing with the help of hearing aids, assistive devices or cochlear implants. AVT programs are directed by an AVT-certified SLP. Parents often decide on *Total Communication*, a combination of spoken language and sign language.

In order to help correct articulation issues (like being unable to say an “r”), SLPs may resort to a system called the “SmartPalate” for a real-time, visual computer display of lip positions and tongue-palate contacts. A custom-made mouth piece that fits like a dental retainer is equipped with sensors that help identify the exact area where a speech problem arises. This gives important information on which techniques should be used to remedy the issue.

Speech-language pathologists also evaluate patients for specialty instruments that will facilitate communication. They will contact the client’s insurance company to get authorization and coverage for the device. Subsequently, they will train the person on how to use the instrument. The instrument trial and training is known as **Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)** therapy.

Such communication facilitators may provide written text communication between the conversation partners. This type of equipment, such as the UbiDuo works well for one-on-one exchanges, such as during doctor’s appointments.

There are also the devices with text-to-speech conversion capabilities. Compose a message and the machine displays and speaks it. Example: LightWRITER Swift. iPad even has a text-to-speech app.

Devices with touch-screens showing pictures and symbols are especially helpful for children and for people with speech and learning challenges. Here pictures are converted to speech. Example: DynaVox.

For those who are physically challenged, bedridden or wheelchair-bound and who are unable to select pictures or messages, eye-gaze detecting equipment can be tried. Example: DynaVox EyeMax

Communication technology is certainly advancing at a rapid pace, which greatly increases social interaction and quality of life for those with speech-language-hearing challenges.

In other news: President Judi Swan and husband David filled in for vacationing Vicki Martin and gave us a “Figuratively Signing” ASL lesson. Carole Blowers was also “volunteered” for the effort.

VP Monique Hammond informed us that our website is getting a much needed upgrade. Glenice Swenson has accepted the challenge and is currently working on the project.

Also, HLAA National has already sent the reminder for this year’s Walk4Hearing, which will take place on September 28, 2013 at Lake Calhoun. The goal is to raise \$50 000. So, now is the time to register with HLAA National - Walk4Hearing Home Page, to form teams and to maybe think of possible local sponsors.

Treasurer Bob Knoll gave us some good news: Our 2012 Walk4Hearing money has given a boost to our coffers. This allows us to pay our bills for running the Chapter. Updating the website, paying for CART services, keeping our communication technology current, printing information materials, increasing Chapter visibility by attending Conventions and taking out local ads does take funds.

Our yearly steak fry will be on 10 April 2013. Tickets are \$10 each and can be obtained from Bob. We need volunteers for various jobs that day. Those who want to volunteer please let Bob know so that we can organize our "crew."

Our next meeting is **March 16, 2013**. Our speaker will be HLAA TC president Judi Swan who addresses the issue of Relationships and Hearing Loss. See you all then!

Monique

Minnesota Commission serving Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) Announces the following awards:



Awards on Lobby Day:
Monique Hammond
Adrean Clark
Peggy Camp
Bruce Hodek
Susan Rose
and the Minneapolis St. Paul Airport!

Congratulations, Monique! From your cheering section
(HLAA-TC)

Capti~Vated!

By Vicki Martin

Remember a few years ago when we calculated that only one in ten thousand movie showings within 25 miles of the Twin Cities were captioned? (HLAA-TC News, March 2008). I am very happy to amend those statistics now.

Recently, Dennis asked me if I'd like to go see "Lincoln", a movie that has garnered lots of publicity and a couple of Oscars. I said yes, but if it isn't captioned is it OK if we come home? Dennis frowned, not wanting to pay for tickets we weren't even going to use. "We'll ask first," I said. "If they have something, I'll try it."

"Lincoln" was showing at Marcus Oakdale Theater. The newspaper ad showed "OC" (open captions) by the list of movies, but I was doubtful that the time we chose to go would be the one carrying captions. The website does have encouraging information about captioning, but it is buried in a place few would think to look: under "movies and events". Searching does not help either. I tried numerous permutations of likely key words (caption, captions, captioning, captioned, assistive listening, assisted listening...) but no results were found for any of them.

We took a chance. The ticket seller did not know if they had captioning, but was eager to find out. It turns out, Marcus Oakdale Theater, where we saw "Lincoln", has several portable captioning devices, available free for all showings of the movies which are offered with captions. He turned the device on, and I could see that it displayed a green "Capti-view" designation. Dennis got some popcorn and I happily followed him in, with Capti-view under my arm.

You can sit in any seat you choose. The Capti-view base fits into the cup holder (sorry, you can't put your pop there too!), and the flexible neck allows you to position it as you wish. The captions are green, and there are "blinds" that presumably prevent others from being annoyed by it. You direct it to your own eyes.

As we watched some of the previews, the Capti-view went dark. I took it back out to the ticket table and was given a different one. "maybe it's the batteries," the man said. I went back into the theater with the second Capti-view, its green letters glowing. This time I stood near the door until I could be sure it was going to work. Then it too went dark.

Back to the ticket counter. This time a third employee was present, who knew a little more about the workings of Capti-View. "It won't come on until the feature starts," he said. I had thought of that too, but it had a display prior to that, and the display had gone off. "That's just a kind of screen-saver", he said. "It will go dark, but come back on when the feature starts".

He was right. This time I sat down, adjusted the Capti-View to my liking, and settled in for the long haul (2 ½ hours).

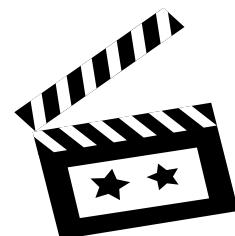
Marcus Oakdale is the only theater listed on the St. Paul Pioneer Press movie page that advertises captioning, and -- lucky for me -- it is a theater close to home. Fully half of the movies listed this week at Marcus are available with captions, and every showing of each of those movies is accessible.

Will "Capti-View" work for all movies? Maybe not. Though it worked with "Lincoln" because the pace of dialogue was slow enough to follow, it was still an effort for me to focus and refocus continually between the screen and Capti-View. For a movie that depends on catching a string of rapid-fire one-liners, it might not prove satisfactory.

Marcus Oakdale Theater also offers infra-red listening devices. These may be fine for people with mild hearing loss who do not use hearing aids, but the IR receivers are all headsets and cannot be used with ordinary hearing aids. Had it been a receiver I could have used with my hearing aids and neckloop, I would have combined the listening device and Capti-View for a more complete experience.

One additional word: as noted on the theater website, there are a limited number of Capti-View devices available (I saw no more than six). If a group of deaf or hard of hearing people want to attend a showing together, you should call the theater in advance so they can procure additional devices to accommodate your party.

In 2008, the movie situation looked bleak for people with hearing loss. Until recently, I was resigned to it. But this is a long way from one in ten thousand. At this theater anyway, it has become one in two.



Thanks, Marcus Oakdale!

Save the dates!

Annual CI Picnic at Brookview Park in Golden Valley
Sunday, September 22, 2013 11:00 - 3:00

June 27-30 HLAA NATIONAL CONVENTION Portland, Oregon. For more information, see
www.hearingloss.org/content/convention

September 28, 2013

HLAA Walk4Hearing. 5K walk. Lake Calhoun (Thomas Beach), Minneapolis, MN
Registration at 9a.m.; Walk at 10a.m. See www.walk4hearing.org

Upper Midwest Audiology Convention.

In order to increase our HLAA TC visibility, four members – Monique and Ross Hammond, Bob Knoll and Carole Blowers – attended the Upper Midwest Audiology Convention on February 22 & 23 in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Our Chapter had an information table in the Exhibit Hall. We handed out over 100 brochures and quite a few posters to audiologists and HIDs. The purpose was to remind hearing specialists that HLAA TC is a unique and needed resource for their clients. We made the case that – in the context of aural rehabilitation – our mission statement of education, support and advocacy complements quite nicely the work that they provide for their patients. We found a lot of interest among the attendees and hope that they will indeed share the HLAA TC advantages with their customers.

Bob Knoll, true to his calling as treasurer for our group, also collected information on potential sponsors for this year's Walk4Hearing. On Saturday morning, Ross and Monique Hammond as well as Rich Diedrichsen from HLAA St. Cloud attended Juliette Sterkens' most interesting presentation on looping and T-coils. Ross and Monique also stayed to listen to Mary Bauer as she talked about DHHS services and assistive listening devices. It is amazing how many different products are on the market to help those with hearing loss stay connected socially and safe physically. Technology truly does not take a holiday.

--- *Monique Hammond*

Creative Captioning

When is a five-minute phone call not a five-minute phone call? When it goes like this:

In an attempt to have some reimbursements automated, I had to talk to five different people in customer service. Four of them did not know how to do their jobs. One told me things about my account that were not true. Two of them hadn't even heard of automatic reimbursement (I had to explain it to them), and one wanted me to get her the address where she could send payment information. Really? She thinks that's my job? That address is in her company's file, not in mine.

And just to make it a little more interesting, my captioner seemed to be on to some new stream-of-consciousness thing. Captioning is never perfect, but what do you do with something like this?

“please check the. please note that all the difference got to do help but smile and the moment was. Of that is a loose loose it will succeed.”



Right.

At Sea



Cruises are exactly what they are cracked up to be: all-inclusive vacations to exotic places, with five-star restaurants, entertainment, pools and hot tubs, gym, library, mini-golf, jogging track, water slide, on-board shopping and adorable towel-animals in between stops.

But unless specifically arranged for them, they are not geared to hard of hearing people. Ours was a standard cruise.

The cruise troupe presents some good shows although, arriving a bit late to one of them, we could sit only where a large pillar, three intersecting panes of thick glass, and a brightly lit video console station all conspired to limit our view. I could not hear any of the dialogue either, of course, but had read in the Carnival website (obscure, and hard to find) that assistive listening devices were available.

I guess that was the moment I'd been waiting for. I slipped out of the darkened theater and presented myself at the Guest Services desk to ask for an assistive listening device. I knew they wouldn't have one, but at least I could make them look.

"What can you tell me about assistive listening?" I asked the manager of Guest Services. The manager, already quite busy, went out a side door into the office area to see what he could find. He was gone quite a while before he appeared again in the public area, going around to the other end of the service desk and out that side. When he finally came back, he had nothing. "There's some earphones," he said, but it was clear he didn't quite know what to do with them.

"I actually need a receiver I can plug into," I said, demonstrating with the neckloop I had brought with me for the purpose. He shook his head, and looked apologetic.

"I'll bet people don't ask for those very often," I said. He shook his head again, indicating "no".

"You know why?" I asked him. "It's because it's a well-kept secret. No one knows you have these. It is on the website, but it's hard to find." He nodded.

"You have a lot of senior citizens on this ship," I said to him. "A lot of them could really benefit from a good listening system." Another nod.

Mission accomplished. Now I needed to let them know that their non-theatrical communications are similarly lacking. There is no captioning on any of the TV stations, and all of the announcements made by loudspeaker leave us metaphorically as well as physically at sea. These include not only daily activities and logistics announcements, but safety instructions as well.

Carnival goes all out to provide terrific service in every respect – except one.

At the end of the trip, as if to remind us of that one shortcoming, we received our final printed daily schedule with the following instructions: “Listen to cruise debarkation instruction talk on channel 17”. No captions, remember? Further printed instructions were even less helpful: “listen for departure announcements over the PA.” Um. Right.

I’m not complaining. The weather was perfect. The food was wonderful. We were graciously served by a large number of cheerful stewards. And as long as you could hear, you would be apprised of everything you really needed to know. It could have been a lot worse.

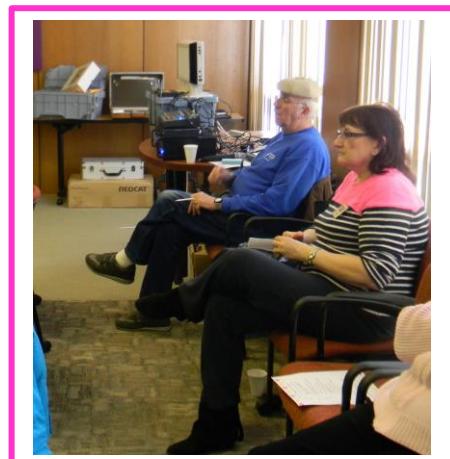
We could have been on the Triumph.

--- Vicki Martin

Monique, Carole and Bob at
Audiology Conference (below)

Candi addressing the group (right)

Carole and Bob listen to Rachell
(lower right)



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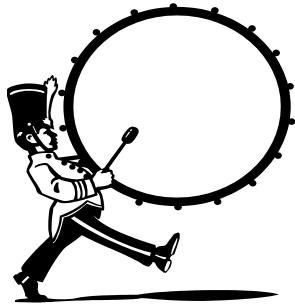
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Our next meeting is March 16, 2013

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Photos – Ross Hammond

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Linda McIntire, cilinda97@yahoo.com

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