

# HLAA TC

## NOVEMBER 2012



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

**November 17, 2012** - HLAA  
TWIN CITIES CHAPTER meeting –  
speaker is Taylor Joseph from the  
Starkey Hearing Foundation

**December 15, 2012** - HLAA  
TWIN CITIES CHAPTER meeting –  
Annual Holiday party

**January 19, 2013** - HLAA TWIN  
CITIES CHAPTER meeting –  
speaker is Mary Hartnett from  
MCDHH

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HLAA National - Maryland  
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MN Contact Information - Minnesota  
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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 Anne Swan

With the news coming in from the east coast this week, I have decided to file away my original message, instead addressing a subject near and dear to all of us.

Superstorm Sandy initially had 60 million persons in 8.2 million businesses and homes without power. Most of us watched in disbelief as the worst storm in history battered the coast and inland covering many states.

Reportedly, one of every five cellphone towers ran out of power, rendering cell phones useless for many, with no power to recharge.

Now into the picture put the one in 15 Americans who are deaf or hard of hearing, and the fact that one in five over 65 are deafened.

Now think of how it would be to not hear any sirens and alarms if they were activated; to not have power to see

weather alerts and updates; and for many to not have family or neighbors to help.

The emergency communication systems in our country are being continuously worked on and updated, with vast improvements. However, in a situation which we have seen play out with this storm, not even the best of systems can possibly work without the ability to communicate.

True, storms like this are once-in-a-lifetime events, but it brings to mind the extreme need that still exists for our everyday emergencies. Do we have proper assisted listening/alerting devices for our homes and businesses? Do we know how to properly use these devices? Can we afford to not know these things?

Many great systems are in place, but at the same time we need to remember that it takes a system and knowledge of that system to make it beneficial. A recent survey showed that many people who have WeatherAlert devices do not know how they work.

While a hurricane is not likely to hit the Midwest, where most of us are located, other emergencies are always possible. Are we ready?

I would like to encourage all of us to make sure we have workable assisted listening devices which would make a big difference in the event of an emergency, weather or non-related. With the vast array of devices, the affordability and the accessibility it seems a wise thing for all hard of hearing/deaf persons. This is also a reminder to me, who does not have what I should have in my home to alert when necessary.

My wish for each of you is a joyful Thanksgiving, however you spend it, and may your blessings be many.

## HLAA TC Meeting: Saturday, October 20, 2012

Synopsis by Monique Hammond, VP



Our main speaker today was Cami Lawless, HID Associated He (MCDHH) joined us briefly during the second hour. CART was cheerfully provided by Lisa Richardson from Paradigm.

Cami Lawless became a certified Hearing Instrument Dispenser (HID) in Minnesota in 1995. She is currently the hearing aid specialist for our own Sue Brabeck with whom she has worked for the past seven years.

Cami pointed out that buying a hearing aid is a process and not simply the purchase of an instrument. Besides fitting the device, specialists are faced with educating both patient and family members on realistic expectations. Hearing aids do not fix hearing loss, which often leads to frustration among clients and their loved ones. It is therefore important to stress the difference between hearing and understanding and the importance of follow-up care.

A very valuable test that helps with the choice of an appropriate instrument is the Speech Discrimination test. It separates what we hear with our ears from what we understand with our brain. Certainly, hearing aids can allow us to hear sounds at near-normal volume levels but this does not necessarily mean that the brain is able to process the signals. Depending on the site and severity of the damage, the brain may not recognize the message. Also, some frequencies may record such a steep loss that a “frequency transfer” is in order. For more efficient processing, this technique moves sound from frequencies of worst hearing to frequencies that can still be heard.

Although technology has improved tremendously, the key to maximizing the benefits from any hearing aid lies in a proper, customized fit. The first setting might be a good start. For the client to get the best possible results, however, repeat visits for fine-tuning the instrument are a must. Many people are unaware of this, which translates into them not using the device because it does not work for them. Hearing aid vendors must inform their customers of the need to return for adjustments as these are included in the bundled price of the hearing aid. As clients we must make sure that we understand how much follow-up care we buy when we purchase a hearing aid. Cami sees her patients once a week for 4 to 6 weeks initially and every three months afterwards. Fitting never ends.

The newest hearing aids with apps and wireless capabilities are of course the most expensive ones. Although they introduce more flexibility into a patient’s life they need accessories, such as remote control devices, which also come at a cost.

So, where will we be using our hearing aids? What is our lifestyle and how much technology will accommodate us? To answer all those questions, Cami has one last piece of advice: Find a specialist who knows the available instruments and with whom you are actually able and willing to work.

During the second hour, Teika Pakalns, senior project manager for the MCDHH (Commission for Deaf, Deafblind and Hard-of-Hearing Minnesotans) gave us a brief introduction to practical information and resources regarding the upcoming election. Although, the voting will be over by the time this Newsletter is printed, it is important for us to visit the MCDHH website <http://www.mncdhh.org> regularly for news and updates.

Teika also distributed revised MCDHH brochures. In 2013 the Commission will seek input on issues to be included in its work plan for the upcoming 5 years. This gives us a bit of time to think about concerns that we may pass on to the MCDHH for consideration. Listening to Teika once again reminded us that there is so much more to hearing loss than not hearing so well.

Monique Hammond, VP



Bob gives the treasurer's report



Cami shows Sue a wireless device

Reserve the 3rd Saturday of each month from Sept. through May for the HLAA-TC meeting.

Your officers are working hard to make the meetings interesting and informative for you.

**NEXT MEETING November 17 at the Courage Center**

## Snippets from the media

To the hoopla about Khan Academy, the free online school where kids really learn their stuff, you can now add several MOOCs (massive open online courses), some of them also free. Offerings include everything from Greek and Roman mythology to electrical engineering and advanced cryptography.

I don't know about you, but a lot of these things sound way more interesting than anything you can find on TV these days. But here's the challenge:

### *Are they captioned?*

I can imagine hours spent trying to find out, and if captioning is available, more hours spent trying to find out how to use it. I'm not saying they *aren't* captioned. I sincerely hope they are. But when it comes to chasing down the elusive cc's I think I may have run out of steam some time ago.

So, to those of you who still have that spirit of discovery, here's another track to follow. Check out Khan Academy or Udacity online and see if you can view it with captions. You could learn two important things: whether the Next Big Thing in education is accessible, and whatever fascinating subject is being taught!



TIME magazine, November 12, 2012 reports on the 25 best inventions of the year:

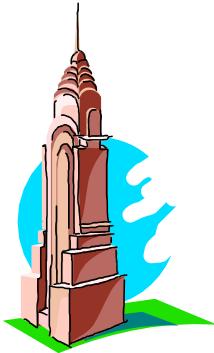
"Four Ukrainian students have created gloves that allow speech- and hearing-impaired people to communicate with those who don't use or understand sign language. The gloves are equipped with sensors that recognize sign language and translate it into text on a smart phone, which then converts the text to spoken words." Price" \$75



**Any takers?**

# Notes from a Trip

By Vicki Martin



A fall trip to the Northeast, ending just before the onslaught of Sandy, brought us many special gifts, from time spent with family (including baby granddaughter Nora!) to the New England hills awash in the red-gold colors of fall. And there were dozens of smaller gifts too, things that often get only a passing notice from me. But I seldom return home without having spotted an interesting take on hearing accommodations somewhere along the route. New York City provided it this time.

Aboard the Intrepid, the behemoth retired aircraft carrier now functioning as a museum and showplace not only for itself but for dozens of planes, technical and historical artifacts, movies and demonstrations, the space capsule, SST, and the space shuttle Endeavor, a ring-shaped object resembling a large showerhead caught my attention. It hung over me, black and nearly invisible against the cavernous dark ceiling of the space shuttle pavilion as I watched one of many short documentaries. A small sign next to the screen explained: “An induction loop is provided for the benefit of hearing aid users. To use, please switch your hearing aid to ‘T’”. I took a second look, positioned myself under the “shower”, and turned on my T-coil. I heard music, and the roar of planes.

As I looked around at the other exhibits in the shuttle garage, I could see that there were more of these devices around the area. It seems this Manhattan museum, not to be outdone by the New York City subway system with its 500 looped ticket kiosks, has gotten on board with its own looped exhibits. As I looked at the stark simplicity of the loops I had to wonder, “how hard can that be?” I know looks can be deceiving, but it did not appear to be a complex (read: expensive) object. I decided to check it out.

Although I could not nail down a price for a single-person loop in a kiosk situation, I did find a few clues to help get a perspective on it. Looping a large venue such as a theater, for example, costs in the neighborhood of \$25 - \$50 per

seat. That may look like a lot of money to a theater owner with hundreds of seats, but look at it this way – it's barely the cost of one ticket. Likewise, a medium-sized church can be looped for \$2000 - \$8000, which is about what a pair of hearing aids would cost for a single congregant. Home loop installation is around \$150 - \$300. Presumably, a kiosk, ticket window or checkout lane, being only a small area, would ring in on the low end of these estimates.

We hear conflicting stories about accommodations, often beginning with the premise, "it's too expensive". People are still saying that about video captioning, even though it can now be done by an amateur using free software. Maybe it is the mystery of it all that makes people fear that looping will be expensive. Sound seems to go from this box into that brain with no medium in between to move through. You can stand right next to the telecoil user and you won't hear a thing. No sound waves are in transit. Miracles can't come cheap!

The New York Times is among the respected publications reporting that loops are in fact reasonably priced: "The Hearing Loss Association of America, the largest group representing people with hearing problems, has joined with the American Academy of Audiology in a campaign to make loops more common in the United States. The technology is a cost-efficient way to provide benefits that even the most expensive hearing aids cannot deliver".

We are thankful that more and more public venues, including New York's Intrepid museum, have discovered this.

Of course, in order to get in and stand under one of these mysterious loops, you have to buy a ticket at a crowded and noisy ticket booth down below, where there is – you guessed it – no loop!

### **Cochlear Implant Support Group - Two Year Celebration**

**Date: Sunday, December 2, 2012**

**Time: 1:30 – 4:00 pm**

**Location: Dakota County Wentworth Library, 199 East Wentworth Ave, West St. Paul**

**Please send your RSVP to Sara Oberg: Email: [soberg3@fairview.org](mailto:soberg3@fairview.org)**

**It will be held in the large meeting room. You are welcome to bring a spouse, partner, friend, family member, and/or significant other to any of these events! If you would like to bring a refreshment to share that would be wonderful!**

# **Nov. 19 Community Meeting - Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Citizen Solutions for Healthcare**

**SHARE YOUR VOICES & HANDS!**

**Help Improve our Healthcare System – Give Us Your Comments & Ideas!**

## **What is the meeting about?**

This meeting will **focus on health care and people who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing**. Do you have ideas about how to make the health care system better? Do you want to be part of health reform? Come to this meeting and share your comments & ideas. Light refreshments will be served.

Citizen Solutions is engaging Minnesotans in a different kind of conversation to help fix healthcare, and your voice is needed too. Minnesotans from all walks of life – small business owners, parents, farmers, seniors and others – are coming together to share their experiences and perspectives. This is your chance to get directly involved in a statewide effort to improve the healthcare system in Minnesota.

## **When & Where**

**When:** Monday, November 19, 2012, 6:00-8:00 PM

**Where:** Bread of Life Lutheran Church for the Deaf, 2901 – 38th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55406

### **Accessibility:**

- Sign language interpreters & real-time captioning will be provided.
- Assistive listening devices will also be available.

**Registration:** Please register by **November 15**. We need to know how much food to order and how many interpreters we should have. Please contact:

[michelle.ooley@state.mn.us](mailto:michelle.ooley@state.mn.us)

Download the Word flyer here: <http://bit.ly/VRvGCW>

## **Important!**

If you can't come to the meeting but want to share your comments & ideas, please email them to [mncdhh.info@state.mn.us](mailto:mncdhh.info@state.mn.us) by November 19.

*Sponsored by the [Citizens League](#) and the Bush Foundation.*

444 Lafayette Rd N, Saint Paul, MN 55155-3814

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## Captioned Theater Productions

\*\*\* **Anna Bolena** by Gaetano Donizetti.

**Performed by:** Minnesota Opera.

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

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

**Run:** November 10, 13, 15, 17 and 18, 2012.

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

**Description:** Donizetti's legendary masterpiece is a gripping tale of intrigue and betrayal.

\*\*\* **Madeline's Christmas**, by Ludwig Bemelmans **Performed by:** Stages Theatre Company.

**Location:** Hopkins Center for the Arts Mainstage, 1111 Mainstreet, Hopkins.

**Captioning:** Saturday, Nov. 17, 1:00 PM; Saturday, Dec. 1, 1:00 PM.

**Tix:** Reduced to \$11, \$9 Child/Senior, \$8.50 Weekend/Evening Group (12+); apply to the individual needing AD/ASL and one companion; ask for discount and seating section when making reservation: Phone: 952-979-1111 option 4 (Tues.- Sat. noon to 6:00).

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

**Description:** Celebrate Christmas in Paris in this popular musical production for all ages.

\*\*\* **A Christmas Carol**, By Charles Dickens; adapted by Crispin Whittell

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

**Captioning:** Sunday, Dec. 2, 1:00 PM.

**Tix:** Reduced to \$25 for Captioning (regular \$24-62); phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626.

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

**Description:** In the Guthrie's holiday tradition for the 38th year

\*\*\* **Catch Me If You Can** book by Terrence McNally, score by Marc Shaiman & Scott Wittman,

**Performed by:** Touring Company

**Location:** Historic Orpheum Theatre, 910 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis

**Captioning:** Thursday, December 13, 7:30 PM.

**Tix** Limited seats are available at the lowest price level to patrons using ASL interpreting or Prices apply for up to two tickets for each patron. Additional seats may be sold separately and at regular price. Email [accessible@broadwayacrossamerica.com](mailto:accessible@broadwayacrossamerica.com); phone: 612-339-7007; hotline 612-373-5650.

**Website:** <http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org/accessible>

**Description:** Based on the hit film and the incredible true story that inspired it.

\*\*\* **A Servant of Two Masters**, by Carlo Goldoni, adapted by Constance Congdon

**Performed by:** Yale Repertory Theatre.

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

**Captioning:** Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1:00 PM; Friday, Jan. 11, 7:30 PM.

**Tix:** Reduced to \$25 for Captioning (regular \$24-62); phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626.

**Description:** A classic comic masterpiece

\*\*\* **Elf**

**Performed by:** Touring Company.

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

**Captioning:** Thursday, Dec. 20, 7:30 PM (by c2 inc.).

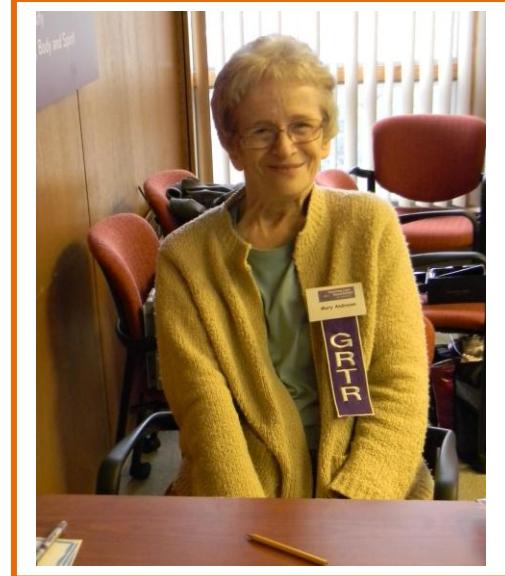
**Tix:** \$TBD; if using Captioning, request seating in that area; ph: 651-224-4222, TTY 651-282-3100

**Web:** <http://www.ordway.org/accessibility/>

**Description:** One of the most beloved Hollywood holiday movie hits of the past decade is born again—live on stage!



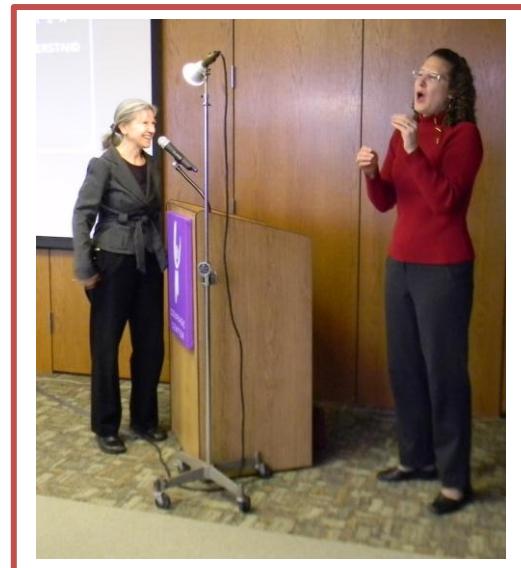
Lisa captures every word!



Mary's beautiful smile



Judi and Monique discuss the meeting



Teika discusses voting in the next election as Mary translates for the group

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**Our next meeting is November 17, 2012**

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This month's editor is Vicki Martin

**Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Center in Golden Valley, MN. We gather at 9:30 to socialize and the meeting starts at 10 AM. All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning* ([www.paradigmreporting.com](http://www.paradigmreporting.com)). Please visit the chapter's web-site at [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org)**