

HLAA TC

March 2014



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 15, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Speaker Sara Oberg, BM, MA, CCC-SLP, Aural Rehabilitation Specialist, Fairview, University and Regions Hospitals, "Communication strategies"

April 9, 2014

Steak Fry! HLAA TC fundraiser (see details inside)

April 19, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Christine Pett (Med-El), Types of Hearing Loss, Hearing Aids, and Cochlear Implants

May 17, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Mary Bauer, Clear Speech, Promotion and Practice. Annual elections
Year-end pot luck



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Officers' emails

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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



Monique Hammond

Finally, we are Looped!

The HLAA TC meeting of February 15, 2014 was a hallmark day for our group. We got to test for the first time the *permanent*, professional induction loop that was installed in the Board Room at the Courage Center in Golden Valley on February 6, 2014 by looping specialist Steve Walsh and HLAA TC member Ross Hammond. The reports from meeting attendees were positive: the loop worked very well! The loop was donated by HLAA TC in recognition of the unwavering support that the Courage Center has shown to us throughout the years.

Actually, our meetings have always been loop-assisted by means of a *temporary* wire that was put down before the meeting and taken up after the meeting ended. One can imagine that this was a rather physically demanding, labor-intensive procedure. Also, temporary loops have their drawbacks, such as signal clarity and strength variations across the room. In our

case, people had to switch seats now and again in order to get better sound quality. Also, troubleshooting interference noises and dead zones presented a few more challenges for our "loopers" Bob Knoll and Ross Hammond. We thank both of them for a job well done.

In order to take advantage of the hearing loop, we need telecoils or T-coils in our hearing aids. For those who do not have any T-coils we carry portable units that are used with a headset. How does this all work? We must remember that loops and telecoils make up a hearing system. One without the other does not work. During our September 2013 meeting, looping specialist Steve Walsh and audiologist Kim Fishman talked to us at length about loops. I refer those who are interested in a refresher to the meeting synopsis which appeared in our October Newsletter. This can be found at www.hlaatc.org - click on Newsletters.

So join us for our next meeting on **March 15, 2014** and find out how much easier it is to hear and understand. Our speaker will be Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) **Sara Oberg**. We gather at 9:30a.m in the 2nd floor Board Room at the Courage Center for coffee and social time. However, you can come early and help us set up the room. Doors are open as of 9:00a.m. More information regarding directions and times can be found on our website at www.hlaatc.org.

See you then,

Monique



HLAA TC Meeting February 15, 2014

Synopsis by Christine T. Morgan



Marty Barnum



Christine

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Christine Morgan in the absence of President Hammond. Christine informed everyone that this is the first meeting using the permanent loop. She reminded everyone with t-coils to turn them on.

Christine's guiding thought for the day is not a famous or political figure. She asked everyone to bear with her while presenting the quote and her reasons for picking it. "Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it without knowing what's going to happen next. Delicious ambiguity."

This quote came from Gilda Radner, quirky actress on Saturday Night Live from 1975 until 1980. Her characters (Roseanne Rosannadonna, Lisa Lupner, Barbara Wawa, etc.) were over-the-top and she received an academy award for her work in 1978. She was diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer at the age of 40. Her book "It's Always Something" entails her struggle with cancer, being misdiagnosed, treated, and eventually her death a few years later.

Through it all, she tried to face her challenges with humor and courage. Hearing loss presents us with some of the same challenges. It is not always easy to be positive, have humor and our courage can also be put to test. We live with unknowing and ambiguity. Is it "delicious"? Not really, but it is our reality!

Christine introduced Marty Barnum. She's been an interpreter since 1978 and has been certified since 1982. Marty was one of the developers of the Health Care Interpreting Program at St. Catherine's University and Director of the Program from 1985 to 1999. During that time, the Program grew from a 2-year Program to a 4-year Bachelor's level program. Marty is currently doing consulting work related to communication access for deaf, hard-of-hearing and deaf/blind people in health care situations. Most recently, Marty worked under a special contract with the task of looking for systemic issues related to persons with hearing loss in long-term facilities. Marty has presented nationally and internationally on communication issues in medical settings.

When Marty first started she did a survey of Minnesota nursing homes to see what was the biggest problem they were experiencing in regard to hearing loss. It was losing hearing aids! Patients misplaced them, aides put them in their pockets when they took them off patients and forgot about them, they ended up with the wrong patients, etc. Patients tend to withdraw and get depressed without their hearing aids.

There are correlations between hearing loss and falls, and hearing loss and dementia. A study at Johns Hopkins showed that a 25 DB hearing loss correlates to three times the risk of falling. For every 10-Decibel increase, the rate increases 1.4 times.

There are many theories about the correlation: sounds cluing us that there's going to be a change in the level of ground; our brain working hard to pick up auditory information so we may not pay as much attention or be focused on our balance; unequal hearing loss; subtle connections between the auditory and visual systems in the brain, etc. Balance exercises may help. There are dizziness and balance clinics throughout the Twin Cities which can help.

People with a mild hearing loss have two times the risk of dementia. As the loss increases, the risk increases (with severe hearing loss, the incidence is five times greater). It may be due to some connection between hearing loss and the part of the brain where dementia originates, long term wear from decoding sounds, social isolation, or other factors. Only one in seven people over the age of 50 with hearing loss uses a hearing aid. What about the others? They have numerous reasons for not getting them.

Marty gave many examples of dealing with people with hearing loss in nursing homes and how important it is to their quality of life. She often acts as an advocate for them and tries to educate staff on hearing loss issues.

Marty tries to teach those working in nursing homes to face the person when they talk, don't cover your mouth, paraphrase when necessary, reminding them that shouting or over-enunciating is not going to help, teaching staff how to maintain hearing aids, being sure the batteries are working and even putting them in the correct ear. When to take them out at bedtime or before surgery can also have an impact.

Nursing home staff do not get enough education on hearing loss. They are also often understaffed. Patients get frustrated when they don't hear and ask for something to be repeated and the person says "never mind". "it wasn't important". That is frustrating to all of us with hearing loss. Hearing people often forget that we don't always understand them. In a nursing home situation, hearing loss frustrations can also lead to acting out behavior which may cause the patient to then be over-medicated instead of dealing with the real problem. Education may be the best solution.

Vicki Martin did an ASL lesson with some "family" words for today. Lionel announced that the Anoka Technical College is hosting the 2014 National Court Reporting and Captioning Week. Lionel has brochures (courtesy of Lisa Richardson).

We will be having a Board Meeting in March so if there is anything you want the Board to think about or work on or any suggestions, please see one of the officers. Board meetings are open to members who wish to attend.

Bob announced that Anne Finnstein passed away at 95 years old. She was probably a member from the very beginning. Bob also brought Steak Fry Tickets (\$10) with him. The new loop system is working well for those with T-coils today and we are thankful. The Walk4Hearing did not generate much money last year.

Some ideas after today's presentation were speaking at a Senior Expo, "adopting nursing homes", a speakers exchange, with members giving presentations, etc. Lionel has been in touch with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department to try to get a speaker on hearing loss and safety.

Christine thanked everyone for coming, adjourned the meeting a few minutes before noon.

Newsletter history

By Vicki Martin



Winter is de-cluttering time. In our house, as I was cleaning out some files to re-organize, I came across a 2008 email from then-editors Merrilee Knoll and Linda Senechal. It contained these statements:

“....then comes the trip to the UPS store to make paper copies. I drop off the jump drive and tell them how many copies to make. They make one copy for me to proofread. I try to get the same UPS person each time (hard to do) as we have “special” needs: we need their lightest paper to keep the cost of mailing at 42 cents.. We also have to make the paper cut after printing at the top and bottom to keep the cost of postage at that price. This takes 1-3 hours, depending on how busy they are. Also sometimes I offer to go back to UPS, something has gone wrong, used the wrong paper, cutter did not work, or they used a size 7 font not the one used in the proof paper. Sometimes it all has to be done again....”

“When I have the papers done, I go back home, fold them (use a roller to really flatten them to fit their special “slit slot” tape them in 3 places (requested by the post office), put on the address labels and stamps. Then I take them to the post office to be weighed. Even though they are the same size as last month and everything should be OK, I have the post office weigh one, as they come up with new rules much of the time. If anything is off I have to take them back home and work out the problem. We don’t want the papers coming back to us and not going to our HLAATC members. That is why I think the dates and a timetable will be useful.”

As an online editor, I have not been involved in the hardcopy side of publishing. But, according to Bob Knoll, things have not changed very much. Although most new subscriptions are e-subscription only, the number of paper copies has continued to rise (though by a lesser amount). But no matter how few paper copies are sent, the steps involved in preparing and mailing them remain the same. A significant number of hours and a large amount of dedication is required to put them in your hands.

What does the future hold? Will ours become an e-only newsletter? Maybe. But for now, we have the option of electronic or hardcopy (or both) newsletters, and can thank Bob for keeping them accessible to those who do not have computers.

Thanks, Bob!

Meeting Snapshots



Marie on balance



Friendly chat



Lionel

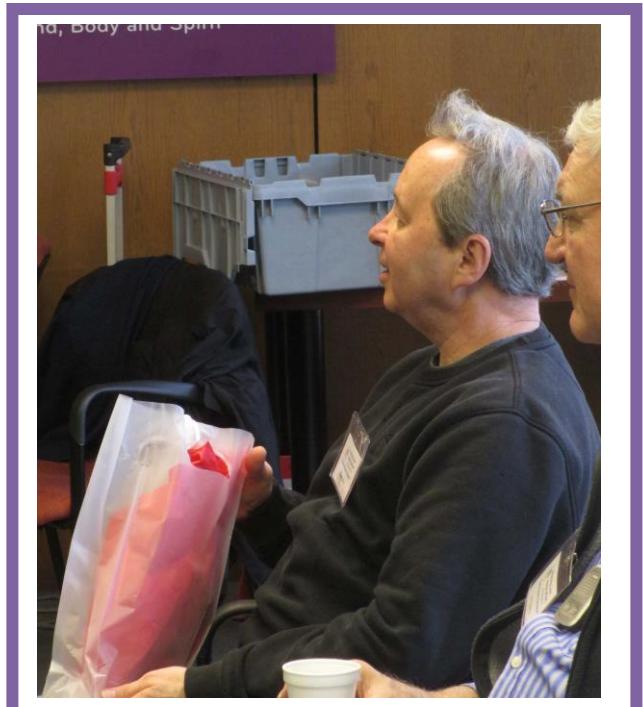


Lisa, Bob, Carol

(More Meeting Snapshots)



Vicki with ASL family
words: "children"



We have a winner!
What is it, Doug?



More conversations



Steak Fry!

Great steaks, great company, great HLAA-TC fundraiser

The Steak Fry is coming - sooner than you think! Here are the details:

Date: April 9 (Wed)

Time: 5-7 PM

Place: Crystal VFW, 5222 Bass Lake Road

Cost: \$10 per ticket

Tickets available from Bob Knoll at the March HLAA-TC meetings, or by e-mailing Bob (rknoll5200@aol.com) with the number of tickets you want, and he will mail them to you.



VSA (Accessible Arts) new website

Hi, all you fans of Accessible Arts Events that offer Captioning! Two quick things of note:

First, VSA Minnesota's NEW website is now LIVE! You can find us at the same address: www.vsamn.org. Please check it out and let us know what you think. (You may need to refresh your browser in order to bring up the new site.)

The **Accessible Arts Calendar** is located under **Community** (in a horizontal list of website sections at the top) or on the big **Calendar** button near the top right. From the **Calendar** main page (<http://vsamn.org/community/calendar/>), you can find the next handful of accessible shows at the left or go to the graphic calendar at the right and search by Month, Date, Location, Category (Theatre, Music, Workshop, etc.), or Accessibility Services (like Scripted Captioning, etc.).

In the News

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

“Older adults with impaired hearing may have a faster rate of brain shrinkage as they age, a new study suggests.

“A number of studies have found that older people with hearing loss tend to have a quicker decline in their memory and thinking skills, compared to those with normal hearing...

“But the ‘biggest question’ ... is whether treating hearing impairment can **slow changes in brain structure** and, more importantly, delay dementia.

“He and his colleagues are now planning a trial to test that idea...

“[the] team found that older **adults with hearing problems showed a faster decline in brain volume** over the years -- especially in brain regions involved in processing sound and speech...

“If impaired hearing is one contributor to mental decline and dementia, Lin said, then treating it could have a big impact on public health.”

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Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group

Sunday, March 9, 2014
1:30 – 3:30 PM

Dakota County Wentworth Library
199 East Wentworth Ave
West St. Paul, MN 55118
651-554-6800

Host: Jodi Landry
Please send your RSVP to Sara Oberg: mncisocialgroup@gmail.com

Hearing Loss and the Job Interview

By Vicki Martin

The article on job interviews in the latest Hearing Loss magazine (January-February 2014) brought to mind my own job interview over thirty years ago.

My hearing loss was already a given. It was 1981, and it was still lawful for non-government-funded employers' job applications to ask about candidates' disabilities.

The interviewer was skilled at setting candidates at ease, and I was not nervous. At the end of the interview, I shared with him some information regarding a government bonus for companies hiring people with disabilities. It was just a little extra incentive for an employer to step outside of his comfort zone and expand his hiring practices.

"Oh." The interviewer said dismissively. "I wouldn't take that." I must have looked a little puzzled. Don't companies care about every little improvement to the bottom line, especially when it results from doing the right thing?

"If a person can't do the job," he said, "I'm not going to hire him." I was speechless. He perceived the offer as a bribe to hire someone who can't do the job, when its purpose was just the opposite – to help employers find people who *can* do the job, but that they might not have considered before. I dropped the subject quickly.

Though my interviewer surprised me with his negative view on employer incentives, he hired me anyway. And I found him, throughout my career, to be quite understanding and supportive.

This man, obviously, did not need a hiring incentive. But do some employers need that extra push? Is paying a bonus a reasonable approach to encouraging companies to hire people with disabilities? If not, what are some of the things that might motivate an employer to hire people with disabilities?

It is now 2014, and these questions remain. We have a lot to learn, but many people are working hard to make the workplace more accommodating. Other articles in the above-mentioned magazine, ("The Workplace and the Law", "Hiring Employees with hearing Loss – What's in it for Employers?") help provide some answers.



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Our next meeting is March 15, 2014

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Treasurer – Bob Knoll treasurer@hlaatc.org

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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 or visit us on Facebook: groups/HLAA-TC.