

HLAA TC

April 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.

April 19, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Speaker Ade Haugen, West Central DHHS regional rep, "How to present a Caregiver's DeafBlind Awareness Workshop"

May 17, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Mary Bauer, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist, MN DHHS, "Clear Speech, Promotion and Practice", Annual elections and Year-end pot luck

September 20, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Jason Galster, Ph. D., Starkey, "Wireless Technology"

October 18, 2014

HLAA TC meeting: Vicki Martin, HLAA-TC member, "Cochlear Implant Year One – Predictably Unpredictable!"



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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

April 2014



Monique Hammond

Winds of Change...

Spring has sprung and with that we are approaching the end of our HLAA TC season, which will be next month. All told, we have had a productive "year." We continued our outreach efforts thus keeping the name of HLAA TC alive in our communities, with our doctors and audiologists. We have donated and installed an induction loop in our meeting room and will support another upcoming looping project in the Twin Cities. Once again we will contribute to the Lions' D-Feet hearing loss walk in June.

Yet, with our last meeting fast upon us, it is time to think about **new leadership for the year to come**. Those who decide to become a member of the HLAA TC Board will be able to initiate or be part of the changes that they would welcome or like to see happen.

The motivation for leadership is backed by a strong belief in our mission and by the desire to pay forward to those who have been there for us in time of need. I have had a total of two terms of VP/president for which I am very grateful. I learned

a lot about others and their sometimes overwhelming challenges, about hearing loss and about myself.

Our Board consists of a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The immediate past president acts in an advisory, tie-breaking role. In May, vice-president Christine Morgan will move into the president position. Treasurer Bob Knoll wants to "retire" after eight stellar years of watching over our funds. The expression "above and beyond the call of duty" comes to mind. So, in May we must choose a treasurer and vice-president. "Election Day" is always exciting because unforeseen decisions and changes tend to keep us on our toes. What might happen this year?

So, who has served on a Board before? Who might have experience or talent as a treasurer? Although perfection is not required, we want to find candidates among ourselves who believe that our group is an important resource for those with hearing loss and who want to see it grow.

If you are an HLAA TC member and consider signing on but have questions, please talk to one of the Officers during the next meeting or contact us by HLAA TC email. (See the last page of the Newsletter or visit the website www.hlaatc.org About Us)

Incidentally, our Newsletter editor Vicki Martin would welcome editing help. If you got any experience in the field or want to learn something new, please inquire with Vicki.

As you try to decide whether to serve or not, remember the words of **Robert F. Kennedy**:

"The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to making things better."

Our next meeting will be on **19 April, 2014**. See you then. Enjoy Spring!



Monique

HLAA TC Meeting March 15, 2014

Synopsis by Christine T. Morgan



Sara Oberg



Christine

The meeting was called to order by President Hammond. She reminded everyone that the room is looped, so if you have T-Coils turn them on. We also have a portable device called the Comfort Duet for those without T-Coils. She thanked members, guests and visitors for attending. She also thanked Angie Sundell from Paradigm for providing captioning today.

President Hammond had two quotes for the day: one from Robin Williams (the actor) who said Spring is the way of Mother Nature saying "Let's party". She was reminded of the other quote as she was walking through her backyard and got a boot full of slush. This one is from Doc Larson (an American journalist and columnist) "Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush."

VP Christine Morgan introduced Sara Oberg, B.M., M.A. who is a speech-language pathologist at the University of Minnesota Medical Center , Fairview, providing aural rehab for adults and at HealthPartners Specialty Center, Division of Regions Hospital, providing speech-language therapy for children and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing and have hearing aids and/or cochlear implants.

Sara also had been with the Lion's Children's Hearing and E.N.T. clinic at the University of Minnesota Amplatz Hospital from 2007 until January 2014 providing aural rehabilitation and speech language therapy for children and evaluating children for cochlear implant candidacy. In 2010, she had a vision and started the Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group in Minnesota as a volunteer. This group meets monthly in the Twin Cities and provides information and support for those with cochlear implants or those considering getting a cochlear implant. Sara also does voice therapy at HealthPartners and is a singer with a music education degree.

Sara considers herself proficient but not fluent in American Sign Language. She grew up with deaf grandparents and has been immersed in the deaf culture her entire life. Sara's grandmother is now 98 years old and lives in her own home. Sara read a beautiful poem written by her grandfather when he was just a boy. Her grandparents accepted their hearing loss and lived a full and happy life.

There are 4 levels of how people learn to hear:

Detecting the sounds: can you hear them, how about environmental sounds, someone's name, etc. The

Ling 6 sound check is done with the mouth/face covered to prevent lip-reading. This assesses your hearing across frequencies of speech.

Discrimination: determining whether the sound sounds the same or different

Identification: identifying environmental sounds, words from a closed set.

Comprehension: understanding what is being said at the sentence and paragraph level.

All this is done without visual information to maximize hearing to the best ability and to work the brain. It is very fatiguing. People go home with some “homework” as well. There are also free aural rehabilitation classes for those with at HealthPartners starting on Monday, May 5.

Be educated about your hearing loss and willing to explain it to others. Pick a well-lit, quiet environment. Be sure to give feedback to the speaker, letting them know what you did not understand. Do not bluff. Look for visual cues to help you understand. Sara also briefly discussed Glottal Fry (or Creaky Voice) as well as Minnesota Monotone and people talking without moving their lips. Familiarity with the topic helps when going to a movie, play, concert, etc. Avoid putting yourself down, apologizing or being a victim. Watch your body language and practice self-care. Try to be aware and honest about your skills, strengths and challenges.

In restaurants, try to sit by a wall or in a corner or at the edge. Stay away from the kitchen and ceiling or wall speakers. Floor and wall coverings also help. You could also nicely ask to have the music turned down. They may be more willing to accommodate during off-peak hours. Round or square tables work better than rectangle. Use assistive listening devices if you have them.

There are three ways to react to challenging communication situations: you can be passive, aggressive, or assertive. Being assertive is the best way. You admit that you are hard of hearing and ask for what you need. This means respecting your partner's and your own needs.

Some homework ideas: listen to books on tape or audio books, talk radio, webinars, e-readers, apps on cell phones, etc. Always wear your hearing aids or cochlear implant in order to stimulate the brain and work the auditory pathways.

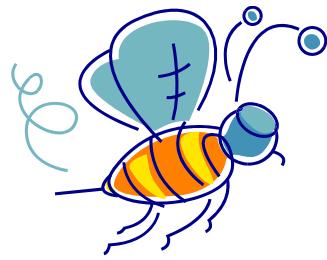
As a speaker, be sure to get the person's attention before speaking, speak face-to-face, don't shout, rephrase as necessary or write things down to clarify, turn off background noise, keep objects, hair or hands away from your face, as well as food, candy or cigarettes. Be sure to move your mouth or upper lip. Don't say “forget it” or “never mind” or “I'll tell you later” when someone does not understand what you are saying. Maintain a positive attitude and be patient.

Sara then took audience questions and concluded her presentation.

President Hammond thanked our speaker and stated that the next meeting would be on April 19th. Secretary Lionel announced that the next Cochlear Implant Social Group Meeting is on April 6th. Rashni Bhatt is a guest and is looking for a part-time software engineering position if anyone knows of one.

Vicki signed some ASL for the group: love, spring, flowers, mud, rain, baseball... and wish!

President Hammond adjourned the meeting at noon.



Buzz Off!

By Vicki Martin

I guess it didn't work. After all the times we've had them turn down the music in restaurants, asked for a quiet booth away from the kitchen, and commented on the noise level, they still didn't seem to take the hint: many diners would like to converse – not shout – with one another over dinner.

So instead of providing more quiet corners for diners to savor both the food and the company, restaurants on the whole are ratcheting up the sound.

In a front-page article (3/20/14) on the subject, the Pioneer Press interviews a frustrated 60-something customer who complained, "the only time you could hear someone was if they yelled at you." The article speaks of the "increasingly raucous nature of some restaurants." Moreover, experts say the trend "will continue to pose acoustic challenges for years to come."

Yes, that is right. It is a "trend." Meaning, noise levels are deliberately ramped up to create an atmosphere with a trendy buzz. This "buzz" often exceeds the NIOSH safety guidelines for noise for an extended period of time.

There are ways you can mitigate this problem. If you have directional microphones on your hearing aids, you can try to sit with your back to most of the noise, and face the person you want to hear. Both hearing aids and cochlear implants usually have programs especially designed to reduce ambient noise and focus on the nearest voices. And if you have control of the 'sensitivity' settings on your CIs, you can lower the sensitivity, which also helps to home in on the sounds at your own table. With or without the HA/CI hearing technology, a pocket talker, or similar personal amplification device can be used with good results if you are dining with only one or two other people that you want to talk to.

But best of all is when you can walk in and have a meal with a friend – without all the wires and gadgets.

There aren't many of these quiet places around right now, but go ahead – nominate the ones you know about. When we accumulate a handful of suggestions, we'll publish them, right here! Then we'll all know where we can go for a stressless evening out. See you there!



Meeting Snapshots (Thanks to Ross and Dennis!)



Sara explains



Angie captures the words



Monique



Loop reminder

(More Meeting Snapshots)



Lionel



Checking her data



Paying attention



Christine

Ade Haugen, HLAA-TC speaker for April

Adrienne (Como) Haugen who is affected from Usher Syndrome Type 2a (moderate to profound hearing loss at birth with onset of progressive Retinitis Pigmentosa in her teens) is an advocate for those who are affected with the loss of hearing and/or vision loss. From early in her childhood, she learned self-advocacy and has extended herself to advocate in behalf of others. Haugen was born in Virginia, MN but grew up in Duluth, MN. She attended both private and public schools in Duluth along with many years of speech and lipreading therapy from the Speech and Pathology Department at the UofM-Duluth. On March 15, 1974, she was diagnosed to have Usher Syndrome. She was pronounced legally blind in November 1993. Since in 1997, she found others who were also affected with a dual neuro-sensorial loss of hearing and vision. They were discovered by online cyber-encounters with two deafblind email support groups that had quickly spread out world-wide. In the year 2000, Haugen obtained her first Leader Dog for the Blind (Abbey), joined the Minnesota DeafBlind Association (MDBA) and the American Association of Deaf-Blind (AADB). In that same year, she began her commissioned member work with the Commission Serving Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans. She later added to the mix by becoming the West Central (St. Cloud) DHHS Regional Representative. She is also member of HLAA in St. Cloud and the Twin Cities, Olivia Lions Club, America's Guide Dogs and other national-level organizations supporting the deafblind population. Within organizations, she served in committees on local, state and national levels.

Adrienne is married since December 1980 to Richard Haugen and they live in Olivia, MN. They have a son, Brian, who was married to Jennie since 2012. They have a daughter, Brigitte. Adrienne received her second Leader Dog "Scotty" in June 2013; and, there is the Haugen's pet cat named Lil'Jon.

Haugen developed a "deafblind awareness" in-service or workshop program that had been well received by the Renville Nursing and Assistive Living Facility in Renville MN, the Minnesota Independent Living Council and Lions clubs.

Her program can be set up in a half-hour to 1 1/2 hours timeframe. She opens up her presentation with the fact that too many people who require hearing aids are not being fully informed to include, in part: (1) existence of t-coils and its use; (2) hearing aid dispensers not being well-trained on new programmable device(s) or able to provide appropriate and full communication access to the consumer; (3) hearing aid dealers are not trained to provide *prescription* appropriate hearing aids or assistive listening devices (ALDs) thus requiring and encouraging the consumer to see a licensed audiologist who specialized in programmable hearing aids.

Next, Haugen shares that she believes that caregivers who are not familiar with hearing aids need full training, understanding and comprehension on the care and handling of the persons' expensive devices. She demonstrates with role-playing on appropriate approaches to people at all levels of hearing and/or vision loss. The show 'n tell lesson while using stimulated materials makes the audience realize how the consumers can and are unintentionally isolated and/or are being unintentionally mistreated. The stimulation tools show the audience how and what hearing and vision loss resembles. This has been a popular part and the audiences have attentively responded; and, a few have been brought to tears from realizations.

Haugen will provide a brief version on how to deliver deafblind awareness along with her tools that she uses to demonstrate to the audiences. Her hope is that the HLAA members will welcome this program and proceed on with its own project to spread the word throughout Minnesota. Come, see and learn at the April 19, 2014 T.C. HLAA meeting!

Travel tips!

From an expert (audiologist): *do not put your CI processor through the X-rays at an airport*. These are very strong X-rays, and could possibly scramble the programs. Most likely you are going to be wearing the processor (there is no problem going through the person-scanners) but if you have a backup one, or are trying to “protect” the one you usually wear – don’t do it by putting it in your X-rayed baggage or carry ons.



Supershuttle at MSP – has an electronic display showing your number, van number and when boarding. This is great if you are afraid you will miss the announcement that your van has arrived. Be warned though: sometimes the van disappears from the display as soon as it arrives (it *should* remain visible until it departs). So keep your eye on your entry in the display to see when it changes.



Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group

Sunday, May 4, 2014
1:30 – 3:30 PM
The Maplewood Library
3025 Southlawn Drive, Maplewood, MN 55109
Hosts: Pete and Judy Domning

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!

No need to RSVP – just come if you can!

It Costs a lot to be HH!

By Vicki Martin

Do some people wonder why people with handicaps are sometimes given breaks on the cost of goods or services? Even if gainfully employed, we are sometimes offered a discount on theater tickets, and (by law) are never charged for any accommodations that may be offered, in the theater or elsewhere. This is a nice gesture, and although there may be an ulterior motive (get more people into those less popular side sections of the theater, perhaps), we appreciate that it can also save us money. Not only are we, on average, underemployed, but we pay more for a lot of things that your average hearing person. Ever try to negotiate with someone over the telephone? The one who knows everything that is said is the one who controls the negotiating process. I'm sure that you, like me, have often simply agreed to whatever price was proffered rather than spend time hopelessly trying to persuade a party whose bargaining stance is an unknown.

And then there are the small, everyday exchanges too, that cost us. An example: I had two three-for-something coupons for separate products. One of them applied to a slightly different item than I had picked up. The cashier held up the coupon and pointed to the correct product in the display, which I then bought instead. Since that coupon was so misleading, I decided to check on the other one too. "Is this the correct product for this three-for-\$2.99 coupon?" I asked. He said something completely incomprehensible to me, but since he was sort of nodding as he waved the items through, I assumed it was correct.

The total didn't seem quite what I had calculated in my head, so when I got home I looked through my receipt carefully to see if I had forgotten to add something in. Nope. But I was charged \$2.99 – three times – for my coupon items. About three times as much as I was willing to pay.

I'm not going to go broke for being overcharged \$6.00. But we are always at a disadvantage in a negotiating situation. Here's a call for advice: what are some of the ways you have found effective for dealing with business negotiations, or any complex purchase? What stories can you share with us about spending too much – just because you couldn't hear?



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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.