

HLAA TC

February 2015



Twin Cities Chapter

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

February 21, 2015

Barbara Friedman, "Making the Most of Your Hearing Aids, Implants and accessories"

March 21, 2015

Tanya Gahler, "Hear the Possibilities"

April 18, 2015

Gary Johnson, "Scams, Fraud, and Identity Theft"

May 16, 2015

Annual elections and pot luck lunch



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Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) is held the 3rd Saturday of the month (September thru May). We gather at 9:30 to socialize, and begin our meeting at 10 AM at The Courage Center, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442. The meeting adjourns at noon.

President's Message

January 2015



Christine Morgan

President's Message

February 2015

Even though the “holiday season” is officially over, we have a lot going on at HLAA-TC.

This month's speaker is Dr. Barbara Friedman, audiologist at the University of Minnesota speaking about making the most of your hearing aids and cochlear implants. This is a great opportunity for those of us with one or both to learn some new tips or just to be reminded of those things that have fallen by the wayside.

On March 4, we have Meet With Your Legislator Day (see further information in this copy of the newsletter and/or on our website). Examples of discussion points with the legislators are increasing employment for those with hearing loss, captioning in public places, providing centralized funding for interpreters and/or

CART, improved information for those purchasing hearing aids, and preventing cuts to programs and services for the deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing. We hope to have a large turnout from HLAA-TC.

The Board is currently working on a questionnaire asking members and visitors for their input. Please be sure to watch for it. We need to “hear” your honest input and ideas. This is your organization and we want to provide education and support for our members and guests!

We have many excellent speakers lined up from now until our last meeting in May. We hope you will attend as many as you can. Bring a friend, neighbor, co-worker and/or family members. Everyone is welcome.

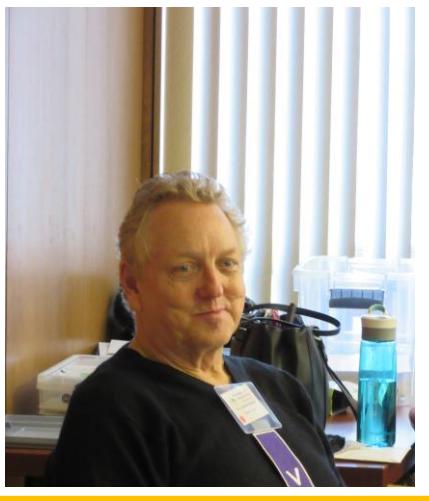
In June, we have our annual national convention being held in St. Louis this year. I am so excited to be going for the first time. It's a wonderful opportunity that, unfortunately, I had to miss last year because of my CI surgery. A lovely historic location and an agenda filled with information and education, as well as a chance to meet others from across the country. Information and registration can be found on the HLAA National website or in the Hearing Loss Magazine.

Have a wonderful month and I hope to see you on the 21st.

Christine



HLAA TC January Meeting Synopsis



by Lionel Locke
HLAA-TC VicePresident

President Christine Morgan called the meeting to order at 10 AM. She welcomed all those in attendance and then presented a brief history of Miss America 1995 Heather White, the first person with a disability to be named Miss America. Heather lost her hearing at 18 months. Heather's message to all of us is that most hearing people do not understand that people with hearing loss have to think incredibly fast in order to keep up with conversations.

One on one conversations are not that stressful. Group conversations, however, combined with background noise is nearly impossible. To overcome that negative, Heather tells us that we need to focus on positive thoughts rather than on the negative. Heather received two implants in order to hear her children as they grew up, to experience the hearing world, and to achieve her goals.

After two announcements about the next Adult cochlear implant social group meeting and the placement of HLAA meeting schedules in various public places, President Christine Morgan introduced speaker Mary Harnett.

Mary is the executive director of the Minnesota Commission Serving Deaf, Deaf/Blind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans. She has been with the commission for 14 years. Mary provides us with an update every January on existing and upcoming legislation that affects us.

Mary thanked HLAA for the support of MCDHH and gave a brief history of the Commission. During the last 30 years, over a hundred laws have been passed helping support the civil rights of people that are Deaf, Deaf/Blind and Hard of Hearing. One example is the hearing screening mandate for babies passed in 2007 allowing for early identification of hearing loss which assists with language development in order to keep up with other children.

Mary's message to the group is to advocate at the capital with our legislators and other elected and appointed officials in order to make our case. Mary also stressed the need to communicate with employers. Too often communication breakdowns occur in the workplace, people lose their employment, and people with hearing loss are not treated fairly. Employers need to be informed about accommodation and how it is not as difficult as they fear.

Mary also talked about captioning and visual paging at the Minneapolis airport. This success story is one of many that the Commission has worked on. Mary closed by talking about strategic planning for future legislation and the upcoming Meet Your Legislator Day to be held March 4, near the Capital. She then asked for HLAA support for the passage this year of new legislation calling for an accommodation fund encouraging hiring managers at the state level to hire more people with disabilities followed by private industry encouragement. Secondly the advancement of hearing loops in public places and follow up details on activation of captioning when necessary.

After fielding many questions from the audience, which included a lengthy discussion about the history of T-coils and looped systems, President Christine Morgan thanked Mary for her presentation. One footnote to the presentation is age-related hearing loss, which is the next major issue to be addressed by the Commission.

After the door prize drawing won by Carole Knoll, our HLAA Secretary Lisa Richardson provided two announcements, a Court Reporting and Captioning Week sponsored by the National Court Reporters Association to be held in February and Captioning now available at WILD Hockey games.

After further discussion about captioning and the FCC complaint process, President Christine Morgan again thanked the speaker Mary Harnett and declared the meeting adjourned at noon.



CURLING DAY FOR HLAA MEMBERSHIP

Is anyone interested in spending a few hours at one of the Curling Clubs learning how to curl and enjoying a social get together?

Your Vice-President is a certified Curling instructor and can arrange the ice time at a reduced cost and will provide all necessary equipment.

You can bring your own lunch or snacks and refreshments to the curling club located at the Biff Adams Arena (Frog town Curling Club) located at 743 Western Avenue in St. Paul MN. The club has soda machines and hot drinks for sale.

I can arrange a Saturday or Sunday in the February time frame generally near the Noon hour if we have at least 8 people. We can handle up to 40 people in groups of 8 and I will provide all the instructors.

Please let me know if there is an interest. All you need is clean tennis shoes on the ice and layered clothing and gloves. Depending on the outside temperature, the arena temperature is between 26 and 36 degrees.

If you do not want to curl, but just want to attend and enjoy the atmosphere and friendship that will work as well. All are welcome including your friends and family.

Please respond to Lionel Locke at Locke058@umn.edu or my cellphone 612-327-5376 before February 15th.

Lionel Locke, Vice President
HLAA-TC Chapter

I Hear, Why Don't I Always Understand?

Christine T. Morgan

We usually “hear” but don’t always understand conversation. It takes a lot of attention and effort. It is often exhausting to keep up. Many of us resort to bluffing. Most of us have been told for a long time that having both visual and auditory input helps us to understand what is being said. However, some research has recently discovered that visual cues do not reduce listening effort.

It seems pretty obvious that hearing aids and cochlear implants should technically reduce listening effort in people with hearing loss. And those of us (with or without hearing loss) know that background noise increases listening effort.

However, according to the Picou, Ricketts and Hornsby in their 2013 research, visual cues “come at a cost”. The brain needs to process the auditory and visual information and synthesize them. This appears to “get the listener back to zero sum gain of listening effort.”

In 2011, two other researchers, Gosselin and Gange, studied listening effort and cognitive demands in older listeners. According to them, auditory plus visual information required “more effort and cognitive resources than the auditory only condition regardless of the type of noise.” Yikes! We always thought it would be easier!

In 2012 at the Research Symposium at HLAA convention, Johns Hopkins did a presentation on Brain Deafness. The main problem is because people wait about 7 years before they seek treatment for hearing loss and then only about 20-25 percent actually get and wear hearing aids. Inefficient and inaccurate information equals “gaps”. More gaps equal more cognitive resources that need to be used to make sense of conversation, etc. The unfortunate result is usually social isolation because it is just too exhausting to try to communicate.

One way to help prevent this is by getting our hearing treated with hearing aids and then exercising our auditory brain. According to the experts, we need to use the hearing aids every day to build the ear/brain connection. You can also help this along by some listening rehabilitation such as listening to recorded books (in quiet and then in increasing noise as you get more proficient at understanding), talk radio, etc.. There are available software programs and you can also work with a listening partner if you have one.

Background noise will be a problem even with the best hearing aids or implants but removing yourself from the noise and using some type of hearing assist technology can help you decrease listening effort and cognitive load. You may even become a role model for those still in denial about their hearing loss.

Reference:

Brad Ingrao, AuD, *Oh My Aching Ears! Listening Effort and Hearing Loss*, Hearing Loss Magazine, September/October 2013



Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

By Judi Swan

After many years of reading about Cochlear Implants, watching friends get theirs, and involvement in the HHLA, I found myself face-to-face with a decision for myself.

In my fall annual Ear Nose Throat Doctor appointment, I was given the usual tests. Results were given to me, that I had gone down in my hearing loss from the previous year. Once I was past the always-dreaded booth test, stressing at the shoulders, headache full-bloom, I was taken into the doctors' office to wait for him.

He arrived shortly, a tall, friendly and very kind man. Sitting down on his little "scoot stool" that they seem to go anywhere on, he rolled over to the examining chair that I was sitting in. Greets me, and then says, "So when are you going to talk about a Cochlear Implant?"

I told him "when I am 'old'". (I am 71). "Okay, then let's talk," he said.

He told me that my word perception was a mere one percent, and that the hearing aids I had could do no more, as I was at the most powerful of those available on market. If I agreed, he said, he would be happy to have my records sent to the UofM Cochlear Implant Clinic. I agreed.

I was told I would receive information and catalogs of the makers of CI's of which i would have a choice. They arrived the next morning, much to my astonishment.

Initial orientation appointments and orientation were scheduled, consisting of testing, a psychological examination, and meeting the surgeon. These were completed on November 14th. Surgery was scheduled for December 18.

All went smoothly, with an early start, and heading home in the afternoon. The anesthesia and the drugs they gave me at hospital left me foggy, but I remember two distinct things....i looked funny with the white foam case holding my ear safe and I wanted a vanilla shake very much.

I recuperated at home until the ninth of January, and the long awaited activation appointment. The appointment went well. Christine had warned me that I would go home with lots of stuff. Amen.

A follow-up visit went well, and things sounded very good from the start. Now I am on a schedule of appointments with various providers through July. Each time I go, I learn more, and am so thankful for this technology.

So I am joining Vicki and Christine and others in our HLAA/TC with my own CI. I am excited to go to the next CI meeting which is close to my home, and to learn more and more how to "listen." As others before me have said or written, each new sound is a chance to do a Scavenger Hunt to find the source. So far, only one event has fazed me, and Dave helped me find the source of sound: a bird outside my office window.

I really look forward to helping others who have not yet taken this leap of faith. I look forward to learning from you as i go forward. I truly believe that this whole life-changing experience can be more than just function, but extremely educational as well. See you at the February meeting.

Tweet! Tweet!

Some things in Life are Free!

Since I have had a Cochlear Implant in December, I now find that I have some very useable, rarely used hearing equipment.

I am willing to donate these things to a requester:

1. One Phonak Hearing Aid
2. One Phonak FM System-Streamer
3. One AudioDry Overnight H/A Dryer

I would be very happy to have someone else use these items.

Email me at: swanjudi@yahoo.com for more information.

Judi Swan

Other freebies available:

CI filters

for Cochlear Americas Nucleus 5

Feedback-reducing high quality
Comply foam earmolds ("canal tips", vented)

email Vicki Martin at:
gimme88@aol.com

Got stuff?

Advertise here to find a home for
hearing equipment or accessories
you can no longer use.

Make someone happy!



Go Wild!

Paradigm, the company that provides CART services for our HLAATC meetings, and is managed by our secretary Lisa Richardson, has won the contract to provide captioning for Minnesota WILD games.

Next time you watch a game, be sure to cheer for both teams -- the Wild, and the Paradigm crew!

Congratulations, Paradigm!

DHHS training sessions -- Free sessions!

From Marie Koehler

DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING SERVICES ~ Metro Office

651-431-5964 (Voice), 651-964-1514 (VP), 888-206-6513 (TTY), 651-431-7587 (FAX), www.dhhsd.org

Note the following upcoming sessions coming in 2015:

Beginning Sign Language

March 11, 1:30-3:30

Elmer L. Anderson Building – 540 Cedar, Room 2370 St. St. Paul Room 2370

Learn basic signs and become familiar with some of the characteristics of American Sign Language. Gain an understanding of the importance of gestures, mimes, and reading facial expressions and body language.

To register, call 651-431-5940 (voice or relay), or email dhhs.metro@state.mn.us

Call or email for location of each class.

If you need hearing or other accommodations, request at least 2 weeks before session

Provide your name, phone #, email address, title and date of session, employer and job title

Loop Minnesota

This is the YEAR of the LOOP! Make it happen!

Mark your Calender! **Loop Minnesota** meets on the *second Friday of the month* in the St. Louis Park City Hall Council Chambers located at 5005 Minnetonka Blvd. St. Louis Park. The meetings run from 11:30am to 1:00pm. The Chambers are "looped."

Everybody is invited to join our group and discussions as we set out to Loop Minnesota. First-time guests are treated to pizza. Your ideas and input are both needed and welcome. Visit us at loopminnesota.org and let us know if you plan to attend.

Upcoming Meeting Dates for 2015

Mar 13 2015 - Friday 11:30 am– 1pm

Apr 10 2015 - Friday 11:30 am– 1pm



Lobby Day Challenge!



**Mary Hartnett challenges us to make
Lobby Day count!**

Lobby Day Details

Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Meet With Your Legislator Day March 4th, 2015 at the Best Western Plus Capitol Ridge (Kelly Inn)!

What is Meet With Your Legislator Day?

We will be offering trainings and then community members will meet with the Senators and Representatives who represent them. Your legislator is supposed to represent you, but can only do so if they know what you care about. Our goal is to get as many people to visit their legislators. This shows the community's strength and helps us get our bills passed.

Is it really all day?

No, the day will be split in two – you can come in the morning or the afternoon.

What is the schedule?

All Day:

- 8:00 am to 2:00 pm – Registration
- 9:00 pm to 3:00 pm – Appointments with Legislators

Morning:

- 8:30 am to 9:30 am – Training: how to meet with legislators
- 9:30 am to 10:00 am – Welcome and overview of bills

Afternoon:

- 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm – Training: how to meet with legislators
- 1:00 pm to 1:30 pm – Welcome and overview of bills

What will we talk to legislators about?

Increase jobs for adults and young adults who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing

Provide a centralized fund for interpreters and CART for employees who are deaf and hard of hearing and deafblind

Require captioning in public places

Provide better information to people who purchase hearing aids

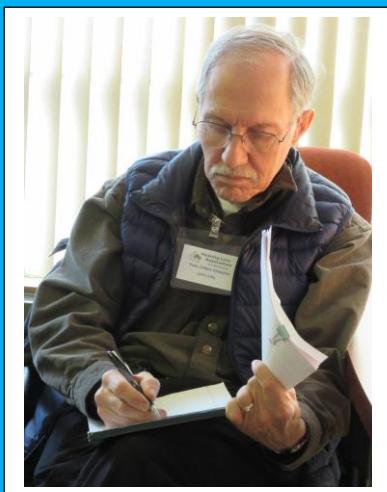
Prevent cuts to programs and services

To register for Meet With Your Legislator Day on March 4th, 2015 visit the Online Registration Form at <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1976739/Deaf-DeafBlind-and-Hard-of-Hearing-Lobby-Day-2015>

In the meantime, let's get our bills passed!! Come to Meet With Your Legislator Day! Sign up now.

More information can be found here: <http://www.mncdhh.org/news/759/the-commission-of-deaf-deafblind-and-hard-of-hearing-minnesotans-mncdhh-invites-you-to-participate-in-lobby-day-on-march-4th-2015>

January HLAA-TC MEETING



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Our next meeting is February 21, 2015

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Treasurer – Marie Saliterman treasurer@hlaatc.org

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Photos – Vicki Martin

Newsletter Editor -

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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.