

# HLAA TC

## April 2018



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

Next Speaker:

*April 21, 2018*

Cochlear Implant Panel

*May 19, 2018*

Elections

Pot Luck

Auction



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[www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

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 Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442. The meeting adjourns at noon.

# President's Message



*Christine Morgan*

*President's Message  
HLAATC April 2018*

Does the picture look like something in your yard?

I can't believe we only have two more meetings before we end the 2017-2018 year! Yikes. Of course, we still have a lot to do, especially with the national convention being held in June in Minneapolis. Have you seen the lineup of meetings and social events? Talk about packing things in a few days. There is still time to volunteer to help (see Lionel) but unfortunately you missed the early-bird discount if you have not yet registered.

This month we have the cochlear implant panel bringing us up-to-date on their latest technologies. May brings our potluck, silent auction (let's start getting those items/services prepared), and our Board elections. The Board has been working on a slate of candidates but don't hesitate to let us know if you are interested in being considered. And don't forget our committees. It truly does "take a village". It is hard work running and growing this Chapter but it is so very rewarding.

We don't have a speaker for May (on purpose). The Board would like to hear from membership and we want people to bring their comments, concerns, stories, ideas, etc. This is your organization and

you are the wind behind our sails.

I have been very proud and honored to be your president for the last (almost) four years. I've learned so much and met so many wonderful people. We share a common challenge and together we are much stronger. We are making hearing loss more "visible" little by little.

With gratitude to all of you,

Christine



**FREE! Tai Chi at the NE Library on Central Avenue  
in Minneapolis**

Presented in collaboration with Christine T. Morgan,  
Certified Tai Chi Instructor

**Mondays, April 2nd – April 23rd 1:30-2:30pm**

Sun style tai chi has a higher stance with agile steps and powerful qigong breathing you can do while seated or standing. This style of tai chi is good for cultivating internal energy and helps build balance. This class is good for beginners, seniors, those with arthritis and other health conditions. Wear comfortable clothes and flat shoes.

To register, call 612.543.6775





*Kathleen Marin, Vice-President*

## **Meeting Summary March 17, 2018**

President Christine Morgan opened the meeting at 10 am and introduced our speaker, Peggy Nelson, PhD, of CATSS (Center for Applied and Translational Sensory Science), located at the University of Minnesota. Peggy described CATSS as a collaboration of scientists from various fields who work with the public and with industry to develop devices and strategies for people with sensory deficits, like low vision and hearing loss. For instance, they are trying to understand how the brain focuses attention on one signal (or source of noise) out of all the background noise to create smart hearing aids and cochlear implants to improve our ability to hear in noise. They are also studying how the brain interprets the signals from hearing aids and cochlear implants. This is important because the brain starts to focus on other things when it isn't getting a good signal from the hearing senses. Then it has to reorganize when sound is reintroduced via hearing aids or cochlear implants. The goal is to make that reorganization happen quickly and make the sound more natural. Another focus is on balance, including current research on the possible effect of wind turbines on balance.

Peggy described her research on hearing aids and quality of life. She pointed out that many people are not satisfied with their hearing, even after having their hearing aids adjusted professionally. So she did a study where patients with mild to moderate hearing loss adjusted their own hearing aids. What was astounding was how differently the people adjusted their hearing aids, not only from each other, but also from the way audiologists would have programmed them. And they expressed satisfaction in the outcome. This leads to the question of how having complete control over our hearing aids would affect quality of life, such as programming them differently for music, restaurants, different environments or acoustics, seasons, and so on. A different line of research has been to create smart hearing aids that adjust themselves based on the environment, but Peggy expressed a concern that people may still want some control. Another issue is that audiologists program our hearing aids in a quiet environment. Peggy suggested that adding typical noise, such as traffic sounds and noisy restaurants, would improve the programming. Moreover, some audiologists are able to follow up and send new programming information over the internet to the hearing aids to further fine tune the adjustments.

Another aspect of quality of life is whether our world shrinks with hearing loss, lessening activities, interpersonal communication, and general participation. The answer is often yes, so the next question is how to expand that world back. For instance, with a really good sensory aid, a person can regain enjoyment of and participation in music, sports, crafts, or whatever they like doing. Research is also being done on the impact of hearing loss on memory, cognitive decline and how much effort it takes to understand what we hear. The next phase of research

*(March meeting summary, cont.)*

that Peggy is interested in is finding out how hearing aids and cochlear implants impact quality of life, not just intelligibility.

After the break, Christine described a study done in Japan that demonstrated that smoking is a risk factor in hearing loss. She also described a meeting that the St. Paul police asked for to better address issues of hearing loss and deafness. There was nothing in their protocols about working with people with hearing loss who do not sign. Part of that may be due to the greater advocacy of the Deaf population, as well as the wide range of people with hearing loss, many of whom deny it or don't even realize they have hearing loss. Editor Vicki Martin gave us an ASL lesson, with all the words relating to the month of March. Vice President Kathleen Marin asked for assistance in finding articles to put on our Facebook page to make it more interesting and active. No technical know-how is necessary, just ideas on what to add. Feel free to email ideas to her. Secretary Lionel Locke talked about our upcoming elections for board members. We are looking especially for someone to take on the role of vice president. That person would serve for 2 years and then become president. The current board serves as a nominating committee, but we also take nominations from the floor. Please let us know if you are interested. He also mentioned that we will have a table at the HLAA convention in Minneapolis. We will be looking for volunteers to staff that as well. Christine then closed the meeting at noon.

## Miscellany

Pioneer Press Premium Section March 2018 "Bright Ideas"

Audiology, p. 11

Quote from article:

**"Hearing Aids are hardly new, but what do they look like today?"**

"There are stock images of a big, beige device with some sort of bulky plug in the ear. I don't understand where they find those pictures because that hearing aid hasn't existed since the 1970s or 1980s. Today's hearing aids are small, elegant devices that can run for days... today, we can fit an entire wirelessly connected hearing aid inside the ear canal"

*(Editor's comment: While it is true that miniaturization and digitalization have greatly improved hearing aids and reduced their size, it is also true that greater functionality may still require more space than will be found inside the ear canal.*

*We applaud the miniaturization of hearing aids – but not because we are afraid that they will be seen. We applaud it because it allows more and better functionality to be housed in a wearable hearing device. It is the "more" and "better" that we care about most, not the invisibility.)*

**Reminder: Plan ahead for our May meeting!**  
**Things to do NOW!**

For election of board members: *offer to run for office, or volunteer at meetings,*  
For Silent Auction: *round up donations* from your favorite retailers or services

And LATER:  
Pot luck: bring a dish, and stay to eat!

## Introducing our April Speakers



**Sonya Reschly**  
Advanced Bionics  
(no photo available)



**Jessica Melton**  
Cochlear



**Landon Lacey**  
Med-El

**Sonya Reschly**, Au.D. is a Clinical Specialist for Advanced Bionics, providing clinical and surgical support to Cochlear Implant centers in the greater Chicago area. She has worked extensively with cochlear implants both in practice as a clinical audiologist and as a representative and territory manager within the cochlear implant industry. Her primary clinical interests include implantable technologies, hearing aids, and aural rehabilitation

**Jessica Melton** is a licensed and certified Audiologist. She trained at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana and earned a Doctorate of Audiology at Rush University Medical Center in 2006. Since 2007, Jessica has served Cochlear Americas as both a Territory Outreach Specialist and a Clinical Territory Manager. Today, Jessica is the Area Manager for the Chicago Metro and Northern Plains Territories

**Landon Lacey** is a Speech-Language Pathologist with a specialization in working with children with hearing loss and their families. She received her Bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University and her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Landon is currently Consumer Outreach Manager in the Midwest Region for the MED-EL Corporation where she provides support and outreach services for MED-EL recipients, cochlear implant candidates, speech-language pathologists, educators, audiologists, and cochlear implant clinics.

# Pushing the Limits

*Kathleen Marin*



There are two realities that stand out in the lives of people with hearing loss: our hearing aids and implants work best when the person talking to us is no more than six feet away (two arm-lengths) and hearing in noise is difficult, if not impossible. I do not want my life to be circumscribed by those limits, so, with the help of assistive listening technology, the support of my loved ones, and a little ingenuity, I'm finding ways to push back against them and expand my activities.

Let's start with eating out. I love going to restaurants, trying new foods, and not having to do the work of cooking and/or cleaning up. Like most people with hearing loss, I look for quiet restaurants and go during off hours. But that is not always possible, and I don't want to miss out on being with my friends or experiencing a new taste. So I ask for a quiet table, up against a wall, in a corner if possible, and away from the bar, kitchen and large parties. I also use my assistive listening device (ALD) in a specific way. I set the transmitter to unidirectional mic and have my tablemate attach it to their collar facing away from the crowd, toward the wall. That way, their voice comes in louder than the restaurant hubbub. If there are more people at the table, I put the transmitter in a wine goblet to get it closer to the people speaking and away from the annoying sounds of cutlery.

I also attend lectures and presentations, and many venues do not provide ALDs. My particular ALD can hook right into the sound system and stream the speech directly to my hearing aid and implant. I always ask the sound technicians to do that for me, and they have always been willing to comply. In some settings, the sound system can't handle that, so instead, I ask the presenters to wear my transmitter. Again, they have been happy to help me out. Last week, we found an innovative solution: the sound technician taped my transmitter directly to the microphone the speakers were using. That worked amazingly well, and the various presenters didn't have to keep passing my transmitter around and I didn't have to worry that someone would accidentally walk off while wearing it.

Another activity I enjoy is going on tours: architectural tours, history tours, art tours, gangster tours, almost any topic. I regularly ask the tour guide to wear my transmitter. I have only been turned down once, and that was due to a lack of understanding of the importance of an ALD vs typical amplification. I have since developed a little speech to explain why my ALD is essential, and every tour guide has graciously worn my transmitter.

My biggest challenge came when I decided to participate in a protest march with 20,000 people. No ALD was going to help me in that endeavor! Instead, my daughter, who calls herself my Personal Hearing Device, filled in the blanks for me. When I couldn't decipher the chants (which was most of the time), she spoke them clearly, loudly and directly to me so that I could join in. After we reached the place for the rally, I found a spot for us near the huge amplifiers and was able to understand almost everything that the different speakers said. When I didn't understand something, she cued me in with a few key words and/or the basic ASL that we know. The amplifiers near us cut out during the rally, leaving me unable to hear and feeling very isolated. I quickly found an official-looking person who promised to track down the sound tech. In just a few minutes, the amplification was restored, and I once again could hear the speeches and feel the excitement of being part of a great undertaking.

It has been gratifying to return to participating in "normal" or "hearing" pursuits again. But it requires work. Did you notice how often I wrote the words "I ask" in this article? That's the key: explaining what we need and asking for accommodations. The payoff is that an entire world opens up for us with nearly unlimited options. What would you like to do that you thought was off limits to you? What have you done that you thought you couldn't do? Let's have a conversation about it and share tips. You know how to find me. I'll be at our next meeting or you can email me at [vicepresident@hlaatc.org](mailto:vicepresident@hlaatc.org).

## Don't Forget!



### Register Online or Offline

**Online** – fill out the [Online Registration](#) and registration will be a breeze; you will receive a confirmation letter by email.

**Offline** – download and complete the [Registration Form](#) and mail, fax or email the form to us.

[convention@hearingloss.org](mailto:convention@hearingloss.org).

## Minneapolis Regional Chamber members sought

President Christine reached out to the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce to see if they can post information about our Convention on their website. They said they can only post it if we have an HLAA member/volunteer who is also a member of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber.

Do any of you out there belong to the Minneapolis Regional Chamber? If so, please let Christine know ([president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)) so she can request the posting.

### Focus group opportunity: hearing impairment/hearing aids

From: Courtney Coburn Glavin, Au.D.

I am reaching out to see if members of the Twin Cities HLAA organization would be interested in participating in a focus group on hearing impairment and hearing aids.

We are starting a business that aims to reshape the standard delivery model of hearing healthcare. I am a licensed audiologist, and I have seen how difficult it can be for patients to navigate the hearing healthcare system and get the help that they need.

We want to hear directly from individuals with hearing loss, specifically about their past experience(s) in receiving hearing healthcare and in obtaining hearing aids. This invaluable feedback will directly help to shape the company.

We will be hosting focus groups over the next several weeks to collect this feedback. We are local to Minneapolis, so we will host one group in town on Monday, April 16th from 5:15-6:15pm.

For those unable to make that meeting, another will be hosted over the phone. We are looking for 5-10 individuals to participate in each focus group.

If interested, please email me ([glavin.courtney@gmail.com](mailto:glavin.courtney@gmail.com)) or call my cell (614-562-4417) to let me know. Once you contact me, I can provide additional details.

## Take Note!

Would you come to an HLAA meeting if it wasn't captioned?

Did you know there was a time when our chapter meetings were not captioned?

Did you know that MCDHH sponsors most of the cost of CART (Communications Access Realtime Translation) at our HLAATC chapter meetings?

If this service is important to you, it is time to express our gratitude! Anne is always looking for quotes to add to their website, annual reports, printed materials and social media.

Please send your thanks to **Anne Sittner Anderson**, Communications Coordinator  
Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing Minnesotans  
[anne.sittner-anderson@state.mn.us](mailto:anne.sittner-anderson@state.mn.us)

One person's perspective:

Dear Anne,

It's hard to imagine how HLAA (then SHHH Minnesota chapter) was able to function before the meetings were captioned. When I joined the group in 2004, most (though not all) of the meetings were captioned. But it was not always so.

I had recently discovered CART, and requested it for a meeting of the Business Leadership Network, an organization dedicated to supporting equal access in the business world for people with disabilities. With some reluctance, my request was granted. I believe it was the first time it had been provided for BLN in Minnesota. It was also the first time I felt truly included in a meeting.

The second time was at an HLAA chapter meeting.

HLAA was the main source of information and support for me as the only member with hearing loss of my workplace Disability Advisory Committee. I attended HLAA for the information – and I got it, because of the captioning.

Each year, there would be one or two HLAA meetings that were not captioned, due to budget constraints. Rich in information, the chapter was low in cash, and that did limit its effectiveness on those occasions when we did not have CART.

But that is history. Now we have CART for every meeting. I have just learned that MCDHH has been providing funding for this, and I want you to know how important that is to us at our HLAA Twin Cities chapter.

**Thank you, MCDHH, for your help!**

Vicki Martin (member, HLAA Twin Cities chapter)

## Hearing Humor:

From Sandra Duke, Isanti, MN:

"I had had a frustrating evening trying to get my printer to work. I needed to print some stuff for my iPad class. I ended up ordering a new one on Amazon. So when I was getting ready for bed that night (in the half-dark — and my mind still thinking about the printer), I grabbed what I thought was my hearing aid dryer.

Except it wasn't. It was the Vicks bottle. I didn't even notice what I was doing until, as I started to put the second hearing aid in the jar, I started to feel the Vicks oozing up around the hearing aid. I quickly cleaned it off, but the right hearing aid didn't appear to be working. Try explaining that to your audiologist!

I kept it in the drier for a couple of days and started to get some function out of it. I went to my local audiologist and the receptionist/repair person replaced the small mesh piece over the receiver part (for free!). Now it works better than ever!"

*(Editor asks: Is that an endorsement of the Vicks procedure, Sandy?)*

**Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group**  
**Saturday, April 28, 2018 1:30- 3:30 PM**  
**Como Park Zoo and Conservatory**  
**1225 Estabrook Drive St. Paul, MN 55103**  
**651-487-8201**

**Host: Joanna Bailey**

We will be meeting in the Zobota Café in the Conservatory. We are planning on sitting at one of the tables near the main doors from 1:30-2:00 and then we can walk around and enjoy the beautiful conservatory and zoo! You are welcome to bring a spouse, partner, friend, family member, and/or significant other to any of these events! Please check this website for parking and other helpful information: <http://www.comozooconservatory.org/plan/#/visitor-guide>  
Hours and Directions: <http://m.comozooconservatory.org/happening/Details/23>

## Vignette:

Women traditionally bond with their hairdressers. That is, women with normal hearing do.

Even if we do well with hearing aids, the first thing that is usually done at a hair appointment is to dunk our head in water. It is wise to remove hearing appliances before letting that happen. So, we skip the chatter and get right down to business. This can be quite satisfactory, if a little less interesting, for both parties.

At a recent salon appointment, my hairdresser was working on dry hair, and suggested keeping my cochlear processor in place until she had worked her way down to the ears.

For the first time that I can remember, I got to kibitz with my hairdresser! Even though she stood behind me where I couldn't see her, it worked. We talked about family, music, her upcoming surgery, the weather.

So *that's* what it is like! It's not bad! Not bad at all.

## March Meeting 2018 Photos





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**Our next meeting is: April 21, 2018**

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**Newsletter Editor -**  
Vicki Martin, editor@hlaatc.org

**Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley, MN. We gather at 9:30 to socialize and the meeting starts at 10. Accommodations:** All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning* ([www.paradigmreporting.com](http://www.paradigmreporting.com)). The meeting room is also looped for T-coil or receiver.

Please visit the chapter's web-site at [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org) or visit us on Facebook: groups/HLAA-TC.