

# HLAA TC

# May 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:

May 19, 2018

Elections  
Pot Luck  
Auction

September 15, 2018

Drew Gerling, Golden Valley Fire Department, "Thinking (not 'hearing') your way to fire safety"

October 20, 2018

Dustin Leslie, "Text-to-911"



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## HLAA TC Website - Minnesota

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

HLAA TC telephone 763-447-9672

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## HLAA National - Maryland

[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 May 2018*

**Spring has Sprung!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Can you believe that this is our last meeting before Summer break? Wow! As we get older, time seems to move so much faster. Someone likened it to a toilet paper roll (faster as we get towards the end). Not a great thought on such a lovely day.

Don't forget that this is our potluck meeting. Bring (either home-made or purchased) your favorite food to share. If it is not obvious, it might be a good idea to include a list of the ingredients in case some of our members/guests have allergies. Also, bring anything you've collected for our silent auction fundraiser. I will have the auction forms ready when you arrive. We had such a great variety of auction items last year and a lot of fun bidding against each other. Don't forget to bring your cash, checks and/or credit cards!

No presentation at this meeting = more time to socialize and share experiences and ideas. We will also be having our Board elections at this meeting. Both Marie (Treasurer) and I will be stepping down. Still time to get your name in if you have

any interest in serving on the Board. We'd also like to have some volunteers for the legislative and social media committees.

Don't forget the national HLA convention in June. Still time to register – they have even extended the discount date. We are still looking for volunteers to help during the convention. Lionel is taking names.

Looking forward to seeing you later this month,

*Christine*



## Hearing Loss Matters

When: Wednesday, May 30, 2018  
9:00am- 11:00am

Where: Golden Rule Building, Suite 105  
85 E. 7th Place  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Description: A FREE two (2) hours diversity training\* Age-related hearing loss is more than a personal inconvenience, it's an ever-growing public health issue.

Untreated hearing loss has been associated with wide-ranging social and health consequences.

Participants will view "Hearing Loss Matters" (produced by MNCDHH and Twin Cities PBS-TPT) and learn about communication and treatment options from those affected by hearing loss.

After watching the 30-minute documentary, there will be an opportunity for discussion and questions & answers. PLUS there will be a **demonstration of assistive devices designed for those with a hearing loss!**

Registration: Email: [dhhs.metro@state.mn.us](mailto:dhhs.metro@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-431-5940 voice (or use your preferred relay service)



*Kathleen Marin, vice-president*

## **Meeting Summary April 21, 2018**

President Christine Morgan called the meeting to order at 10 am and introduced our speakers, a panel representing the major cochlear implant companies: Sonya Reschly from Advanced Bionics; Jessica Melton from Cochlear Americas; and Landon Lacey from Med-El. Each person spoke about the new and unique features of their products, as well as answered questions from the audience.

Sonya reported that one of the exciting new features of Advanced Bionics is their pairing with Phonak hearing aids so that the implant and hearing aid work together to help users hear in noise. They've also developed a CROS system for those people who no longer have usable hearing on the non-implanted side but don't have a second implant. (About 70% of people get only 1 implant.) AB is currently working on streaming from various external devices, such as cell phones. She also pointed out that their array can stimulate at 16 different points as well as in between those electrodes, giving 120 discrete points of stimulation to provide a wonderful representation of sound.

Jessica stated that Cochlear is still excited about the Nucleus 7 sound processor, the smallest and thinnest processor they've ever created. They have also developed the Kanso, a button style processor worn off the ear to provide greater comfort or a more cosmetic solution. It also has 2 microphones for better sound reception. Cochlear has also paired with a hearing aid company, GN Resound, so that the implant and aid work in tandem. Cochlear's current goal is to increase awareness about implants, since only about 5% of the people who could benefit from one actually get an implant.

Landon talked about the second generation of the Rondo, which is a button style processor, that has been launched in several countries outside of the US. They have started the "plus Rondo" promotion, so that anyone who gets an implant in the US now will also get a voucher to receive the new Rondo when it comes out. This way, people don't have to make a choice between waiting for their implant or missing out on the newest technology. She also described how Med-El has the longest electrode array in the industry and how its magnets don't need to be removed to have an MRI.

(April meeting summary, cont.)

All three panelists answered questions about hearing music more naturally. Jessica indicated that people with more residual hearing are being implanted now, and they are likely to have better music reception than people with little to no hearing. The University of Iowa is doing research into hearing music. Also, people who stream music seem to prefer the sound quality. Both Sonya and Landon talked about the importance of fine structure, a manner of processing sound in the implant that provides more detail than simply hearing speech. Finally, part of learning to appreciate music again requires practice.

Hearing in noise is another big issue. Jessica from Cochlear described the use of dual microphones, SCAN, which is the processor automatically compensating for the level of sound, and having the audiologist develop a specific program to be used in noisy environments. Advanced Bionics also uses dual mics and up to 3 programs with different strengths to get rid of noise more aggressively. Med-El also uses directional mics which can focus very narrowly on the person in front of you in a noisy place. In addition, the processor automatically adjusts for changing sound environments, from a quiet library to a loud football game. All 3 companies provide an external microphone to bring the sound directly to the implant, thus accounting for both distance and noise. The panel also answered several other questions in a spirited discussion about various aspects of cochlear implants.

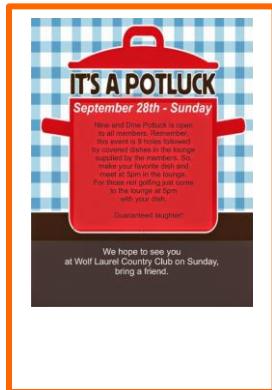
After the break, Christine and Secretary Lionel Locke discussed the upcoming board elections. The current board acts as a nominating committee, but also wants to hear from anyone who would like to run for a board position. The current nominees are: Kathleen Marin for president; Lionel Locke for treasurer; Ross Hammond for secretary; and Mike Higgins for vice-president. Mike then spoke for a few minutes, introducing himself. He has lived in Dayton, Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati and Minneapolis. He worked for many years for National Rental Car, including 2 vice president positions. He has also worked for the State of MN and for HealthPartners. He found out he needed hearing aids at a medical check at the state fair, and now would like to help our group grow as well as learn more about hearing loss. Lionel provided some more info about HLAA-TC, saying that it is a non-profit, volunteer group that opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy and encourages and educates people on how to cope with hearing loss and overcome obstacles and challenges.

Kathleen described HLAA-TC as the only organization in the state devoted to advocating for people with hearing loss who are not Deaf and asked for feedback and ideas from the members on what we should be advocating for. Treasurer Marie Saliterman mentioned that she put testimonial forms on the chairs and would like people to take the time to describe why they appreciate having CART and send them in because our CART is being funded for us and we would like them to know how much we appreciate it. Christine reminded everyone that our next meeting is our pot luck and silent auction and asked people to bring food to share and items for the auction. She closed the meeting at noon.

## MAY Program



Elections



Pot Luck



Silent Auction

Saturday, May 19, 2018, 10 AM.

### Getting There

"You can't get there from here!"

If you usually take 35W northbound to 94 westbound en route to HLAA-TC meetings, check out this website before you leave home:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/35w94/#upcoming>

I-35W from the Crosstown to I-94 will be undergoing construction now through the fall of 2021. There will be ramp, bridge and lane closures during that time, varying with which phase of the project is being done. Get a heads-up to find an alternate route if necessary.

Because you really *can* get there!

# HLAA National Convention 2018



**Extension of date for discounted admission! May 11**

Register Online or Offline [convention@hearingloss.org](mailto:convention@hearingloss.org)

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 demo room preview:

## **THURSDAY, JUNE 21**

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Hamilton CapTel: Connect with Hamilton® CapTel®

2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Advanced Bionics: Communicate with Confidence: Introducing SoundSuccess™

4 p.m. – 5 p.m. MED-EL: Tailoring Auditory Exercises to Meet my Listening Practice Needs

## **FRIDAY, JUNE 22**

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Advanced Bionics: The Simple Way to Hear More

2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Alango Technologies: BeHear® NOW: A Stylish, Affordable, Customizable Alternative to Hearing Aids

3:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. CapTel Captioned Telephone: Latest Advances in CapTel Captioned Telephones

## **SATURDAY, JUNE 23**

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Cochlear Americas: Wear Your Way – Is One Better? Off-the-ear or Behind-the-ear Processors?

*...and more!*

## Second Language



I have heard many older adults comment (complain?) about the disabilities that go along with aging. Of those that have identified a “worst” disability, hearing loss is invariably their target.

We recently spent time with Gladys, an older sibling of Dennis', in a mostly successful effort to accomplish a move of herself and her pared-down belongings to another state.

Gladys has been losing her hearing for some time now, but this time it was much worse. She is deaf, and there seemed to be no way to accommodate her disability. Her hearing aids either do not work, or simply don't give her enough help to make a difference.

She had to reduce the volume of her belongings by a large percentage, and that meant limiting her library to 4-6 boxes of books. She had two ASL books that she had begun to use, and she asked me to help her choose which one to leave behind.

Yes, she was trying to learn sign language. A major problem with that was, she had no one to use it with. Her neighbors are friendly and patient, and are willing to shout in her ear – but they do not sign.

A second disadvantage, or so I thought, is simply age. We have always heard that it is hard for adults to learn a new language, though children do so easily. But this may not be entirely true. “Adults learn differently than children, but no age-related differences in learning ability have been demonstrated by adults of different ages.” We even have some advantages over the young learner: “Especially in the areas of vocabulary and language structure, adults are actually better language learners than children.”

(<http://www.language-learning-advisor.com/age-and-language-learning.html> ).

Now that Gladys has made the move to Chicago, maybe we can focus on enhancing her remaining hearing. And if that isn't enough, she still has that ASL book.

Oh, and by the way...Gladys is 95.

## Idea: How about a hearing aid lending library for older adults?

I know several people who really needed hearing aids for the last few months or weeks of their life. They did not use the hearing aids very long, but they were available at a critical time for them.

What if we could do that for more people?

### Digital Access survey from MCDHH



#### What Does Digital Accessibility Mean to Me? [Share your feedback!](#)

Thursday, May 17, 2018, is the seventh annual Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD). This is a day that promotes and celebrates digital accessibility to make sure that people with disabilities experience inclusion online.

MNCDHH will be posting quotes from community stakeholders about what digital accessibility means to them on our social media to celebrate GAAD. If you would like to participate, please go to <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4320331/Digital-Accessibility>

### Position Open

The position for the Coordinator of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Role Model Program is open. It is a paid position. I believe they are looking particularly for males to apply since very few have so far. Feel free to share.

Please see the details by following this link to Lifetrack Resources.

<https://recruiting.paylocity.com/Recruiting/Jobs/Details/35409>

(Note: the position is 0.8FTE, so it may be considered a full time coordinator position.)

Emory David Dively, Deputy Director, Commission of Deaf Deafblind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans

*Advocating for communication access and equal opportunity with the 20 percent of Minnesotans who are Deaf, Deafblind or hard of hearing.*

85 East 7th Place, Suite 105/ mn.gov/deaf-commission/ hearinglossmatters.org

## Book Review: Musicophilia by Oliver Sacks

*Vicki Martin*



Oliver Sacks (1933-2015), neurologist and author of the well-known Awakenings, left a legacy of fascinating books, mostly on topics dealing with neurology.

It's been said that "we hear with our brains, not with our ears", so it is not surprising that the way we perceive sound (or don't perceive it) and how it affects us would be of interest to Sacks. Sacks' work, Musicophilia (New York, 2007), focuses particularly on how we perceive and respond to music, and how neurological pathologies affect the music/brain connection. Of particular interest to me is the chapter on tonal distortion in music ("Pitch Imperfect"). Relative pitch, and even perfect pitch (enjoyed by 1 in 10,000 people) can be severely distorted by hearing loss, yet to some extent restored by great attention to sound and the subsequent remapping and enlarging of the cortex.

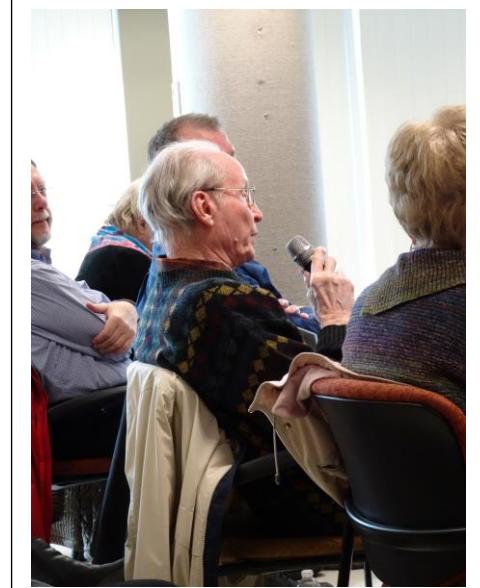
"If there are changes in the sensory input or the use of the body", writes Sacks, "...The brain's mapping of the body image...adapts quite rapidly. Thus if a finger, for example, is immobilized or lost, its cortical representation will become smaller or disappear entirely...If, conversely the finger is used a great deal, its cortical representation will enlarge, as happens with the Braille-reading index finger in a blind person...One might expect something similar to happen with the mapping of tones from a damaged cochlea" (pp. 135-136). He shows that our cortical representations shrink or enlarge according as "we pay attention to or focus on sound" (p. 136).

Cats, whose hearing is legendary, also develop hearing loss and distorted tonotopic maps when exposed to noise trauma. "If, however, the cats were exposed to an enriched acoustic environment for several weeks following exposure...their hearing loss was less severe, and distortions in their auditory cortical mappings did not occur" (p. 142). A rich acoustic environment, then, can minimize tonal distortion.

But I am not a cat. And the peace and relaxation that come with a quiet environment are of great value too. What is the proper balance? Sacks does not try to answer these questions, but he is expert at raising them, and suggesting tantalizing possibilities.

Musicophilia touches on dozens of ways in which sound and neurology interact, from "earworms" (can't get that song out of my head) to emotional effects to tinnitus. It's a fascinating read, and some of its chapters may inspire us to experimentation, in the hope that we can optimize our own auditory neurological connections.

## April Meeting 2018 Photos





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**Our next meeting is: May 19, 2018**

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**Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley (3915 Golden Valley Road), 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.**