

HLAA TC

December 2019



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:

December 21, 2019

"Clear Speech"

Mary Bauer

*Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist
Minnesota Department of Human
Services*

January 18, 2020

Legislative Update
Emory Dively

February 15, 2020

Vestibular Rehabilitation
Novacare



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Officers' emails

- Christine Morgan - president@hlaatc.org
- Mike Higgins vicepresident@hlaatc.org
- Ed Benck - secretary@hlaatc.org
- Lionel Locke - treasurer@hlaatc.org
- Dwight Maxa - director@hlaatc.org

HLAA TC Website - Minnesota

www.hlaatc.org

HLAA TC telephone 763-447-9672

Contact Information - Minnesota

info@hlaatc.org

HLAA National - Maryland

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
December 2019*

Well, here we are at the end of 2019 and our last meeting of the calendar year.

Time for our holiday party with the potluck and the ever-so-fun White Elephant Gift Exchange. Our December speaker is Mary Bauer. Many of us know Mary, who is not only a wonderful person but a wealth of knowledge as well. She is going to present on "Clear Speech". Don't you wish everyone spoke more clearly?

January is our update from the Commission, and February is a presentation by NovaCare on Vestibular Rehab. We have been so fortunate to have had such terrific speakers. You can learn so much at the Chapter meetings in addition to developing new friendships and warm support. Your suggestions for specific topics and/or speakers are always welcome. Just let one of the officers know.

The Conference Committee is working behind the scenes for the 10/10/2020 conference. We are always looking for members who are interested in getting involved on the Membership and/or Legislative Committees too.

Those of us with hearing loss understand that holidays and family can be fun but stressful. Take time to take care of you. Sometimes we have to walk away for a moment for some quiet time and to recharge.

I hope you all have a healthy, happy, and safe holiday season.

Christine



HLAA-TC Mentor Program

In line with our mission of providing information, education and support to people with hearing loss, our HLAA chapter is starting a mentor program to pair volunteers with others who are seeking advice for their hearing journey.

If you would like to volunteer, or are looking for advice and guidance, contact Christine Morgan (president@hlaatc.org) or Dwight Maxa (director@hlaatc.org)

November Meeting Summary



Mike Higgins
Vice President

Dr. Hubert Lim is the Associate Professor in the U of M Department of Biomedical Engineering and Otolaryngology ENT and the Institute for Translational Neuroscience Scholar. He is also the Chief Scientific Officer for Neuromod, Dublin, Ireland.

Dr. Lim's research is in technologies, devices that interface with the brain and the peripheral nervous system. More specifically, technologies for hearing and tinnitus. In the scientific community there are still many questions as to what is going on. There is a strong link between hearing loss and tinnitus. We do know there are multiple brain regions involved, not just the hearing system. These include the non-hearing pathways and higher cognitive, emotional limbic pathways of the brain. Mechanical tinnitus can be caused by physiological changes such as vascular pulsations. Subjective tinnitus occurs when the sound is generated in the brain, in the nervous system absent any actual sound coming into the ear externally. Tinnitus affects about 20% of the population including a large portion of the work force and military personnel.

About 5% of the population suffer with subjective tinnitus. The challenge is how to address this condition. For many of these individuals' specific sounds or music stimulation helps to temporarily overshadow or mask the tinnitus. These hearing approaches do interact with the brain, but the reduction in tinnitus is short-term.

Recent clinical recommendations for treating tinnitus include behavioral and cognitive approaches. Cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT, is now considered the gold standard in dealing with tinnitus. This involves weeks or months of different methods learning about the patient's tinnitus and incorporating relaxation and mental exercises. These multi-pronged approaches are demonstrating longer term results indicating the brain must be changing on a long-term scale. The challenge remained, what is causing tinnitus and what can be added to the behavioral approaches to improve tinnitus treatment. Research indicates that if external sound (volume) cannot be increased the brain will elevate the incoming sound (gain) to improve comprehension. In some individuals the brain overcompensates and brain cells fire at a stronger level than necessary. This results in tinnitus or the phantom effect. Because the brain is multimodal it provides multiple pathways to access the auditory system. Using Classical (Pavlovian) Conditioning other stimuli can be introduced requiring the brain to become more sensitive to many different stimuli and not focus on the tinnitus stimuli.

(November Meeting Summary, cont.)

Dr. Lim and his U of M research teams found electrically stimulating the pinna (outside of the ear) or stimulating the tongue were the greatest drivers of activity related to tinnitus. Dr. Lim's research pursued electrical and sound stimulation of the ear to resolve tinnitus. The Neuromod Corporation in Dublin, Ireland was also working to develop a device to combine sound stimulation with electrical stimulation of the tongue to resolve chronic tinnitus.

Neuromod had created the Tonguetip® (lollipop) device with 32 electrode contacts providing gentle stimulation to the tongue. Both the sound and electrical stimuli are controlled by a small, lightweight device. This manages the timing, intensity and synchronization of electric stimuli to the tongue and sound stimuli delivered through Bluetooth headphones. This combination provides an effective treatment for tinnitus. The device already carries the CE mark and is approved as a medical device for sale in the EU. Dr. Lim and his team is continuing research with the Neuromod device at the U of M to secure FDA medical device approval in the United States.

Officer Updates and Reports

President - Christine Morgan

- Announced our Board's plan for a "mentor" program to provide support to individual's with hearing loss challenges, Christine and Dwight will lead this program.
- December meeting speaker Mary Bauer, on Clear Speech, holiday potluck and white elephant exchange
- Materials from the Hearing Health Foundation are available on the resource table.
- As a member of the MNCDHH Board Christine is the Metro Advisory Council Representative and the information conduit for our Chapter to and from the Commission. A Cost Benefit Analysis was requested by the Department of Commerce before any decision would be made requiring insurance companies to cover the costs for hearing aids.

Introduction of a guest who is an Architect with an interest in hearing loss. He has focused on hospitality and restaurants projects and provided a quick overview regarding restaurant acoustics, seating preferences and self-advocacy for the hard of hearing.

Vice President - Mike Higgins

- The October 10, 2020 HLAA-Twin Cities conference work is ramping up. □ Information and conference updates are on the [HLAA-TC Website](#) Two of the three guest speakers are already scheduled.
- As the conference grows closer, we'll be asking for more volunteers.
- Like previous years we'll have a few door prizes for attendees
- Unlike the 2018 conference, we don't expect snowstorms in October 2020.
- Give to the Max Day contribution link is on Facebook at HLAA-TC and HLAA-Twin Cities until January 19, 2020. We'll also participate in Give to the Max Day 2020 as we have in the past.

Secretary – Ed Benck

- New member of the Board but already recognizing the work that is necessary to develop and support the HLAA-Twin Cities Chapter activities. Each of the board members bring unique skill sets that round out the organization. The 56 attendees at today's meeting attest to that hard work.

(November Meeting Summary, cont.)

- Advice for eating out. Go early and 15 minutes before the rest of your party arrives so you can pick the best table. For example, dinner at Ike's in a little room off the bar is great and you may need advocate with the staff to keep the window to the bar closed.
- The number of big-name entertainers with tinnitus is growing. Some cancel concerts and tours due to the onset of tinnitus or intensifying symptoms. We have the same problems.

Treasurer – Lionel

- If you shop on Amazon, please use Amazon Smile and select **Hearing Loss of America Twin Cities Chapter** as the charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. They will donate a small portion of your purchase price to our Twin Cities Chapter. Amazon Smile will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. These contributions go directly to our checking account. The purchase must be made on Amazon Smile.
- On Saturday, December 14 from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm a family winter wonderland event is planned at Apollo High School in St. Cloud. This event is sponsored by the Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing Division. There will be food from Cold Spring Bakery, refreshments, crafts and decorating cookies. Santa and some of the elves will also be there.
- Introduction of two U of M MBA students at the Carlson School of Business. They requested HLAA members participation in a focus group to determine what the hearing aid consumer wants now, what are their current and future needs, what do we value in our current hearing device and audiologists?

Director at Large – Dwight Maxa

- Because our organization is growing, Dwight has been asked to assist in formalizing our processes to become more organized as a Chapter. That means having objectives and goals along with a strategic plan. We're growing and need to know where we're going in the future.
- In his role as Director-at-Large, he will be looking into funding options.
- Dwight has been involved this organization for a long time, but has not played an active role until now. He is enthusiastic about our future direction and impact.



Got Opinions?

Read a good book lately? Or a not-so-good one?
Or have you had a nice restaurant meal with quiet conversation?
Tell us about your experiences and share the good, the bad and the ugly!
Book reviews and restaurant reviews are always appreciated.

December Speaker



Mary Bauer

The Talk:

“Clear Speech”

Mary will tell us about the simple fundamentals of clear speech. It makes so much difference for hard of hearing listeners, you may wonder why everyone doesn't do it. Actually, we can – and it doesn't take any special talent, just the willingness to make it a habit.

The Speaker:

Mary Bauer is a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Specialist at Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS), a division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. She has been at DHHS since 1996. She provides consultation, information & referral, technical assistance, and training regarding issues related to hearing loss.

Mary is well-known for her presentations and she brings several aspects to her trainings – including her own experiences as a person who is hard of hearing.

She graduated from Augustana College in Sioux Falls with a double major in Elementary Education and Deaf Education and has worked with deaf and hard of hearing persons and their families since 1980

“Hearing” the Words Behind the Mask

By Christine Morgan

Now this is exciting news!

According to Neil Bauman, PhD (a leading authority on hearing loss as well as an audiologist with hearing loss), Dr. Anne McIntosh, Ph.D. received FDA approval at the end of 2016 for her clear surgical face mask. It is manufactured in the US and is called “The Communicator”. Great name, right?

The Communicator combines the best of fabric and clear face masks. This enables you to easily see the wearer’s mouth without any fogging and will allow you to speechread with ease. It is not only useful for doctors, dentists, etc. but also for surgical nurses who have hearing loss to be able to speechread others in the surgical suite.

Best of all, it is available to anyone. The introductory price: \$1.50 each, a box of 40 for \$60, or a case for \$500. For further information, e-mail Dr. Anne at info@safenclear.com or go to <http://www.safenclear.com>.

No more muffled dentist or doctor talk! Let’s spread the word!

Safe N Clear Dental/surgical masks

“The Communicator”



Errata (from November issue)

Our blog writer's name is Laura *Hagemann*, not *Hagedorn*.

I do not know anyone named Hagedorn – so why did that name leap onto the page when I meant Hagemann?

Etymology may give a clue: “The roots of the distinguished German surname **Hagedorn** can be traced back to the region of Brunswick, now the modern state of Lower Saxony. The name means ‘hawthorn’.”

Aha! Both Hawthorne and Hagemann are quick with a pen (or its modern equivalent).

For the record, “the German surname **Hagemann**, like many surnames, was taken from some geographical feature near the dwelling place of its first bearer. Coming from the Old Norse "haga," or some local variation of the word, the name means ‘one who lives near a hedged or fenced enclosure’.”

My apologies to Ms. *Hagemann*!

---- *editor*

SPAM reminder

Not getting your HLAA-TC Newsletter even though you signed up for it? Or do you know someone else who isn't?

Be sure to check your SPAM folder. Sometimes we drop things in there by mistake.

You can get it back! Just highlight the email you want, and click the button that says “this is not spam”.

Voila!



From the Listen Lab:

Volunteers needed!

Dr. Matt Winn's Listen Lab has been working hard on new projects. We are currently seeking adults who: (1) speak English as a first language, (2) lost their hearing after birth, and (3) understand speech relatively well with cochlear implants. Often people who hear "relatively well" can carry on a phone conversation. In our lab we are interested in speech perception and the things that make it difficult or effortful. All of the tests involve listening to words or sentences where we see how changes in speech rate, timing, articulation, or different talkers affects how you hear the speech. The sessions, held in Shevlin Hall on the East Bank of the University of Minnesota, may last up to 2 hours.

Participants are paid \$25/hour and free parking is available.

I hope you'll be interested! If so please respond back to me (henn0158@umn.edu or 612-625-3327) with your availability. Also, please feel free to share this invitation with others who may qualify.

Thanks!

Kate Teece, Au. D.
Research Audiologist
University of Minnesota



New Product

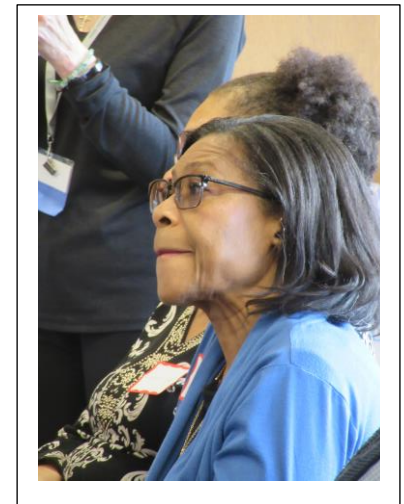
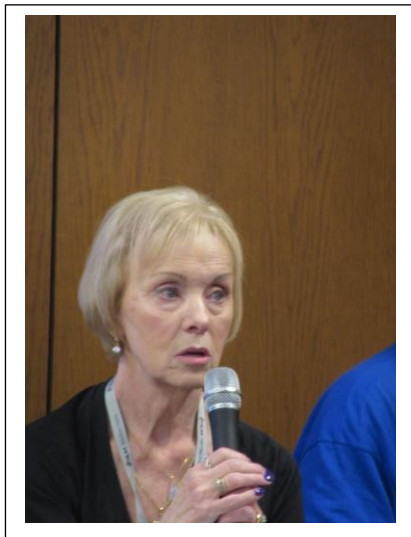
From TIME magazine, December 9, 2019, "100 Best Inventions of 2019":

Bose Sunglass frames, which pair with your smartphone, include a tiny audio system in each temple, designed to be audible only to the wearer. No headphones needed. "Frames provide an open-ear personal listening experience that allows the wearer to enjoy content without closing themselves off to the world around them."

(No explanation is given as to how the sound signal gets to your brain.)



Photos from November Meeting





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Next meeting: December 21, 2019

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Welcomes You!

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Secretary – Ed Benck
secretary@hlaatc.org

Treasurer – Lionel Locke
treasurer@hlaatc.org

Director at Large -- Dwight Maxa director@hlaatc.org

Contact Info. - info@hlaatc.org

Photos – Vicki Martin

Newsletter Editor -
Vicki Martin, editor@hlaatc.org

Meetings are held the 3rd 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). The meeting room is also looped for T-coil or receiver.

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