

HLAA TC

April 2025

Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota



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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 19, 2025

Jon Slock

Break the Bubble

Avoiding Isolation in the Twin Cities
followed by:

Luncheon in honor of
Lisa Richardson's retirement

May 17, 2025

Annual Meeting

Round Table Discussion

Budget presentation

Board elections



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President's email

Robin Coninx – president@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

The April Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter meeting (HLAA TC) will be held on April 19, 2025

See page 11 for further details

President's Message

March meeting summary
Robin (Byrdie) Coninx

Summary of the HLAA-TC Meeting March 15, 2025

The March HLAATC Chapter Meeting was chaired by Byrdie, the interim volunteer leader, who welcomed attendees, and called attention to the upcoming Walk4Hearing event on June 21, the meeting room's newly repaired hearing loop system, and the call for board members President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (the chapter currently relies on volunteers filling interim roles).

The meeting featured a presentation by Matt Winn, professor and researcher from the University of Minnesota, on "listening effort" and its impact on individuals with hearing loss (see summary on page 4).

Chapter Business and Upcoming Events

April Meeting (April 19): A speaker will address engagement and avoiding isolation, followed by a luncheon celebrating the retirement of longtime captioner Lisa Richardson, who has been involved with HLAA-TC since 1992.

DHHS Resource Fair (April 24): Rich invited chapter members to join him at the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services event in St. Paul to promote HLAA-TC.

May Meeting (May 17): The annual meeting will feature a budget presentation and board elections. Byrdie encouraged nominations for officer roles.

Walk4Hearing (June 21): Plans are underway to make the event inclusive, with adjustments to the walk path based on feedback from last year.

The meeting concluded early after a break, with Byrdie thanking Matt and attendees. Matt expressed openness to future collaboration and volunteer participation in his lab's studies, offering paid opportunities and free parking at the University of Minnesota.

If you are interested in participating in this research as a volunteer, please contact Kate Teece at henn0158@umn.edu.

(Listen Lab is located at the University of Minnesota
32 Shevlin Hall, 164 Pillsbury Drive SE Minneapolis, MN 55455)

HLAA-TC Mission:

To open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education and advocacy.

April Chapter Presentation
“How to Meet People and Stay Engaged”
Jon Slock, coordinator
Break the Bubble



At our HLAA-TC Chapter meeting on April 19th, our presenter will be Jon Slock who will be speaking on the topic of how to avoid isolation, meet people and stay engaged. Jon coordinates the monthly meetups of *Break the Bubble*, a highly successful gathering of people who want to meet people and make friends in the Twin Cities.

Jon will share his experiences and knowledge to help us remain socially active and engaged.

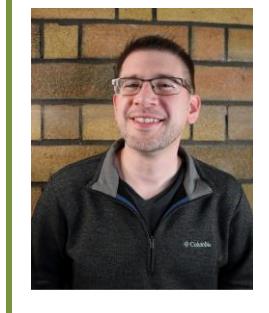
Hearing loss and social isolation have been linked to several health risks, including depression and anxiety. Jon’s presentation will include specific opportunities for people with hearing issues to remain socially engaged and active.

Following Jon’s presentation, we will be hosting a retirement celebration for Lisa Richardson, our long time CART provider. A light lunch will follow. (See article on page 5 for more information and to RSVP for lunch.)

Join us on April 19th in the Board Room of the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Minneapolis. Social time starts at 9:30 and the meeting begins at 10. This meeting will be in person only.

HLAA-TC March presentation summary

Matt Winn: Listening Effort and Hearing Loss



Matt, a former audiologist turned researcher, shared his journey from clinical work to academia, focusing on understanding the experiences of people with hearing loss, especially those with cochlear implants. Matt emphasized that listening effort—the cognitive energy required to hear and understand speech—is often overlooked in traditional audiology training and clinical practice.

Research shows that people with hearing loss experience increased fatigue, need more recovery time, take more stress-related sick leave, and may withdraw from social situations due to the effort required to listen.

He illustrated how individuals might unconsciously avoid effortful situations (e.g., avoiding crowded restaurants), comparing it to his own experience of avoiding pizza due to minor inconvenience when walking home without a car. Examples from attendees included going to bed early, enjoying silence after noisy environments, and shortening social interactions to conserve energy.

Matt explained how cochlear implants process sound via electrical pulses rather than acoustic waves, leading to reduced clarity (e.g., loss of prosody—speech melody and emphasis). His lab studies this, using tools like pupil dilation to measure effort. Key findings of the research so far include: 1) Effort persists beyond the act of listening, as individuals mentally repair missed words, impacting their ability to follow conversations. 2) Mistakes early in sentences are more costly than those at the end, and effort doesn't always correlate with word recognition accuracy. 3) Unlike those with normal hearing who target effort where needed, people with cochlear implants tend to exert effort uniformly across sentences, leading to greater fatigue. Matt encouraged audiologists to rethink how effort is assessed beyond simple word recognition tests, and suggested strategies like pausing after key information to allow listeners to catch up.

Attendees shared personal strategies (e.g., pre-planning seating for optimal hearing) and frustrations (e.g., booth tests not reflecting real-world challenges). Matt welcomed their input to inform his teaching and research.

Watch the presentation here: <https://youtu.be/VZytFF1d6HA?si=X5mhYjrS1LO0ZBav>

Invitation to a Retirement Celebration For Lisa Richardson!



April 19th 2025
At 11:15 AM at the Courage Kenny
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley MN 55422

A light lunch and cake will be served

please RSVP Byrdie at president@hlaatc.org if you can stay
for lunch

Lisa's advocacy and skill of bringing CART to individuals with hearing loss has been since 1992! She has been a contributing member to SHHH/HLAATC for all of that time.

Please come and say thank-you in person or send a congratulatory note to president@hlaatc.org that we will happily pass on to Lisa!

HLAATC Board Election Nominations – April 2025 Newsletter

Get Ready to Vote for Your 2025 HLAATC Leadership Team!

Election Date: May 17, 2025

Nomination Deadline: April 30, 2025

Spring is here, and HLAATC is buzzing—it's time to nominate the rockstars who'll lead us into an epic 2025! The High-Level Awesome Association of Totally Cool Folks (HLAATC) board—made up of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 4 Directors at Large—is open for nominations, so let's meet some standout candidates and get ready to fill the slate!

Meet Your Nominees at this time

Robin "Byrdie" Coninx – Running for President

Robin "Byrdie" Coninx is a high-flying leader ready to take HLAATC to new heights as President. With bold vision and infectious energy, Byrdie's set to rally us toward an amazing future!

Christy Myers – Running for Secretary

Christy Myers is stepping up from Director at Large to bring her organizational magic to the Secretary role. She's eager to document our journey and keep HLAATC on track with flair!

Sharon Witt – Running for Treasurer

Sharon Witt is our number-crunching wizard vying for Treasurer. With her savvy and wit, she'll make sure our finances fuel every HLAATC dream!

Big News: Director at Large Opening!

With Christy Myers moving from Director at Large to another role, a Director at Large position is now vacant—and we need YOU to step up! The HLAATC board thrives with 4 Directors at Large alongside our President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, so we're calling for nominations for these spots and all positions—don't miss your chance to shape our future!

(nominations, cont)

How to Get Involved

Any HLAATC member can nominate a candidate—including our fab four, yourself, or someone awesome—for ANY position, from President to Director at Large! To make a nomination, or for further information, contact Robin Coninx (president@hlaatc.org) or 763-447-9672 by April 30, 2025 -- late entries miss the party!

Vote: Join us on May 17, 2025, at the Annual HLAATC Chapter meeting (details next month!) to elect our new board—your vote powers this team!

Why It Matters

This election is YOUR shot to build an HLAATC board that rocks—President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 4 Directors at Large strong! Robin, Michael, Christy, and Sharon are ready, but we need more nominees—especially for that open Director at Large spot—so let's make 2025 legendary!

Stay tuned for more in next month's newsletter. Nominate, vote, and let's roll!

A Brief Update on Book Club

By Laura Hagemann

Check out this [Blog Post](#) for a summary of the March book club that we had on March 25th with author and New York Times reporter Thomas Fuller on his nonfiction book “The Boys of Riverside: A Deaf Football Team and A Quest For Glory.”

April Book and Book Club: APRIL 2025: Tuesday, APRIL 22, 5:00 pm Western/ 7:00 pm Central/ 8:00 pm Eastern Time. [“Silent Night” \(Fiction\)](#) by Nell Pattison, BARD: DB 112022 [[ZOOM-Register Here](#)]
Book Synopsis: What happened while they were sleeping? A school for the deaf takes an overnight trip to the snowy woods. Five teenagers go to sleep, but only four wake up. Leon is missing, and a teacher's body is found in the forest.... Sign language interpreter Paige Northwood is brought in to help with interrogations.” Published 2024. Book 2 of a series we started in March 2024 (Book 1 is The Silent House, previously read by this book club in March 2024).

Book clubs happen every fourth Tuesday on Zoom with captions). To see a book reading order and schedule, visit our [Book Club Webpage](#). If you would like to join us for any future book club or if you have questions about book club, please contact Laura Hagemann (HLAA-TC Social Media Specialist and Book Club Coordinator) social@hlaatc.org



Saturday
June 21, 2025

Como Park
1199 Midway Parkway
St. Paul, MN

Twin Cities Walk4Hearing

REGISTER TODAY! walk4hearing.org



REGISTER TODAY!
walk4hearing.org



TO REGISTER

Scan the code with your phone or Click here: HlaatcWalk

To support our local HLAA-TC Chapter, select HLAA Twin Cities to receive a portion of your contribution

Volunteers needed!

HLAA-TC Board member Michael Smith requests:

HLAA Twin Cities chapter is working on a membership development project and is hoping to find members who are willing to volunteer a few hours keying email addresses and profiles into a provided spreadsheet. If you can spare some time to help, please contact the subcommittee chair, Michael Smith, at michaelsmithmn@gmail.com.

St. Paul Hearing Loss Resource Fair

This exciting resource fair will offer free hearing screenings, courtesy of the University of Minnesota's Speech Language and Hearing Science Department. It's an incredible opportunity for people experiencing hearing loss and their families to explore a wide range of resources and discover programs dedicated to providing communication access. Attendees will have the chance to learn about services that support their needs and find out exactly how to request these vital resources. Don't miss out on this chance to connect, engage, and empower yourself with the tools and knowledge to enhance your communication and access to services!

Where

Elmer L. Andersen Human Services Building
540 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota

When

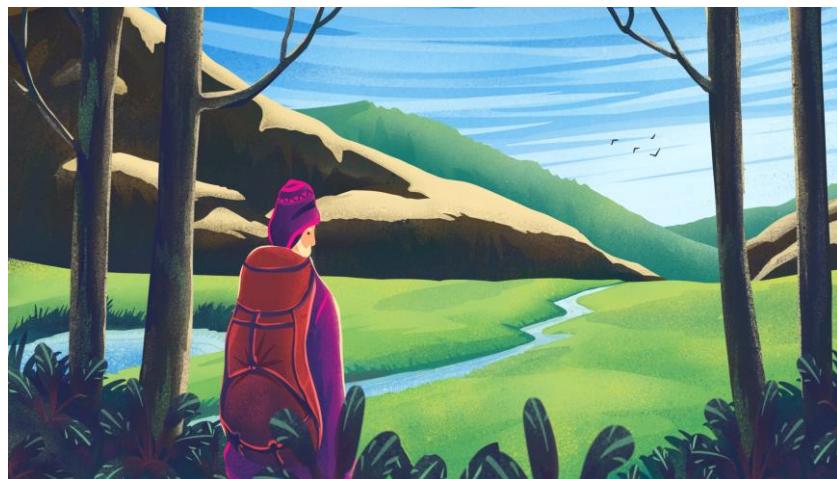
Thursday, April 24, 2025
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Exhibitors

Exhibitor registration is now open! Sign up on the [St. Paul Hearing Loss Resource Fair exhibitor registration form.](#)

Free hearing screening provided by University of Minnesota Department of Speech Language Hearing Sciences.

Hearing Loss Resource Fair



Telephone tag squared (in four easy steps)

By Vicki Martin

Setting: Phone meeting to schedule medical transportation. It is a Saturday evening, and no Farsi interpreter is available to the transport company at that time.

Persons on the call:

M – Farsi-speaking refugee needing medical transportation for her son

V – refugee sponsor team member

S – scheduler at the medical transportation company office

Equipment (four phones: three with M and V, one at the scheduling office):

- A) V's mobile phone, open to an app that displays the incoming voice as captions on screen.
- B) M's mobile phone, open to an app that translates V's English *voice* to Farsi text
- C) B's mobile phone, open to an app that translates English *text* to Farsi text.
- D) S's (office) phone at the medical transportation company

Instructions:

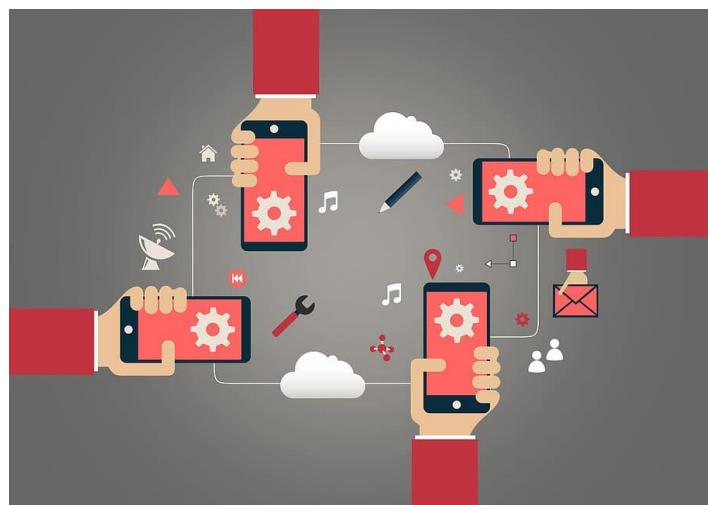
Initialize: V calls phone D from phone A

Iteration:

1. **V speaks aloud in English on phone A, and Farsi text appears on phone B.**
2. **S speaks aloud in English on phone D, and English captions appear on phone A.**
3. **M types English captions from phone A into phone C, and Farsi text appears on Phone C.**
4. **M and V “converse”, using English and gestures.**

Repeat steps 1-4 about 46 times, (or as many as needed).

End call – and schedule your next meeting in person.



Membership form

To join the HLAA TC Chapter, please print and complete this form and mail to:

HLAA TC Chapter
P.O. Box 26021
Minneapolis, MN 55426

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone/TTY#: _____

Email: _____

Membership Type:

(Please Select One. All Memberships are annual and renewed on September 15th of each year)

New Membership
 Renewal

(\$25) - Individual Membership
 (\$50) - Professional Membership
 (\$15) - Printed Newsletter (optional - all memberships include a newsletter via email)
 (\$____) - Donation

Please add up totals and mail this form along with your payment to the address listed at the top of this form.

Total Enclosed

***NOTE: National Membership is a separate membership with privileges and publications (see www.hearingloss.org).**

RECEIPT

This is acknowledgement that \$_____ has been received by HLAA-TC for _____

from:
Name _____
Date _____

By _____

Meeting information

The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA-TC) will be held on April 19, 2025.

Location: Courage Kenny, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55422

Registration: The meeting will be in-person only. Register if staying for lunch.

Meeting time: Meeting begins at 10 AM (social time at 9:30). Lunch is at noon.

Accommodations: All meetings are realtime captioned by Captioners from Veritext/Paradigm (www.captioning-paradigm@veritext.com).

The meeting room is also looped for enhanced hearing directly to your hearing aids or Cochlear implant using T-coil.

HLAA TC
PO Box 26021
Minneapolis, MN 55426



First Class

Membership Form **HLAA Twin Cities Chapter**

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

State.....Zip.....

Phone.(area code).....

E-Mail.....

Newsletter via email included in all memberships

Individual \$25 (includes digital newsletter)

Professional \$50

Donation _____

Printed Newsletter (optional) \$15

**Mail to: HLAA Twin Cities Chapter
PO Box 26021
Minneapolis, MN 55426**



Welcomes You!

Interim President – Robin Coninx president@hlaatc.org

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Karla Sand

Mark Daly

Michael Smith

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