

# HLAA TC

# December 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.

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### Acting President: Kim Fishman

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

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

HLAA-TC meetings suspended temporarily  
for the remainder of 2025



The Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter meetings (HLAA TC) will be suspended until after January 1, 2026  
*See page 9 for further details*



**Dear fellow readers and members,**

As you know, our chapter has been experiencing some changes within the board, and we are taking time to thoughtfully figure out our next steps. We recognize that the chapter has been struggling recently, and that our membership numbers have declined. We want to be open about this, while also sharing our commitment to moving forward in a positive and meaningful way.

The board is intentionally stepping back to reassess how we can make our HLAA TC chapter sustainable, thriving, and fun. Our goal is to rebuild a vibrant group with strong participation, engaging programs, and a welcoming community for people with hearing loss and their families.

We are currently working toward developing more programs, offering hybrid meetings to better accommodate both in-person and virtual attendance, and updating our website to make it a more useful and accessible resource. These improvements will take time, as we are a small volunteer-led board with busy schedules, but we are dedicated to making steady progress.

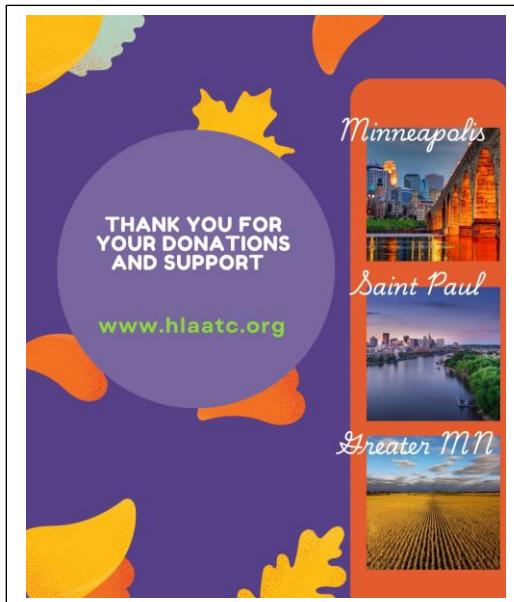
We truly value the ideas, energy, and talents of our members. If you have fun or helpful ideas to share, or if you are interested in joining our volunteer board, we would love to hear from you. Your involvement can make a real difference as we shape the future of our chapter together.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and continued support.

**Sincerely,**  
**Kim Fishman**  
Acting President, HLAA TC Chapter

# Thank you for your donations and support

By Laura Hagemann



Thank you to those who were able to donate to HLAA-TC for Give To The Max Day.

Our [Donation page](#) will remain up and taking donations for a while. If you'd like to share about our organization instead of donating, here are some quick links and information:

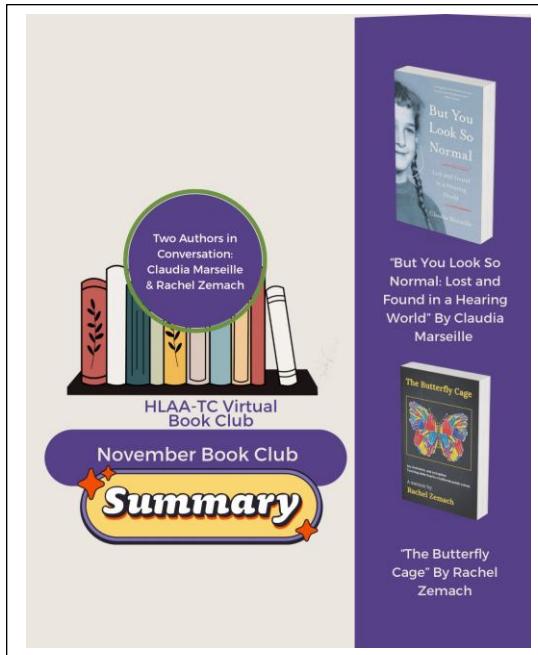
[Website](#) | [Book Club Page](#) | [Newsletter](#) | [Facebook & Facebook Group](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Chapter Presentation Recordings](#)

**HLAA-TC Monthly Chapter Meetings:** September- May, on the third Saturday of the month, 9:30 am – 12pm. [Note: As of November 2025, chapter meetings paused until January 2026]. We meet at [Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley, MN](#). Each meeting typically features a guest speaker who talks about a topic related to hearing loss. Chapter meetings have captions/CART and the meeting room is looped. All presentations that we get permission to record are placed on our YouTube Channel ([Playlist of Presentations](#))

**HLAA-TC Book Club:** meets every month on Zoom throughout the year on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 5pm Western/ 7pm Central/ 8pm Eastern (unless otherwise stated). We alternate reading fiction and nonfiction books typically about hearing loss, deafness, disability or featuring a character with those characteristics. Book clubs have captions and frequently have author guests. [Note: Book club on break until January 2026]. For more about book club and to see books we've read and authors we've had as guests, visit our [Book Club Page](#).

# November Book Club Summary: 2 Memoirists

By Laura Hagemann



Book club had its November meeting on November 18th and we are skipping December so we won't meet again until January 2026. On November 18th the book club had Claudia Marseille (author of "But You Look So Normal: Lost and Found In A Hearing World") and Rachel Zemach (author of "The Butterfly Cage") for our November 18th HLAA-TC Zoom Book Club. The following is a detailed summary with links discussed.

[Note: Originally we planned to record and place the recorded moderated discussion between Rachel Zemach and Claudia Marseille on our YouTube channel but unfortunately it didn't record successfully (user error). Thank you to both Rachel and Claudia for taking part in this special book club. Even though it didn't record, the discussion was great]

- "But You Look So Normal: Lost and Found In A Hearing World" By Claudia Marseille (you can find her book on: [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), [Bookshop](#), [Simon & Schuster](#), [Audiobook on Amplify](#))
- "The Butterfly Cage" By Rachel Zemach (you can find her book: on [Amazon](#) and [Bookshop](#))
- Claudia and Rachel have similar family background (Jewish, however not raised religious; and both have spent a large portion of their lives in California; both had intelligent and complicated fathers).
- Claudia was diagnosed as severely hard of hearing at age 4 but was mainstreamed in public schools instead of attending a school for the deaf. She wrote "But You Look So Normal" to reflect on her life's influences and share her story with friends experiencing age-related hearing loss.

- Rachel became deaf at age 10 after a fall, retaining 5% hearing in one ear and using a hearing aid. She taught deaf children for 10 years before writing “Butterfly Cage” to process her trauma and advocate for deaf children.
- Both authors described feeling in-between the hearing and deaf worlds, with Claudia more in the hearing world and Rachel balancing both.
- Other resources on in-betweeners:
  - [Life Between Hearing and Deafness \(Documentary\)](#)
  - [Amanda McDonough: Life In Between Hearing Culture and Deaf Culture \(YouTube Video\)](#)
  - [Language on the Move Podcast Interview with author Jessica Kirkness](#)
- Technology has improved things (closed captions, transcription, video chatting/conferences, etc.) but in the advent of all the tech it requires those of us with hearing loss to have to really advocate for ourselves, especially since hearing loss is an invisible disability. More on invisible disability:
  - [This blog](#) is on advocating for yourself with your hearing loss
  - [This website talks about invisible/hidden disability project called the Sunflower Lanyard program\).](#)
- Rachel shared some statistics on the large number of people with hearing loss versus deaf in this country. For similar statistics, [see this page on the National Institute on Deafness website](#)).
- Claudia and Rachel discussed the challenges of being hard of hearing, with Rachel emphasizing the importance of sign language and multi-modal communication for parents of deaf children. They shared personal experiences of social isolation.
- There was much discussion about deafness education and sign language and Rachel shared many insights of her time teaching (make sure to read Rachel’s book for more).
- Rachel also shared that the [Lingvano app](#) is a good tool to help people learn ASL. (Note: You can learn different forms of sign language on Lingvano, choose: American Sign Language [ASL], British Sign Language [BSL], or Austrian Sign Language [OSEG] and there are free and paid versions of the app).
- Books that were discussed by the authors and recommended were:
  - ”Shouting Won’t Help” By Katherine Bouton (read by this book club in August 2021 and we had Katherine as a guest. She is president of [HLAA-NYC](#) and they have virtual meetings with great presentations. She also has a [blog](#)).
  - ‘Hear & Beyond” By Shari Eberts and Gael Hannon. We had Shari as a HLAA-TC Chapter Presentation speaker several years ago.
  - Rachel Zemach is writing a second book about “In-betweeners”, those who straddle both deaf and hearing worlds. [publishing date to be determined]
  - ”Hear Today, Gone Tomorrow: A True Story of Love, Hearing Loss, Heartbreak and Redemption” by John Geoghegan. – Rachel recommended this after book club had ended and wanted to make sure attendees got this recommendation.
- A reading order for 2026 has yet to be decided (that will be announced on this blog/email and our [book club page](#))

## In the News

“US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has ordered the state department to return to using Times New Roman font for documents instead of Calibri, erasing a change under the Biden administration meant to make documents more accessible...

Lucas de Groot, the Dutch designer who created the Calibri typeface, told BBC Newshour the change was both 'sad and hilarious'...

In his order on Tuesday requiring diplomats to return to Times New Roman, Rubio called Blinken's decision to use Calibri a 'wasteful' diversity initiative, according to an internal department cable seen by Reuters.”

*editor's query: What does this portend for the future of captioning, and ASL interpreting?*

Times New Roman **Calibri**  
*Times New Roman Calibri*  
**Times New Roman Calibri**  
*Times New Roman Calibri*

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgkez3367xmo>



## Resources Feature: Government Help (MN)

By Laura Hagemann

While HLAA-TC meetings are on pause for the remainder of 2025, we wanted to highlight some helpful information already at our fingertips on our HLAA-TC Website on the [Resources Page](#). Today we are highlighting the "Links on Government Help and Resources (MN)". These links have been compiled through the years and oftentimes have been provided to us by various chapter meeting presenters. Be sure to check out these links and share them and our website with anyone who you feel may be interested. [Note: Any videos shared have closed captions.]

### Links on Government Help and Resources (MN)

- [Your rights while purchasing prescription hearing aids \(MNCDHH\)](#)
- [30 second PSA about over-the-counter hearing aids \(MNCDHH\) - Video with Captions](#)
- [OTC Hearing Aid Shopping Checklist \(HLAA\)](#)
- [Getting hearing aids fact sheet \(DHHSD\)](#)
- [Over-the-counter hearing aids fact sheet \(DHHSD\)](#)
- [Hearing aid insurance appeals guide \(DHHSD\)](#)
- [DHHSD Emergency Preparedness Information for those with hearing loss](#)
- [Traffic Stop Communication Card \(by DHHSD\)](#)
- [Communication Card for Hard of Hearing \(by DHHSD\)](#)
- [Minnesota Access to Communication Technology \(MN ACT\) Program from DHHSD \(formerly TED\)](#)
- [Adult Mental Health Services from DHHSD](#)
- [A list of communication apps from DHHSD's website](#)
- [Minnesota Assistive Technology for All: AT Device Loaning Program](#)
- [A System of Technology to Achieve Results \(STAR program\)](#)
- [Health Care Communication Access Plan \(CAP\) for patients developed by HLAA](#)

If you have anything you would like to see added to the HLAA-TC website, please email Laura, [social@hlaatc.org](mailto:social@hlaatc.org) and she will run it by the HLAA-TC Board of Directors.

## Free FM listening system

Fully functional Williams Sound portable FM listening set available **free**.

The group that owned this listening set has acquired a loop listening system, and is offering the FM system free to anyone who would like it.

Set consists of transmitter and antenna, four receivers that are set to a single frequency, and two additional receivers that can be set to multiple frequencies. (Those with multiple frequencies are portable between different transmitters by selecting the corresponding channel on the receiver.)

The receivers can be used with neckloop, earbuds, headphones or ear speakers.



Contact Vicki Martin  
[gimme88@aol.com](mailto:gimme88@aol.com)

## 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.hearlingloss.org](http://www.hearlingloss.org)).**

**RECEIPT**

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

*from:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_*

*By \_\_\_\_\_*

## Meeting information

Meetings of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA-TC) are temporarily suspended

**Stay tuned for further information in 2026**

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

**Meeting time:** Meeting begins at 10 AM (social time at 9:30).

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



Welcomes You!

### **Acting President – Kim Fishman**

Vice President - Kim Fishman

Secretary -

Treasurer – Sharon Witt

[secretary@hlaatc.org](mailto:secretary@hlaatc.org)

[treasurer@hlaatc.org](mailto:treasurer@hlaatc.org)

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