

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter

February 2008

What's Happening?

February 16, 2008 - Mary Hartnett –(MCDHH) Minnesota Commission serving the Deaf, HOH, Deafblind (topics for the upcoming legislative session.

March 15, 2008 – Lion Dwight Maxa - Board of Directors for Lions Foundation

April 19, 2008 – Dr. Kristen Swan – Region's Hospital – returning psychotherapist

May 17, 2008 – Elections and potluck

June, July, August – NO MEETINGS

June 12 –15, 2008 – HLAA **National** Convention in Reno, Nevada

September 20, 2008 – To be announced

February 2008

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NEXT MEETING

February 16th AT 9:30 AM AT
Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422-4249

HLAA TC Website

www.hlaatc.org

HLAA National:

www.hearingloss.org



Thank you Mary Andresen who has been the greeter at HLAA TC for many many years.

MN Contact Information:

info@hlaatc.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MINNESOTA COMMISSION SERVING DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING FOCUS GROUP
See Page 6 for more information

Welcome to HLAA TC

Have you thanked your
Paradigm CART
Representative today ?

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

HLAA TC President's Message February 2008

Truly, there is never a dull day at HLAA! We started our meetings for 2008 with a bang! We fried the amplifier once more!

So, Thank You, Thank You **CART** and specifically **Lisa Richardson!** You saved the day - literally.

Also, we were sort of "windchilled out ". Even though we had a light attendance, the audience was very engaged and attentive.

Our **Speaker Dr. Michael** update on **Tinnitus**. Among comments, one statement in excuse the pun – with me: *childhood can lead to Tinnitus* the initial hearing damage once.

This ties in so nicely with my you. Here is one more reason the pledge to help *protect kids'* thing, but tinnitus is quite are driven at times to attest. Do not count on a prevention is the best we can afflicted.



Block gave us a bittersweet the many informative particular rang a huge bell – *Loud noise exposure in early later on in life*, even though might not be detectable at

January message to all of why all of us should make *hearing*. Hearing loss is one another – as those of us who distraction by it can well "cure" all too soon. For now, do for those who are not yet

But on to February! Our **Speaker** will be **Mary Hartnett**, the Executive Director of the MCDHH (Commission for Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans).

Mary will talk about legislative concerns that pertain to people with hearing challenges like us. She will also address our strategic vision for the future. What issues are important to us? She will explain in what ways the consultants who work on the MCDHH strategic plan want our input: interviews, focus groups and surveys... Here is a chance to become directly involved.

I do not know about anybody else, but barring a cold or flu that I do not want to gift to the group, I am all revved up. Mary is quite a dynamic speaker with energy and enthusiasm to sell. She and her recently acquired staff work relentlessly on our behalf.

To quote Dr. Martin Luther King Jr: " Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." So, let's seize the day on February 16th. See you all then!

Monique

"HLAA-TC members and board extend condolences to Secretary Sue Brabek on the death of her brother Dennis. Sue has had several serious setbacks and health issues this year, but we understand that losing Dennis was the most trying and tragic. Sue, please accept our deepest sympathy." VP

Speaker: Dr. Michael Block, Starkey

Topic: Tinnitus

Tinnitus is sound that has no objective basis. It originates in the head.

50 million Americans have tinnitus, but only a minority are bothered by it. About 15 million people seek help or treatment for it. Many of those are not bothered by it once they learn that it is not a symptom of anything serious.

Most people who have noise-induced hearing loss will experience tinnitus. More and more veterans are surviving with disabilities, and will experience tinnitus. Likewise, more young people are being exposed to noise (“music”) and also will face tinnitus as they get older. Loss of hearing, in fact, is the primary cause of tinnitus. Although age, gender, noise exposure and general health can all have some effect on producing tinnitus, the primary cause regardless of all other factors, is hearing loss.

Even a hearing loss so small that it is not noticed can result in tinnitus. The hearing loss may not even show up on a standard audiogram. Low-power hearing aids can eliminate this tinnitus.

Measuring the activity in the brain with an MRI proves that tinnitus is a result of brain activity. Dr Block had slides to show brain activity in the absence of auditory information. Part of the brain is “wired” for auditory perception, and if the auditory information doesn’t reach it, it may “turn up the gain”, so to speak, in order to detect sound. This activity may be what causes tinnitus.

There are many things about tinnitus that are annoying and frustrating. It may keep you awake, it may be persistent, you may have no control over it, it may interfere with speech perception, and perhaps worst of all, it may cause anxiety. It can become quite disabling.

Important points to remember: Adding sound can reduce or eliminate tinnitus. This can mean environmental sounds, masking sounds, music, or hearing aids. This also gives the person some control. Changing the way we react to tinnitus is important. And getting enough sleep helps.

Business portion:

President’s messages from Monique: MCDHH is now officially the Commission Serving Deaf, Deaf-blind and Hard of Hearing. “Deaf-blind” is now included.

Monique gave information on how to sign up for a special event called “Capital Lab” on January 30. Mary Hartnett is the organizer of this event, which is sponsored by MCDHH.

Also addressed was our need for new blood in the board lineup. We are looking specifically for vice-presidential candidates, but those interested in any of the positions, or in nominating someone else, should let us know.

We had a quick update on Dr. Barry Voroba’s wireless listening device, which is now available with a telecoil compatible neckpiece.

Vice President: Vicki reminded us to select whatever ASL materials we would like, before the end of our May 2008 meeting. At that time, we will find new homes for any materials still remaining from Big Dave’s contribution.

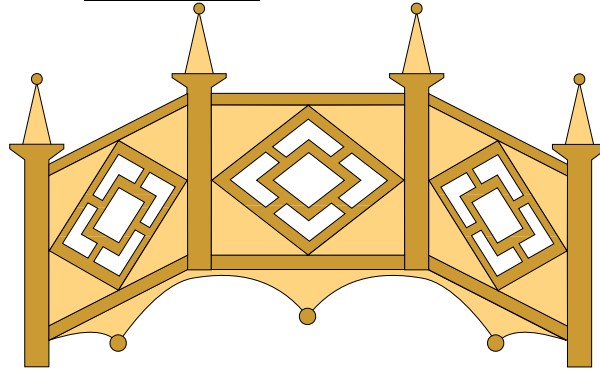
We decided to reinstate our “member spotlight”, a 5-minute personal vignette, given each month by a different HLAA-TC member. Hearing members, and hearing partners of members, are also welcome to share their stories. Todd will lead off next month (February) by telling us something about his life with hearing loss.



2007 - HLA TC HALL OF FAME



Card Lady: Vicki Martin



Donations were made by these people or organizations.

Sue Brabeck	David Bacik
Mike Day	Ralph Katz
Ross Hammond	Janis Lajon
Linda Senechal	Bill and Linda Ovaska
Mary Andresen	Jodi Ostman
Linda Miller	Lori Snyder
Vicki Martin	Crystal Lions
Lutheran Church of Christ	Merrilee Knoll
Coffee Donations	Cookie Sales

HLAA TC would like to thank these people/orgs. who help to make our meetings possible. Their donations help to provide CART (captioning services), looping the room, the newsletter, the website, postage, brochures, mail box and a poinsettia to the Courage Center in thanks for letting us use their facilities for our meetings.

Next month - a tribute to those who place advertisements with us



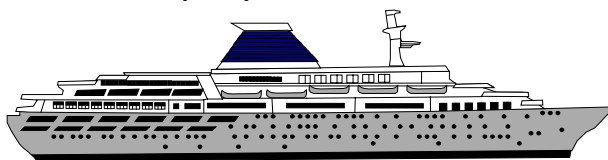
CRUISE TO MEXICO

How about a cruise to Mexico at Halloween time (Oct. 26, 2008 – Nov. 2, 2008), with stops at Cabo, San Lucas, Mazatlan and Puerto Vallarta? Sign Language interpreters and **CART** service providers onboard and for Tours in Mexico. Entertainment with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Performers

! .1-800-419-0460 (Voice only) For deaf people call through the Relay or Email:
mailto:veronica.kandratsenka@americasvacationcenter.com

Ships Name: Vision of the Seas by Royal Caribbean International

<http://www.wrad.org>



YouTube has a video with open captions of Curb Cuts showing ALD's, Ubi Duo, Sidekick, Rear Window, TTY's, CapTel's, and a new device a beach wheelchair. If you have no idea what these are or want to see what is available check this site out.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRaPP5vTm-o>

This is filmed in CA and locations are there, in MN outside of the wheel chair you can contact TED. This is a 1/2 hr. video.

Believe it or not...**Nike Inc.** known world wide for its tennis shoes has a deaf employee who is a designer who uses lip reading to communicate, which she says is a nightmare. They say they cannot afford an interpreter for her.

National HLAA is raising their rates March 1, 2008, so if you want to renew at the old rates do so now.

Diane Keaton (actress) appeared on the Dave Letterman show looking a little ditzzy and bewildered, where she said, "I have some hearing issues." Hearing Loss hits Hollywood again. Maybe she will be the one to make the acronym HOH a household word and inform viewers she did not automatically learn ASL.



Michael Block from **Starkey** was our January speaker. See Page 3 for what he said.

Bits and Pieces

Campaign Debates Captioned

This comes from the "Captioning" listserv --

Taudiobook is a company with software that automatically syncs a transcript to a video. As a promotion (and a public service) he's been captioning the debates (and a few other notable videos) all campaign. You might want to check out some of his other captioned videos, too < including the inspirational "last lecture" by Professor Randy Pausch

http://www.taudiobook.com/catalog/index.php?main_page=page&id=20&chapter=0

For those of you who haven't made up your mind, watch,

Republican:

http://www.taudiobook.com/closed_caption/republican_facebook

Democratic:

http://www.taudiobook.com/closed_caption/democratic_facebook

Mike Kaplan
HLAA-LA

Bits and Pieces Continued from Page 5

Volunteers needed for MN Commission serving Deaf and HOH focus group. We need 10-12 volunteers to participate in a focus group that will help us to plan for the next 5-10 yrs. We invite you to stay an hour after your regularly scheduled meeting this month. We will cover lunch for you and ask you questions that will be incorporated into our strategic plan that will help us determine our priorities for HOH people.

What: Led by Mary Hartnett **Where:** Courage Center

Date: Feb. 16, 2008 **Time:** 12 to 1

Contact Kelly Murphy to RSVP at kelly.murphy@state.mn.us or call at (651) 297-1394

\$50,000 Hearing Aid

Widex in the UK is promoting a 25,000 pounds (\$50,144) hearing aid. Solid gold with diamonds. As of yet no one has purchased it, want to be the first buyer?

Dancing With The Stars will start a new season on March 17, and rumor has it that Marlee Matlin will be one of the stars to compete.

The ASHA Leader, a publication of the **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**, Dateline January 22, 2008, first online, February 5, 2008. <http://www.asha.org/about/publications/leader-online/audiology/>
India to Develop Low-Cost Cochlear Implant....The Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL) in Vishakapatnam, India, which normally produces weapons for the Navy, will focus research and development efforts on a low-cost cochlear implant.

The NSTL initiative will bring the device to market in India for 1.5 lakh rupees, the equivalent of about \$3,700—a fraction of the \$45,000 cost of the device in the United States, a fee that includes the device, hospitalization, and surgery.

According to NSTL director and acoustics scientist V. Bhujanga Rao, animal research on the device has yielded good results, and India may be the first country to produce a low-cost cochlear implant.

"In India there are more than one million people who have hearing loss that cannot be repaired," he said. "The CI facility available in a few nations is high-priced. As an acoustics scientist, I want to develop an indigenous low-cost device."

After the completion of this project, NSTL is contemplating the development of a bionic eye project in the near future, Rao said. Visit the New Wind Press for more information.

From the desk of Bruce Hodek....Anyone looking for a great resource guide regarding hearing aids, there is one available via the HLAA website for \$4.25, called "Consumer's Guide to Hearing Aids," put out each year which is similar to the Consumers Report.

<http://www.captions.com/> **Super Bowl Ads**...109 commercials, 21 captioned, 78 not captioned, for a 30 second slot 2.7 million, for captions \$200, read more about it. Want to visit a really neat site that has nothing but captioned videos? See: <http://www.projectreadon.com/>

A new website for people who grew up with a hearing loss is starting up with Dana Mulvany called, "**Growing Up With Hearing Loss**". The best way to join this group is to log into or register at <http://groups.yahoo.com> before or after going to the new group's web page at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GUWHL/>

Hearing Loss Identity

Do you ever get confused about the many labels of people with a hearing impairment? Isn't it interesting the way people with hearing loss will describe themselves?

Here is a summary of what Sam Trychin has to say concerning definitions.

It is estimated that 30 million people in the U.S. do not have normal hearing. Most people who have hearing difficulties start out with normal hearing and then lose some or all of it. These people have hearing loss. If the loss occurs in infancy or if they were born with it, they didn't have anything to lose. Perhaps they grew up learning sign language as their primary means of communication. These people are called *culturally deaf*. Others went to oral schools for the deaf or were mainstreamed in public schools. They may or may not use some sign language. The culturally deaf and *orally deaf* group totals about 500,000 people or 1.5% of the total number with non-normal hearing.

Another 1.5 million people (or 5%) are called *late-deafened*. They have profound hearing loss, but it occurs after the development of speech (usually in adulthood). There is little or no usable hearing, so hearing aids provide little or no benefit. The person usually functions in the hearing world, but they may have deaf friends as well. A visual representation of language is preferred for communication. They may use some sign language, but they usually speak as well and do not necessarily use ASL in the strict sense.

The other 28 million people with hearing loss (93.5%) may call themselves "hard-of-hearing". They were born hearing but now have some degree of loss. The person functions in the hearing world and sign language is not the primary means of communication. Spoken language is the language of choice. Some amount of usable hearing remains and the person can benefit from hearing aids.

I'm sure other people feel as I have often felt – that I don't seem to fit in anywhere. I could hear very well until age 20, so I am not culturally deaf or orally deaf. With a profound hearing loss, I certainly don't fit well in the hearing world. I seem to qualify as being late-deafened since I obtained very little benefit from the two hearing aids that I wore for 25 years, but my cochlear implant surgery ten years ago brought me to the level of "hard-of-hearing". When I take it off, however, I am still most assuredly deaf. I don't sign very well for lack of practice. I do have at least a 300 word vocabulary, however, and I can fingerspell in a pinch.

Do you agree with these definitions? Also, as many of us know, hearing does not equal understanding. Vowel sounds are much easier to hear than consonants for many of us, so we get confused by what we hear. It sometimes doesn't make sense.

Our HLAA chapter tries to enhance communication for orally deaf, late-deafened, and hard-of-hearing adults through our loop system and CART. Other groups in Minnesota may focus on other levels of hearing conditions or other age groups. There is overlap, but we try to make everyone feel that they fit in! You are not alone with your hearing loss.

Linda Senechal

Pepsi/NAD Controversy – Super Bowl Sunday

By Merrilee Knoll

Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 3, 2008 pre game program aired an ASL commercial "Bob's House." This commercial is creating quite a stir among the hard of hearing (HOH) community, as it says captions for the hearing omitting the HOH. The ad is done entirely in ASL as it was made by Pepsi employees involved in the Deaf community; the original idea was by Clay Broussard, 27-year employee with the company, who is not Deaf.

The scene is; two men drinking Pepsi while looking for their friend Bob's (Clay) house, he is also Deaf. They can't remember his address, so they come up with the idea of honking the horn until all the houses on the block have lit up, dogs barking and people coming outside their house to see what the commotion is all about. The only house that is not lit up is Bob's because he can't hear the horn honking.

Now the problem: National Association of the Deaf (NAD) was founded in 1880 which supports the Deaf community of about 1, 000, 000 who use ASL as their first language. They were encouraged to submit their input for this skit. Membership in NAD is about 1% of that million. On the other hand the only org. that supports the HOH is Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) formerly called Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH) 1979. It has a very small following of a fraction of 1% which "represents" the 30, 000, 000. Most of which do not want to be identified as HOH, and do not belong to this or any other hearing loss support group.

The controversy is when NAD or any "party" says they are serving the Deaf and HOH community by having an ASL interpreter representing the total 31, 000, 000. They assume that everyone is ASL fluent on the day the hearing loss began. Not true! Because the Deaf community has been around for so long and their needs are finally being met, more and more people are learning ASL, the HOH community feels left out.

Maybe though instead of complaining about NAD and Pepsi and others, someone in the 30 million HOH could come up with a commercial befitting for all. Instead of working against each other, we should be pulling together to make an even greater advertisement that meets everyone's needs.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffrq6cUoE5A>

Actual commercial

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wl1UdFFeopo>

Making of the commercial

Feb.19, 2009 Converter Boxes – Will You Need One ? Maybe Not

In a nutshell they tell us that if you already have cable or satellite you will not need a converter box. But, if you have an indoor or outdoor antenna on your rooftop you have 3 options; get a new TV with built in digital tuner, subscribe to a cable or satellite or telecommunications service provider if all desired local stations are carried by that service or purchase a converter box that plugs into your current TV. These cost between \$50 - \$70. On Jan.1, 2008 coupons worth \$40 ea. (you are allowed 2 per household) can help with this cost, but they are limited and expire 90 days after they are mailed. This converter box will allow you to watch on your current analog TV "over the air" television. For more details see: dtvtransition.org

Watch Out!

By Vicki Martin

I acquired my third employee appreciation watch when I had been with the company for 25 years. For this milestone anniversary, celebrants are given several gifts, one of which is their choice of a timepiece. Since I still had a utilitarian watch from my 15-year anniversary that was keeping perfect time, I decided to choose one that would also be a nice piece of jewelry. I got a lovely gold and diamond piece.

Just two weeks after selecting the new watch, my old one came to a sudden halt. It must have sensed that my loyalties were now divided, and felt it couldn't compete with the chic newcomer. I took it to a jeweler, hoping it could be revived, but alas – its life was over, and it was time to lay it to rest.

To keep my gleaming new watch clean and unscratched, I decided to look for a utility watch for everyday activities like gardening, bike riding, and housework.

I started with a \$29.99 Timex. It was a good, old-fashioned analog watch. In my own experience, a Timex will keep good time for 10 years. But it was not to be. The one I bought lasted just short of three months. On day 90 of the 90-day warranty period, I dug out the receipt and returned it to the store.

Next I tried a digital for \$9.99. It was incredibly ugly, but I didn't really care. This was to be a “grunt” watch, not a pretty one. I would be satisfied if it would keep time. But I never got a chance to find out, because I couldn't find anyone who could set it. I followed the instructions, such as they were, but I couldn't do it. Dennis tried too, with no better luck. Since our son Yvain was home that weekend, I asked him if he'd like to try. “Sure!”, he said, full of well-justified confidence. I knew it was a lost cause when, a few minutes later, he too declared defeat. If he can't set it, no one can.

I took the digital back to the store and bought another analog – a Coleman for \$19.99. It was a nice, rugged-looking “camp” watch that kept great time – for a week. Thinking it had a bad battery, I took it to my jeweler (yes “my” jeweler – we were getting quite chummy by this time). He thought too that it was the battery – until he looked inside. The watch was shot. His advice, after this third watch failure: “get a Timex”.

“But I started with a Timex,” I said.

He scratched his head. Analog watches are now made with plastic, he said, and they don't hold up. Try a digital, with no moving parts to wear out.

I went back to Target to see about getting another digital, but I changed my mind when confronted with all of the ancillary functions that are now *de rigueur* on every timepiece. Even if I found a one I could set, they come with such an array of bells and whistles (literally) I would live in fear of walking around with a device that was screaming alarms, all while I never even suspected it. No, I just couldn't spend money for something that was going to make me a public nuisance.

I gave up. I would wear my gold-and-diamond beauty day and night. If my chores got really ugly, I'd just have to take it off. I was a one-watch woman, and proud of it.

Not long after this, I visited a little dollar-store to pick up some cheap kitchen supplies. There right in front of my nose I found exactly what I needed: a digital watch that does nothing but TELL THE TIME! I'm not kidding. I'd pay twenty dollars for something like that, but here it was – for one buck! The instructions were useless, but it was so easy to set, I didn't even need them.

Will it last? Who knows? But for now, I've got something that tells me what time it is cheaply – and silently!



Closed/Open Captioned Movies/ Twin Cities

<http://www.mnocfilms.org/ocaptions.html>

To find a movie by location, distance traveled or date see Fomdi: www.Fomdi.com

If you are interest in current movies that offer captioning using a rear-window system, contact one of the three MoPix equipped theatres in the Twin Cities for their schedule.

Rear Window Captions available in:

AMC in Eden Prairie Mall 18

<http://www.amctheatres.com>

AMC Rosedale 14 in Roseville

Crown Theatres Block E15 in Mpls.

[www.crown-](http://www.crown-theatres.com)

[theatres.com/theatres/minnea_block_e.html](http://www.crown-theatres.com/theatres/minnea_block_e.html)

Science Museum:

www.smm.org/info/accessibility.php

Aloha

Events

Aloha events are generally held the second Saturday of each month. The group may go out to a restaurant or meet at someone's home for dinner and games. If you are interested in attending, contact Ellen Thibodo for information on upcoming events.

Phone 651 - 423-2249 (TTY)

E-mail: ThibodoD@aol.com

Aloha is Saturday, February 9 at the home of Linda Senechal in Bloomington.

If anyone can pick a definite month they can host an Aloha event this year, I'd really appreciate it. I know many of you already told me that you'd like to do it - I just need a few more volunteers if possible!!! In the meantime I'm still going to try and work out some reservations to places that would have taken us had they not been filled up this month.

Ellen

Accessible Voice Mail – File a Complaint

Business and Gov. phones cause much concern for the HOH. The complete letter sent by our own Kathryn Bakke to National HLAA is at this website: <http://www.kathrynbakke.com/>

Due to limited space I have condensed the letter and response.

She said they talk to fast, the phone no. for TTY connects but not for reg. phones or CapTel, or the TTY line could be used by HOH, or have an opt no. so you could talk to a real person.

Response from Brenda Battat acting Executive Director: Nat. has been working on accessible voice mail. It is a complicated issue and not easily solved. If you want to pursue a bad experience further you could file a complaint with he US Dept of Justice on the grounds that the facility is not making their programs /services accessible.

To file a complaint go to: <http://www.ada.gov/enforce.htm#anchor218282>

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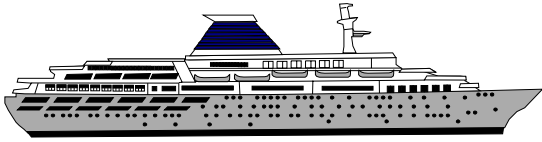
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First Class



See Page 4 for more info.

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Merrilee Knoll, Rknoll5200@aol.com

This month's editor is Merrilee Knoll

Meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Center in Golden Valley, MN. We gather at 9:30 to socialize and the meeting starts at 10 AM. All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning (www.paradigmreporting.com)*. Please visit the chapter's web-site at www.hlaatc.org