

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter May 2009



**Hearing Loss
Association
of America**

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

HLAA Twin Cities Calendar of Events

May 16, 2009 - Rubin Latz, Department of Vocation Rehabilitation - Upgrade of his December talk with our group

May 21, 2009 - 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. – DHSS/MCDHH open house in St. Paul

June 18-21, 2009 - National convention Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee

September 19, 2009 - Jacqueline Hoppenrath, Audiologist from SoundPoint speaking on Tinnitus

September 27, 2009 - CI Picnic - Brookview Park in Golden Valley, Sunday, 11:00 – 3:00.

October 17, 2009 - Donna Fowler, Health East-how to talk to people in the medical field

THE NEXT MEETING IS
May 16th at 9:30 AM
Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422-4249

Everyone is welcome to attend!

● HLAA TC Website
www.hlaatc.org

● HLAA National
www.hearingloss.org

● MN Contact Information
info@hlaatc.org

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A Message from our President



Vicki Martin

In Hot Water

One long-ago morning I corralled our son Yvain and his hapless pair of glasses, and we set off for Target for a replacement pair, leaving his two sisters and a friend of theirs to play in the house until we returned.

Target, not knowing Yvain of course, had made the daring offer of unlimited repairs and replacements of any glasses purchased from them, for up to one year. Yvain had gone through three pairs already, and we were nearing the one-year mark. We had no time to lose.

Yvain sauntered in and made himself right at home. The optician sighed, looked at the calendar, and then announced “You know, this will be the last replacement.” I knew. I was fine with that. Four pairs of glasses for the price of one had been a very good deal. Incidentally (or maybe not so incidentally), Target never repeated the offer.

After we returned to the car and buckled in, it hit me: I had left the teakettle on. “Oh, my God!” I cried. Three little girls were playing in the house and, like me, our children can not hear teakettles. What would happen if the kettle boiled dry and was left on the fire? Would it overheat, and start something else on fire? I took Yvain’s hand in

mine and tearfully implored him: “Pray!” Immediately he started crying too. We said a desperate prayer, and headed home as fast as we safely could.

The house was not on fire. I ran inside and was greeted by three girls scampering down the stairs, happy and playful. “What happened?” I asked, still worried and confused. “I left the teakettle on!”

“We turned it off,” Rayah announced matter-of-factly. “Michelle heard it.” Michelle nodded, and I gave her a huge hug. I was so thankful she had come over to play.

Most such teakettle episodes did no more than add unnecessary humidity to the kitchen, but, 27 years later, I still forget it sometimes.

Last month, while visiting family in Connecticut, I put my sister’s teakettle on the stove, while my Mom and daughter (yes, one of those involved in the Target incident) chatted in the dining room. Suddenly, our talk was interrupted by a siren-like sound. Mom thought it was the cat. I thought it was an electronic warning signal. We began a search for its source and were led to the kitchen stove. It was the teakettle, singing away on a loud B-natural, well within the aided hearing range of all three of us.

I was so smitten with the idea that I could hear a teakettle that I bought one for myself. I lugged it, box and all, all the way back to Minnesota, and began using it at home. Although it pours rather messily, dripping water down the spout, I do indeed hear it when it whistles.

Dennis still uses the old one, because it pours without dripping, and he can hear it – as long as he’s around. But one recent day he lit the stove and walked out to the garage, where he promptly forgot about his tea. The water boiled away to nothing as I sat right there in the kitchen, never even knowing it was on.

Drip or no drip, I recommend the Corning Corelle teakettle in the interest of safety. If you have some hearing in the range of 440 – 520 Hz, you should be able to hear this one. And, who knows -- it might just keep you from getting into hot water.

New - Single Electrode Cochlear Implant (from the St. Joe News)

Linda Kerner didn't set out to be ground-breaking. The St. Joseph woman simply wanted her hearing back — something a traditional cochlear implant could accomplish, if only she were a good candidate for one. But the fact that she wasn't a good candidate opened the door for Ms. Kerner to become the first person in the United States to receive a version of the device that might benefit not only her but also many others with hearing loss.

“It's sort of a serendipity” that receiving a traditional cochlear implant wasn't an option for her, says Dr. Charles Luetje, a neurotologist with Midwest Ear Institute in Kansas City, Mo., and the principal investigator of an FDA study of the William House hybrid cochlear implant, which Ms. Kerner received on April 23. “If it works like we think it will, it has the potential to open up possibilities for a lot of people.”

Ms. Kerner began wearing a hearing aid in 1990, when she was 39 years old, and her hearing has gradually decreased since then to the point that she can no longer hear high-frequency sounds. But because her low-frequency, or residual, hearing remains and traditional cochlear implants can damage that, receiving a traditional implant wasn't a wise option for her.

The hybrid cochlear implant, however, contains a single electrode rather than multiple electrodes and is placed only 6 millimeters into the ear rather than 10 to 20 millimeters in, creating much less risk of damaging the inner ear structures responsible for residual hearing. And in addition to being less risky, the hybrid implant also is less expensive.

Ms. Kerner will return to Midwest Ear Institute on May 14 to be fitted with a hearing aid that will work with her implant, which is in her right ear. If everything works as intended, the hearing aid will drive sound waves and the implant's electrode will stimulate the nerves leading into the inner ear, where Ms. Kerner still has low-frequency hearing. Through this stimulation, the

implant will work with her residual hearing to restore the high-frequency hearing she's lost.

And if for some reason it doesn't work, Ms. Kerner will still maintain the hearing she had before — which is an assurance cochlear implant recipients before her haven't had.

“There's a lot of fear going into it, because in the past, you've always been giving something up in hopes of getting something more,” says Denise Kerns of St. Joseph, a friend of Ms. Kerner who herself has cochlear implants in each ear. Although Ms. Kerns has complete hearing with her implants, none of it is natural, because the 5 to 10 percent residual hearing she had before her procedures was damaged by them.

Ms. Kerns will be with Ms. Kerner when she returns to Midwest Ear Institute this month to receive her new hearing aid and find out if the procedure was a success, and she won't be the only guest in attendance. Dr. House, the creator of Ms. Kerner's implant and one of Dr. Luetje's mentors, will come from Oregon to see his implant put to use for the first time, and if it works, the success will validate something he's believed for decades.

“Dr. House always felt we could use a single, short electrode, so as to not damage residual hearing,” Dr. Luetje says, also noting that in 1984, Dr. House's implant was the first device of its kind to obtain FDA approval but that all surgeons switched to multi-electrode implants in the mid-'80s, at first using them only in totally deaf patients and later using a modified version in patients with some residual hearing.

If the hybrid cochlear implant is successful for Ms. Kerner, there are probably several million people like her, many of them with noise-induced partial hearing loss from being around loud equipment or other damaging sound, who could also have their hearing restored with the implant. And for Ms. Kerner, who dedicates much of her time to volunteering and looks forward to the enhanced interaction with others her implant might provide, this possibility is one of the best parts of her ground-breaking procedure.

stjoenews.net

HLAA TC Meeting 4/18/09

By Linda Miller VP

Our speaker for April was Dr. Catherine Riedel Jons, who is Coordinator for the hearing aid program at the University of Minnesota Medical Center Fairview.

Dr. Jons educated us on the six major stages of the hearing aid evaluation which included, Assessment, Treatment planning, Selection, Verification or Real Ear Measurement, Orientation (care and use instructions), and Validation. By law, it is necessary to test air and bone conduction thresholds, word recognition and loudness discomfort levels. Another consideration is whether the person will have a good attitude for becoming a successful hearing aid user.

The F.D.A. requires that individuals get medical clearance preferably from an Ear, Nose, and Throat physician to rule out any medically or surgically treatable conditions to their hearing loss. It's also important to educate patients on the alternative option to hearing aids, such as directional microphones, feedback reduction, Telecoils and the many assistive listening devices available.



Catherine Jons, AuD
516 Delaware Street SE, MMC 283
Minneapolis, MN 55455

612-626-5775 (appointments)
612-624-0451 (office)
cjons1@fairview.org

One of the Primary goals in the fitting process is to try and make the perception of sounds and loudness as close to what normal hearing people hear, so that a person is reacting in the same manner.

Thank you Dr. Jons for coming to speak for us especially on a Saturday morning! We are much more educated the next visit we take to our Audiologist or hearing aid dispenser.

Thank you to Angie Sundell and Jayne who provided us CART from Paradigm Reporting & Captioning Inc.

President Vicki introduced our member spotlight which was Judi Swan. Judi shared how she had been hearing impaired basically all her life, having ear infections and lots of fluid and pain in her ears. As her hearing decreased by fifth grade, she went from A's to F's. Her family simply did not go to doctors because "all they wanted was money". She talked about the communication difficulties she experienced with family members. Vicki also introduced her to HLAA TC and she joined last year. HLAA is a place where others understand her and people have a common cause. She is also educating others and advocating for herself. Thanks for sharing with us Judi!

Treasurer Bob talked about the successful third steak fry in connection with the Crystal Lions. We sold 155 tickets and Carol Blowers sold 38 tickets! We also served 220 dinners and had 14 volunteers. Thank you to everyone who made this event another success




We Have Moved!

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service, Metro Office, including the Telephone Equipment Distribution Program (TED) and the DHHS Mental Health Program, along with the Commission Serving Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MCDHH) has moved to a new location.

You are Invited to our Open House!

You are cordially invited to our Open House! Come tour our new office space, check out our technology lab, meet the staff and visit with community members:

WHEN: Thursday, May 21 
TIME: 3:00 – 6:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Golden Rule Building
85 East 7th Place, Suite 105
St. Paul, MN (corners of Robert St. and 7th Place)
QUESTIONS: Call 651/431-5940 (Voice) 651/964-1514 (VP),
1.888.206-6513 (TTY) or email metro.dhhs@state.mn.us

Light refreshments will be served

NEW OFFICE LOCATION effective 3/16/09:
85 East 7th Place, Suite 105 St. Paul, MN
MAILING ADDRESS REMAINS THE SAME:
444 Lafayette Rd. St Paul, MN 55155-3814

651-431-5964 (Voice) **(NEW!)**
651-964-1514 (VP) **(NEW)**
888-206-6513 (TTY)
651-431-7587 (FAX) **(NEW)**
www.dhhsd.org

Bits and Pieces

<http://dtv.c-s-d.org/>

CSD is now set up to help people solve their captioning problems.

If you are going to the **National convention in June in Nashville TN** would you snap some pictures and give a short write up about your experiences for the paper?

Marlee Matlin talks about sexual abuse, drug addiction and more in her new book "**I'll Scream Later**"

<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/showbiz/2009/04/15/dcl.marlee.matlin.intv.cnn>

<http://www.bitboost.com/pawsense/>

PawSense, to train your cat to stay off the computer, makes an undesirable noise to the cat, who then learns to stay off the keyboard. This sound maybe irritating to people with tinnitus. You could get the cats a keyboard of their own.

Swine Flu Information - Captioned

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5t1r7yG7rM&feature=featured>

Hawaii has asked that captioning should be put on all TV's that are viewed by children, such as stores, eating places etc. but the Dept. of Education says NO. Why? Caption

- (1) quality is questionable
- (2) video is not always synchronized with the audio
- (3) sound effects may confuse students
- (4) are often shown in all upper case letters.

Nevertheless, the bill passed without the help of the Department of Education.

Washington-The **Alexander Graham Bell** Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AGB) was accused of discrimination by **Audism Free America**. AFA says; "American public is indoctrinated with attitudes of paternalism, bias and discrimination toward Deaf people as a result of AG Bell's advocacy efforts." AGB founded in 1890 is the only organization that uses the oral method. AGB denies the charges.

Ken Ray whose clown name is "Tippie" named after his service dog who had to be put down, is from WI. Born in 1949, he is both blind and deaf, but he likes to make people laugh, so being a clown fits him. He also works in a groc store as a bagger, operates a computer, plays the conga drums and is now attending clown school.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL:

"Everything you need to know about the **Nashville Convention**" with Nancy Macklin Chat: May 14, 2009 at 9 PM (EDT)

<http://www.hear4life.org/index.html>

<http://hearinglossnation.ning.com/>

Hearing Loss with **young people** in mind, ages 18-35. Moderated by HLAA member Patrick Holkins

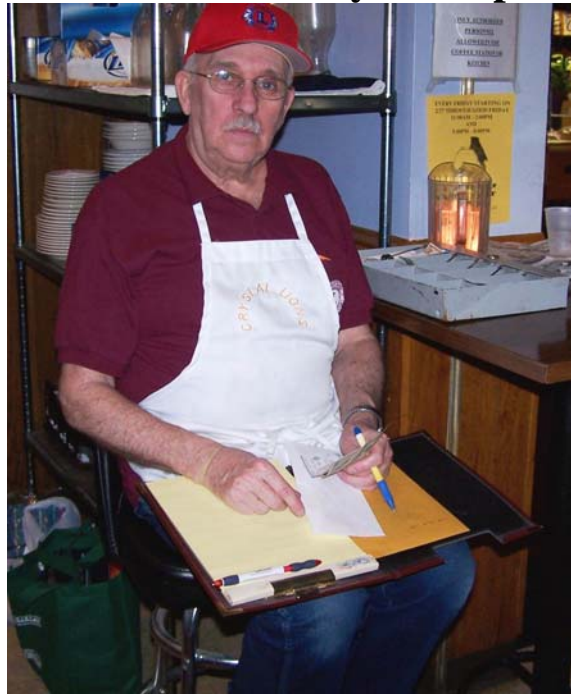
Transcripts from **previous webchats**

<http://www.hearingloss.org/Community/transcripts.asp>

The **FCC** wants to hear about your experiences with captioning, take the **survey**.

<http://dtv.c-s-d.org/help/survey/pages/survey.aspx?sid=4>

Pictures from the Steak Fry and April Meeting

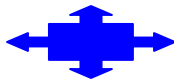


ALOHA

Aloha events are held on the second Saturday of each month. They are social gatherings in the homes of members of the group, usually including dinner, socializing, cards and games.

The June Aloha party will be held at Barb Johnsen's home in Shoreview on June 13. To receive more information, contact Ellen.

For information on the monthly schedule and summer events, contact the coordinator, Ellen Thibodo at ThibodoD@aol.com.



Resources:

The **Merriam Park Branch Library** in St. Paul maintains a collection of resources concerning American Sign Language, Hearing Loss, Coping Strategies, and Deaf Heritage. Materials in the collection include books, close-captioned videos, ASL videos, videos about deaf and hard-of-hearing issues, and signed children's books.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

is for people with disabilities who need services to prepare for work, or to find and keep a job.

Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Rehabilitation Services Branch
First National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

Provides assistance to deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals and their family members to:

- Identify and help solve problems
- Help access services from other agencies
- Coordinate services with other agencies
- Education about assistive technology

Attend their open house on May 21 to learn more!



TIPS ON ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF

Don't apologize. You have nothing to apologize for.

Instead of "I'm sorry, I have a hearing loss..." or "Excuse me, but would you..."

It is better to say "I would appreciate it if you would..." or "It would be most helpful if you would..."

Don't put yourself down.

Instead of: "I know it is difficult to talk to me..." or "I just can't..."

Better: "I can't tell you how I appreciate your efforts to help me understand..." "You are so patient and helpful..."

Don't express anger.

"I've told you a thousand times to... " or "If you can't look at me..."

Better: "I don't want to miss a word you are saying.... Can you turn your head and put the newspaper down so I can see you.....?"

No-no

Blame, be defensive, be rude.

Make requests, not demands....



Accessible Entertainment

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612-338-1466 www.kerasotes.com

MNOCFILMES

Open/closed captioned movies in Twin Cities
<http://www.mnocfilms.org/index.html>

For MoPix-equipped Rear Window
Captioned Films go to
<http://ncam.wgbh.org/mopix/nowshowing.html#mn>.

Upcoming Live Performances with Open Captioning

Reduced prices are offered by the theatres themselves or by the Access to Performing Arts Project to encourage broader participation in live arts events by people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or of low vision. It is a joint project of VSA arts of Minnesota, the Minnesota Association of Community Theatres and the Guthrie Theater.

At the Guthrie:

Tiny Kushner: [An Evening of Short Plays](#)
by Tony Kushner

Captioning: Friday, May 29, 7:30 PM

[Caroline, or Change:](#) **A Musical**

Captioning: Friday, June 19, 7:30 PM

[The Intelligent Homosexual](#)

by Tony Kushner

Captioning: Saturday, June 20, 7:30 PM

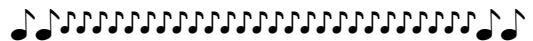
[When We Are Married](#)

by J.B. Priestley

Captioning: Friday, August 21, 7:30 PM, by c2 inc.

All Guthrie Tix: **Reduced to \$25 for captioning users (\$20 subscribers)** phone: 612-377-2224, TTY 612-377-6626

Editor's note: I have really enjoyed the captioned performances at the Guthrie this year! The low ticket prices are a bonus – such a deal!!



Science Museum of Minnesota Omnitheater –

Films shown at the Omnitheater often offer accessible features (CC: Closed Rear View Captioning; AD: Audio Description; or Spanish translation).

Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk (AD, CC) and *Super Speedway* (CC, Spanish) are being shown through June 11, 2009.

Please watch for captioning as you vacation this summer, and share your experiences with us when you return.

Eating Out

I don't know about you, but I enjoy eating out. However, not being able to hear the wait staff or my dinner companions can put a damper on things. Here are some tips that have worked for others in the past.

Picking a restaurant: restaurants that have carpeting and/or tablecloths are generally quieter than wood or tile floors and bare tables. Notice the ceiling height and how that affects your ability to hear. Is the music loud or soft? Is it near traffic? Outdoor cafes will be a real challenge.

Plan ahead. Ask about busiest times and avoid those times if possible. Tour the restaurant when they are not busy, and see if there are tables that are located in a quieter area. Ask the staff for help in this. Explain that you need a quiet area with good lighting.

Avoid high traffic areas (like near the entrance, the kitchen, or the bathrooms). Ask for a padded booth rather than a table if they are available and your group will fit into a booth. High padded backs can help contain the sound. If no booths are available, ask for a corner table. The center of the room will be the most challenging. If the table is round, you will be able to see everyone more easily than at a long, narrow table.

Try to pick your seat before anyone else in your group sits down. Family and friends will get used to knowing where you like to sit after awhile. Make sure you sit with your back to the window if daylight is coming through so you can see faces. Try not to sit where you can see a TV, if there is one, as that is distracting when you are trying to concentrate. Keep your back to a wall or window, and if you have a better ear, sit where that ear receives the best sound from your group. If you plan to use an assistive listening device, sit where you can monitor it if you plan to put it in the middle of the table, or

where you can easily pass it, if you will be passing it around.

Ask that the centerpiece be removed if it blocks your view. Bring along paper and pencil if you think you may need it.

Let the server know right away that you have difficulty hearing. I would prefer to have the waiter or waitress know that I had a hearing problem rather than have them think my behavior was rude, difficult, or stupid. Take your time and read the menu carefully, noting the choices that come with your meal and what beverages are available. Then when you are asked about dressing, bread, or vegetables, you will be expecting the question and can be ready with an answer. If you are unable to understand the server, offer paper and ask that he write it down for you. Be sure to thank the server for the extra attention given at the end of the meal.

If you are a speechreader, don't try to understand all of the conversations that are going on at the table. Give one conversation your undivided attention and do your best to follow along. Don't dominate the conversation by keeping up a monologue. It is tempting to talk when you can't listen, but that is not enjoyable for your companions. Be prepared to ask your companions opinions on various topics, and then you will know what the subject matter is for at least part of the time.

If you find a good restaurant where they are willing to accommodate you by turning up the lights and turning down the music, show your appreciation to management, and let your friends know about it!

Linda Senechal





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Manager

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First Class



NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2009

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- Newsletter Editors** -
Linda Senechal, cilinda97@yahoo.com
Merrilee Knoll, Rknoll5200@aol.com

This month's editor Linda Senechal

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