

HLAA Twin Cities

Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter September 2007



Hello Fellow HLAA TC'ers,

It is my duty as your treasurer of HLAA TC to ask that you remember to bring your checkbook with you on September 15th to pay your partnership fee.

If you have been a participant for any amount of time you know what the \$25 goes towards; things like CART, flyers, postage, newsletters, web site, paper, brochures, gift to Courage Center, postal rental box, scrap books, albums etc. etc.

Don't make me come whining to you for your money. I don't enjoy doing that, but somebody has to be the treasurer.

Bob

September 2007

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THE **NEXT MEETING** IS
SEPTEMBER 15, 2007 AT 9:30 AM
AT THE COURAGE CENTER
ED ROOMS 1 & 2

Courage Center
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422-4249

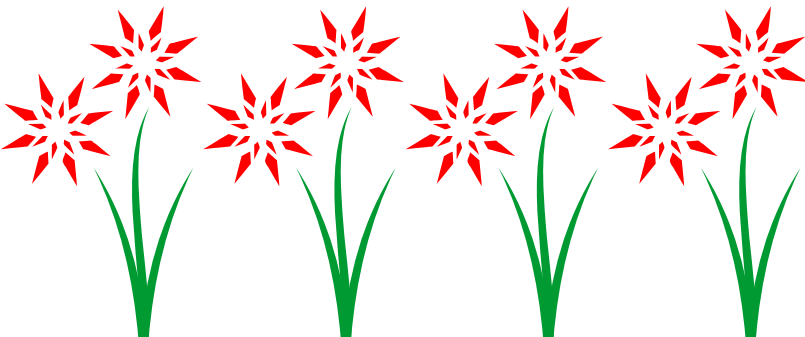
Visit our web site for
a map to this location.

www.hlaatc.org

Remember to thank your CART
provider in September.

Supporting HLAA doesn't cost,

It Pays !!!!!



Greetings to all!

I hope that you had a fun-filled summer. Now let me extend to all a warm welcome-back to HLAA TC for what I consider to become quite an interesting year.

I start every new chapter in my life with a **GRATITUDE** list, and we have indeed a lot to be grateful for.

First of all, the 2007 Legislative session worked wonders on behalf of the hearing disabled and deafblind people. All of our bills passed and were signed by the Governor.

After 10 long years we finally have a mandate for testing newborn hearing! The summary of all the actions that passed can be found on page 6 of your June 07 NEWSLETTER.

We thank the **Legislators** who believed in our cause and worked long hours to help us reach our goals. We deeply appreciate the efforts of **Mary Hartnett**, the Executive Director of the MCDHH (Minnesota Commission for the Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing) and of her staff for pursuing the issues with unequalled enthusiasm and for keeping the pressure up on Capitol Hill. We thank all of the HLAA TC **members** who contacted their elected officials and the Governor when the call for help went out. Everybody's voice counts. Together we stand!

This coming year we depend once again upon the expert **CART** services that will be provided to us at *a reduced rate* thanks to the generosity of **Lisa Richardson and her crew**.

The **Courage Center** makes our meeting rooms available *free of charge*. Having to pay for such space would be a major financial setback for us.

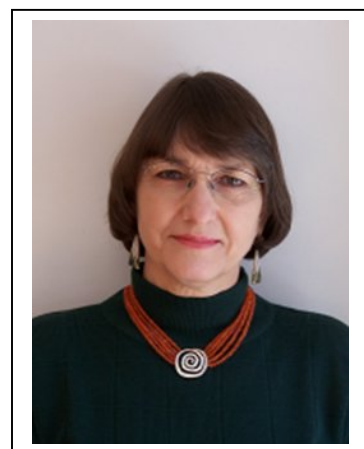
Since learning is truly a never-ending process, we have a line-up of highly qualified, *volunteer speakers* who offer their time to come and share their knowledge with us.

Our first speaker will be **Michelle Rimmer** from the Minnesota Education Center (MEC) for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Bring a guest. Just about anyone can benefit from the insights and tips that Michelle will offer in her talk on "**Job Coaching**."

But mostly we are blessed with a **great group of members and friends** who are willing to pitch in with all of the tasks required to make our meetings possible.

An African proverb states that it takes a village to raise a child. For our group, **it takes every single one of us to make HLAA TC a success**. In that spirit we can look with confidence to the year ahead!

Monique



What's Happening?

Calendar of Events

September 15, 2007 - Michelle Rimmer - MN Employment Center – (MEC) - job coaching for deaf and HOH

October 20, 2007 - Rick MacPherson - Attorney with the MN Disability Law Center

November 17, 2007 - Hearing and Service Dogs of MN

December 15, 2007 - Brian Alexander - OSHA – noise safety standards and regulations

January 19, 2008 - Michael Block – Starkey Tinnitus Clinic

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

March 15, 2008 – Lion's Club Governor

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

May 17, 2008 – Elections and potluck

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 Chapter meetings are held at the **Courage Center** on the 3rd Saturday of each month (except June, July and August). Meetings start at 9:30 and last until Noon.



A little humor from the folks at Beyond Hearing (bh)

Bubba Goes to the Revival

Posted by: "Robert MacPherson" who established the web site. Actual author unknown.

Bubba goes to the Revival and listens to the Preacher. After a while, the Preacher asks anyone with needs to come forward and be prayed over. Bubba gets in line. When it's his turn, the preacher says, "Bubba, what you want me to pray about?" Bubba says, "Preacher, I need you to pray for my Hearing." So the Preacher puts one finger in Bubba's ear, and the other hand on top of his head, and prays a while. After a few minutes, he removes his hands and says, "Bubba, how's your Hearing now?" Bubba says, "I don't know Preacher, it's not until next Wednesday in Baton Rouge."

Meanderings of an (alleged) Crazy Lady

By Sue Brabeck

At the HLAA National Convention, a presenter talked about the positive things about hearing loss. Well, that's an unusual perspective, but I went with it. One of the positives is that many HOH people will not wake with the usual night sounds, such as a partner snoring, a siren passing by outside, or your teenage daughter sneaking back into the house at 4:30 a.m.

Is the ability to sleep through a cacophony of sound always a positive? Well, no. Vicki, Merrilee, Linda and I found that out the hard way at the Convention.

In the wee hours of Sunday morning, whilst tucked snugly into my bed in the hotel, I awoke to the sound of a male voice emanating from who-knows-where. While I am deaf in one ear and can't hear out of the other (so I tell people), you can imagine how much it takes to wake me up. I didn't know where the voice was coming from, and even worse, could not understand the words. My hearing aid was taking an 8-hour nap in its new Dry 'N Store. I peered groggily through the gloom over at Vicki - she was still sleeping. I fumbled with the clock radio - had I inadvertently sent it to go off? Nope. Soon the voice ceased, leaving me clutching the sheets. I lay there frozen and wide awake, questioning my sanity, until the Shake Awake went off at its appointed time of 6:30.

Getting up and moving about, becoming caught up in the hustle/bustle of packing, plus being rattled by having discovered I'd lost my purse (quite another story entirely!), I completely forgot all about my early-morning hallucination.

Later that morning, Terry Portis made the opening remarks at the Research Symposium. He mentioned that during the night there was some excitement at the Renaissance Hotel - the lower floors had been evacuated due to flooding. Ah-HAH! Could that have been the voice I'd heard? Inquiring of the other three ladies, they did not hear anything at all and were not awakened.

It turns out that the voice was real - most probably an all-clear announcement. We were on the uber-luxurious 14th floor of the hotel, and did not get evacuated. Or did we? We don't know! While Merrilee and Vicki and Linda all had a lot of giggles about how Sue "hears voices" (nudge nudge, wink wink!), this underscores a problem for us. Had it been a true emergency for us on the Concierge floor, what would have happened? What about the other ladies, sleeping soundly through all of the excitement? How would they have known there was an emergency?

This got me to thinking about all of the various "disabilities" there are, and how difficult it must be for hotels to accommodate the safety of everybody, more specifically those with hearing loss. How would the nature of the emergency be communicated to us, and how would the hotel ensure that any verbal instructions are understood? Yes, I woke up, unlike my companions, but couldn't understand the announcement. For emergencies, HOH hotel guests can ask at the desk for a "deaf-kit". The ADA prescribes a specific Kit-to-Room ratio for the hearing impaired, including a visual smoke detector, door knock signaler, tactile vibrator alarm, etc. Would any of these been activated for flooding? I'm told that the smoke alarms only work if the fire is specifically in your room - not if it occurs elsewhere in the hotel. Had Merrilee and Linda been roasting marshmallows next door over an open fire, Vicki and I would not have known it about it until we were awakened by the cold water from the ceiling sprinklers! Only then would we have had an opportunity to escape the building, and then inquire of our neighbors why we were not invited to their party.

I have much more respect now for the challenges faced by the hotel industry in accommodating the safety of all their guests. Even those like me that hear Voices In The Night.

Sue

Help!

By Vicki Martin

“You can help by keeping out of my way.”

When the I-35W bridge collapsed, those long-ago words of my mother’s rang again in my ears as I wondered what I would – or should – do in an emergency situation.

At the bridge site, help was clearly needed and there were many who, taking little thought for themselves, swung into action helping others. Partly because of them, fatalities were kept to a stunningly low 13 persons out of the scores of people who were on the bridge when it went down.

I imagine myself at the scene. I am scared because I don’t know what to do. Should I try to pull this person free? Should I lift that child off the bus and take him – where? Should I ask someone what to do? And if I do not hear the answer, should I waste precious minutes asking for a repeat, or just let someone else do it? If I do not press for a repeat, the speaker may think I have heard his reply, and assume that I will do a critical task, when in fact it will not be done.

To bluff at such a time could have serious consequences. To run away does not seem right either.

Emergencies occur every day. Some are small, some are large, and we are bound to be on the scene for some of them.

When you choose your seat assignment on an airplane, you are specifically barred from selecting the seat beside the emergency exit if you, for any reason, would not be able (or willing) to understand and follow orders. You are expected, as an emergency volunteer, to do that.

I can’t even follow orders very well when the person giving them is right next to me. Is someone going to take the time to print out a copy of my instructions in an emergency? Get real.

Besides the shouts of what to do (“Get that child!”. “Stop that carriage!”. “He’s over there!”), people also shout warnings of danger: “Get away!”, “That’s going to explode!”, “Don’t move it!”, “Run!”. The list goes on and on.

There may be a place for us at the scene of a disaster, but unless we see a specific need and know what to do, it is probably not in the middle of the action.

Here are a few things that may make us more helpful:

- 1) Do a quick assessment. If you see a task that you can do alone without instructions, do it.
- 2) If you think someone is giving you orders they expect you to follow, immediately let them know you can’t hear. You may need to tell them you are deaf (instead of hard of hearing) in order to prevent them from having wrong expectations of you.
- 3) If you are with (or can latch onto) a hearing person, tell them you are available to help if they can personally give you instructions one-on-one. Then step aside and stay available.

I do not want to discourage our involvement, but there are all too many ways we can actually make matters worse. In a coordinated effort, it is important that everyone hear. We can’t do that.

Sometimes you really *can* help by staying out of the way.

(The author invites suggestions from all readers, regardless of hearing status. Advice from emergency personnel and first responders would also be helpful. Please respond!)

Vicki



Oklahoma City BBQ at Harn Homestead



Vicki and Linda at the Banquet

Oklahoma convention held in June brought 6 members from our chapter...Linda, Vicki, Sue, Merrilee, Alfred and Candace. Next year join us in Reno, NV



Sue enjoys a cup of Java in OK

If you are interested in **cochlear implants** be sure to make the meetings held at the U, the first Wed. of each month at 10 AM . Contact Linda Senechal for more specific details at cilinda97@yahoo.com



Mr. and Mrs. I. King Jordan (Linda), he was our honored speaker.



Merrilee and Linda at the Harn Homestead

Want to know what's **captioned in the arts** for the HOH?
To receive a list by email each month, call VSA arts or send an email to jon@vsarts.org. Please specify if you want to receive the Audio Description listings, ASL-Interpreted shows, captioned shows, or the combined list.
www.Kerasotes.com/home.aspx
captioned movies

Bits and Pieces

Mary Meyer sister of **Rocky Stone** the founder of SHHH passed away May 15, 2007. She and her sister Helen founded the SHHH Chapter in San Fernando Valley, CA in 1980.

For a lovely story on **Evelyn Glennie**, her life, music and deafness; read one written by the artist herself called "The Hearing Essay." http://www.evelyn.co.uk/live/hearing_essay.htm

Read about **Martha's Vineyard** where for 3 centuries almost everyone (even the hearing) signed. Unfortunately due to "advancement" this is no longer the case. http://www.technological.co.uk/html/contact_me.html

From **The Caucus, political Blog**, New York Times, May 17, 2007. Obama **video with captioning in separate window**, this may be the norm for the future with computers. Tommy Farr, an Iraq veteran and faculty member at Gallaudet University inspired this. Project **readOn** isn't a contractor for the Obama campaign. They create "user-requested captions," Pres. Obama: <http://www.barackobama.com/closedcaptioning/>

Project readOn: <http://www.projectreadon.com/>

Tactile Signing - is used when people are both deaf and blind, signs are done with the db person cradling the signers hands. See and read all about the **only triplets in the world who are db**. They are now 7 years old and live in Spring, Texas. Names: Zoe, Sophie and Emma Dunn. Newspaper article:

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/headline/features/4946594.html> Their lives:

<http://www.throughyoureyesthemovie.com/index.html>

Starkey update-many HLAA TC people volunteered last year and are listed with Starkey Labs, but as of this date I don't believe anyone has been chosen to be a part of any test. If you have been contacted by Starkey please let the editors know so that a story can be put in the paper about your experience.

<http://id.chilleddreams.com/freebies/2007-07-20--energizer-hearing-aid-batteries>

Order your free packet of HA batteries here

Police Response to People with Disabilities.

Eight-Part Series – Designed for use in roll-call training, this videotape addresses law enforcement situations involving people who have mobility disabilities, mental illnesses, mental retardation, epilepsy or seizure disorders, speech disabilities, deafness or hard of hearing, and blindness or low vision. The eight segments range from 5 ½ to 10 ½ minutes in length.

<http://tinyurl.com/2frh4p>

Heel and Wheel Fundraising Walk

Lions Team Challenge

Mission: Hearing and Service Dogs of MN is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people who are D, HOH or disabled by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specialty trained dogs.

When and Where to Walk: Saturday, September 15, 2007 at Phalen Park in St. Paul

For more info: Contact Janet Cobus
Phone: 612-729-5986 Ext. 8#
Email: [jacobus@hsdm.org](mailto:jcobus@hsdm.org)

Bits and Pieces continued

NOTE
FROM
ELLEN
THIBODO

No computer at home? You can find help at your local library, the librarian will show you how to operate a computer and set up an account for you (free). Tell her/him that you want to see the web site of www.hlaatc.org and she will show you how to get to it. This web site is Minnesota's and is operated by former president Dave Miller. Thanks Dave for all the work you put into it.

www.helpmehearfoundation.info

Kevin McHale was instrumental in developing this CI org. called "Help Me Hear Foundation." Stationed in St. Paul, MN. It deals with helping funding of CI's for children.

This is a **live CI implant operation** done June 26, 2007 it is **not closed captioned** yet but will be soon.

<http://www.or-live.com/tgh/1849/#>

Below site is a CI operation also it is slow to load but **is captioned.**

<http://tinyurl.com/yw29yp>

THERE IS A LOT OF USEFUL INFORMATION FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE AT [Twin Cities Deaf Community News and Events](#) SO BE SURE TO CHECK THAT OUT FROM TIME TO TIME

Mr. Austin has been on a quest to help poor children around the world to hear for years now and lives by the slogan of the **Starkey Hearing Foundation** "So The World May Hear". As he said to PEOPLE Magazine, "If I don't do this, who's going to help these children?"

See the events held on June 23, 2007
<http://www.sotheworldmayhear.org/>

The guest list included but was not limited to; Goldie Hawn, Elton John, Micky Rooney, Jay Leno, Jayne Seymour, Jim Belushi, Tommy Lasorda, Robert Wagner, Marlee Matlin, Peter Marshall, Lou Ferrigno, Barbara Sinatra, Buzz Aldrin.

Redsox - 2nd Season Closed Captioned Stress

Last year fans of the Washington Redsox wanted to be able to understand what was going on at the game (FedEx Field) and demanded to have closed captioning. Officials say they set up a stenographer and hundreds of monitors, but the fans say this is not enough. Ideas and solutions were tossed back and forth to no avail. Looks like things will have to be settled in court. Incidentally this is the only stadium in the NFL or professional sport that has done this much.

My family is going to **Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun in Kansas City** this summer. My grandparents lived close to there and it has been a favorite place of ours for years. I decided to see if I could enjoy the shows I remember from my youth and emailed them one morning. Within an hour! I had my friendly response:

"Thank you for your questions. We have always handled hearing concerns on a case by case basis. We would love to be accommodating. What type of assistance do you require? In the past, we have offered printed copies of song lyrics and dialogues to hearing impaired guests. Would that work for you? Please let me know. "

This amusement park is willing to make its customer's happy. I specifically did not mention sign language as most of us don't sign. I was very happy with their offer and the speed of their reply. This is a park I would recommend.

It's a lot closer than Disney.

Leslie Cotter

Putting an end to 65 years of silence

August 19, 2007

A daughter chronicles her deaf parents' surgery and its aftermath.

By Robin Abcarian
Times Staff Writer

In fall 2004, documentary filmmaker Irene Taylor Brodsky was caught off guard when her 65-year-old parents, both profoundly deaf since birth, announced that they had made a life-altering decision: They would both undergo cochlear implants. In three weeks.

"I was like, 'Whoa, what are you talking about? I didn't even know you were thinking about it!' " said Brodsky, who lives in Portland, Ore.

But the former producer for CBS News' "Sunday Morning" soon got over her shock and realized that a terrific opportunity had landed in her lap. She gathered a crew and made the cross-country trek to her parents' home in Rochester, N.Y., where she would film the surgeries, then follow Paul and Sally for a year as their silent world became a sometimes frustrating cacophony.

"They've been daydreaming about sound their whole lives," says Brodsky, who narrates the film. "But what if hearing disappoints us all?"

That is the crux of this exhilarating and often heart-wrenching film, which will be at the ArcLight today through Thursday as part of the International Documentary Assn.'s DocuWeek. It will be shown on HBO, which funded the production, early next year.

"Hear and Now" is both a family love story and a suspenseful tale about the perils of trying to fulfill what may be an impossible dream. Thanks in part to her father's quiet dignity and her mother's tendency to wear her heart on her sleeve, Brodsky manages to create an endearing portrait of two people for whom you can't help but root. At this year's Sundance Film Festival, where the film received an audience award for favorite documentary, the hankies were out at every screening.

"I kept hearing people blowing their nose," said Brodsky, "and I kid you not, I was like, 'Man! Are people getting sick already?' And then I really realized they were crying. I could see people wiping their eyes. And they'd come up afterwards to talk and their voices would be cracking. I wasn't quite prepared for that."

In an interview over cups of hot tea at a big Deer Valley, Utah, house that Brodsky had rented for her parents, extended family and a slew of friends during the festival, Brodsky was able to translate her parents' speech, which can be difficult to understand. (The film has subtitles.)

The Taylors seemed faintly amused by the tremendous emotions inspired by the film. It's just their life, after all, and one they have lived nearly oblivious to the limitations imposed by deafness. In the film, Paul remembers his mother pushing him in his stroller weeping, because, as he puts it, "I would never speak. . . . I would never have a life."

She needn't have worried; he became a college professor and engineer who helped invent a technology that would help deaf people communicate by phone.

Sally was the gossip editor of her high school newspaper and became an expert lip reader.

Together, the Taylors raised three hearing children for whom parental deafness was a simple fact of life.

A new world THERE are many charming, poetic moments in the film. Sally walks a country road before her surgery, saying, "I don't see anything to hear. Will I hear the birds flying?" Paul muses that the surgery might change him in a profound way: "I could maybe become a more bold person and do stuff I could never dream of."

"That," said Brodsky during the interview, "is the one quote in the film that breaks my heart. I felt so sad, because I think the world of him and how can he say that about himself?"

The Taylors met as children at the Central Institute for the Deaf, a residential school in St. Louis that taught the then-groundbreaking "oral method," a combination of lip reading and speech. The Taylors seem to have been model students -- learning to speak, to "hear" music by feeling the vibrations of a speaker and to lip read efficiently -- so much so that in Sally's case, she was sometimes hired by police investigators and journalists to figure out what people were saying from as far away as 100 yards.

Brodsky unearthed lots of footage from her parents' childhoods as well as her own. "In a lot of ways, it's a family album, especially those films which came in these old tin reels in a steel box that my father gave me," she said. "He'd forgotten about them. We had them professionally transferred to digital video. . . . There are definitely some beneficial byproducts of making a film about your family."

There are images of Paul's return from boarding school for his first vacation, at what appears to be age 5 or 6. He recounts his parents' thrill when he spoke his first word -- not "Mommy" or "Daddy," he said, but "thumb." "They were over the moon," he says.

During the Taylors' 1964 trip to the New York World's Fair to celebrate their first anniversary, also captured on film, the pair is thunderstruck by Bell Lab's futuristic Picture Phone. "Why can't we have a picture phone?" Paul mouths to the camera. "Why don't deaf people have the right to communicate over the miles the way hearing people do?" Later, he would contribute to the invention of the TTY device that connects the deaf and hearing through Teletypes and telephones. At one point, he worked for the FCC in Washington, helping implement the law that requires relay operators to be available to the deaf and hard of hearing at all times.

While much of the family footage is evocative of just about any middle-class household of its era, some underscores the challenges of deaf parents raising a hearing brood. Paul Taylor got around some of the problems by rigging lights to blink when the babies cried or people rang the doorbell. "Our house was always lighting up like a Christmas tree," says Brodsky in the film.

Her brother, David, reveals a poignant memory about his feeling of powerlessness when the neighborhood bully ran up behind his father and, telling his friends to "watch this," yelled an obscenity that only the little boy could hear.

"Hear and Now" steers clear of deaf-community controversies such as the debate over signing versus lip reading, nor does it even explore in much depth what cochlear implants -- electronic devices that stimulate auditory nerves rather than amplify sound like traditional hearing aids -- are capable of doing for the profoundly deaf (and there is controversy about this, as well). The Taylors' surgeon, who doesn't think any kind of psychological evaluation is necessary, believes that cochlear implants represent "the No. 1 medical advance of the 20th century," even more important than organ transplants, he says, because hearing is "the only sense that can be restored."

In a classic doctor/patient disconnect, Sally's tumultuous recovery finds her falling apart in his office, telling him that "emotions play a big part in the process." His response as his patient, who is too dizzy to walk, sits weeping: "A little."

But all that is really beside the point as the tension builds over whether the Taylors' lives will dramatically change for the better with the implants.

In another post-op appointment, the Taylors' audiologist turns on a noise-emitting machine to test their ability to hear.

"What does it sound like?" he asks.

"That's tough," Paul replies. "How do you describe what green looks like?"

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Hearing Loss Association of America

Twin Cities Chapter

PO Box 8037

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First Class

Next meeting: Saturday, September 15, 2007

HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

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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