

HLAA TC FEBRUARY 2012



February 18, 2012 – Dr. Teika Pakalns, MCDHH, Rich Diedrichsen & Paul Tuveson on room looping

March 2, 2012 – Legislation Day

March 17, 2012 – speaker from AARP, on “Fraud and Scams”

April 11, 2012 – Steak Fry in Crystal

April 21, 2012 –Marlene Martinek, Lions MD5M Hearing Foundation

May 19, 2012 - Elections/Pot Luck, Linda Miller on Sam Trychin’s “How to talk (and not talk) to Hard of Hearing people”

June 21 - 24, 2012 - HLAA (National Convention) Providence, Rhode Island

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Officers’ emails

- Carole Blowers and Linda Miller
president@hlaatc.org
- Judi Swan - vicepresident@hlaatc.org
- Bob Knoll - treasurer@hlaatc.org

HLAA TC Website - Minnesota

www.hlaatc.org

HLAA National - Maryland

www.hearingloss.org

MN Contact Information - Minnesota

info@hlaatc.org



Twin Cities Chapter

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

Hearing Loss Association of America **Twin Cities** Chapter (HLAA TC) is held the 3rd Saturday of the month (except June, July and August). We meet at The Courage Center, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442

Remembering Merrilee Knoll

by Monique Hammond



*In one of the stars, I shall be living.
In one of them, I shall be laughing.
And so it will be as if all the stars were laughing when you look at the sky at night.
~ The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupery*

Merrilee Knoll, a lady of great inner fortitude and courage, responded to the call of a higher power when she left us for a better place. On December 30th 2011 she passed away at her home, peacefully although suddenly, less than a month shy of her sixty-fourth birthday.

Joining in 1988, when we were called SHHH (Self-help for the Hard-of-Hearing), Merrilee was a veteran of our support group. In so many ways, over time, the names of "Merrilee" and now "HLAA TC" became almost synonymous. Saying that she will be missed by us is certainly an understatement as Merrilee was a pillar of strength that we all had come to rely upon. She was always there, never missed a meeting, greeted us, and welcomed visitors in her quiet, caring way. HLAA TC was her passion. Whenever duty called, she stepped up to the plate. She made every effort necessary to keep the group active and relevant in the service of those with hearing loss. She held the office of President twice, and it was in that function that she bid us farewell.

Merrilee believed firmly in the rights of hearing-challenged people. No matter how she felt physically, she insisted on attending the "Deaf, Deafblind and Hard-of-Hearing Lobby Day" organized by the MCDHH (Commission of Deaf, Deafblind and Hard-of-Hearing Minnesotans), ready to make the case with her legislators on behalf of the hearing loss community. She effectively represented HLAA TC at the state level while she served on advisory committees for the Metro DHHS (Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services division), a program of the Department of Human Services.

We all know about Merrilee's hearing loss and her successes and defeats as she sought better hearing. We remember her talking about her multiple health issues. What we might not know or fully appreciate is that Merrilee was a lifelong diabetic. She was diagnosed when she was about one year old. In those days, care for people with diabetes – from diet to tests to insulin and needles – was by no means what it is nowadays. Yet Merrilee lived up to the demands of the sheer discipline that it took for managing her condition.

She was awarded two achievement medals for living for more than fifty years with diabetes. The Joslin Diabetes Center recognized her in 2009 and the Lilly Diabetes Journey Awards program honored her in 2011. Merrilee had worked for six years with the Joslin Diabetes Research Center. She felt strongly about supporting the scientists and wanted to contribute whatever she could to shed light on this unyielding disorder. She also sat for interviews with diabetes magazines, again sharing her knowledge and experience. In the world of diabetes Merrilee once more became an icon, an example of hope and determination for others.

Yet, no matter how well Merrilee followed doctors' orders and watched over herself, diabetes eventually took its toll. She began losing her hearing in her mid-twenties, probably as a result of decreased blood flow to her ears, a consequence of diabetes. Gradually, her heart became affected. She survived a heart attack at the age of forty-four. Being the trooper that she was, she kept on carrying on – whatever it took, without fuss!

In the Knoll household, diabetes and particularly hearing loss were a family affair. Daughter Janis, the mother of "little Daphne," Merrilee's grand-daughter and love, stepped in and helped out at events such as our yearly fundraiser. As proven by his years of service to HLAA TC, Merrilee's husband Bob was devoted to her and supported and helped her in all of her endeavors. While we lost a dear confidant and friend, Bob lost his soul mate.

Our thoughts go out to Bob and the whole family. Merrilee has graduated from the College of Life with highest honors and now belongs to eternity. Yet she lives on forever in our hearts and memory.

Monique

Merrilee Knoll
HLAA-TC
Leader, mentor, friend
1948 - 2011





President 's Message
Carole Blowers

Deaf and Hearing Impaired Athletes - PART 2

Last month, I wrote an article about hearing impairment and being an athlete. In particular, I discussed some of the challenges these athletes face and some solutions and opportunities available to them. This month, I will continue on this subject, talking about some famous deaf or hard of hearing athletes and the various organizations that support these athletes.

Some famous deaf/hard of hearing athletes

Some people think that deaf or hard-of-hearing people can't play sports. Sports history tells of only a handful of deaf athletes, and even in recent years there have been few big names to admire. William "Dummy" Hoy is perhaps one of the best-known deaf athletes, playing major league **baseball** from 1886 — 1903, where he regularly led the league in stolen bases. Hoy also held an outstanding fielding record, and some credit him with the establishment of signals for safe and out calls. In 1951, he was the first deaf athlete elected to membership in the American Athletic Association of the Deaf Hall of Fame.

Gertrude Ederle was an American competitive **swimmer**. In 1926, she became the first woman to swim across the English Channel. She trained at the Women's Swimming Association joining when she was only fifteen. From this time forth, Gertrude began to break and establish more amateur records than any other woman in the world.

Miha Zupan, a Slovenian **basketball** player, was the first deaf/hearing-impaired person ever to play in the

Euroleague. Despite being deaf since birth, he plays among hearing players at the highest level in Europe. A 6 foot, 81/2 inch tall power forward who can also play center when needed, he currently plays for his country's best-known club.

This year, Chris Jappah, was one of two deaf athletes that participated on the RIT Men's **soccer** team. Born in Liberia, West Africa, Jappah grew up in mainstreamed schools without the use of an interpreter or any real knowledge of sign language. Signals from the referee, as well as from flag holders on the edge of the field, help keep him aware of what's happening throughout the game. Jappah will be accepting an invitation to join the USA Deaf National Soccer Team, a contender in the 2013 Deaflympics held in Greece.

Organizations available to help deaf and hearing impaired athletes:

There have been many organizations formed specifically for deaf and hard of hearing athletes.

United States of America Deaf Basketball (USADB)

This is the premier national sports organization for deaf and hard of hearing basketball athletes and supporters. It was established in 1945 Akron, Ohio as the American Athletic Association of the Deaf (AAAD) by a small group of people who wanted to see formal basketball programs for deaf adults. The organization grew over the next 50 years, becoming an umbrella organization of 26 sports and changed their name in 2000 to *USA Deaf Sports Federation (USADSF)*.

NTID Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation

The NTID Support Team provides services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

students involved in Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation/First Year Enrichment courses and programs. NTID team members teach courses and provide tutoring/performance coaching and advising. .

American Hearing Impaired Hockey Association

The mission of AHIHA is to instill confidence and self-esteem in deaf and hard of hearing athletes. AHIHA helps these athletes improve their skills and understanding of the game, so they are better able to participate in their mainstream athletic programs without limitations. The special needs of deaf and hard of hearing athletes are first and foremost in their hockey environment.

Deaflympics

Unlike other games for athletes with disabilities, which are all directed by non-disabled officials, the Deaflympics are run by deaf people for deaf athletes. To compete you must be deaf, defined as a hearing loss of at least 55 dB per tone average in the better ear (3-tone frequency average at 500, 1000 and 2000 Hertz, ISO 1969 Standard) AND a member of an affiliated National Deaf Sports Federation and citizen of that

country. [Hearing aids](#), [cochlear implants](#) and the like are not allowed to be used in competition, to place all athletes on the same level.

There is both a summer and winter Deaflympics, with participation from 77 nations and organizations such as the USA Deaf Sports Federation and the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf. Deaf and hard of hearing competitors are finding more and more opportunities to show off their athleticism and strive for excellence and recognition in the world of sports. The 2007 Deaflympic winter games in Salt Lake City had more than 600 participants and officials with over 96 countries registered to compete.

Summer Deaflympics will be held July 31 – August 13, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Winter Deaflympics will be held February 6, 2015 - February 14, 2015 in Vancouver, Canada.

I am impressed that the Deaflympics have become the fast growing sports events and oldest after the Olympics. It's great that deaf and hard of hearing athletes can engage in the same kinds of competitive sports as hearing individuals due to these organizations and programs.

e-news email group

If you know anyone who failed to get their January or February newsletter, please send correct and current email address to editors. **HCAA-TC e-news is free to anyone**, member or not, if I have correct email address. Send request to editors.

Newsletter correspondence

Please direct all newsletter correspondence, including email updates, to BOTH newsletter editors:

Vicki gimme88@aol.com

Linda cilinda97@yahoo.com

CaptionCall phones free!

If you are hearing impaired, have a landline, and have internet, CaptionCall will install a free captioned phone for you at no charge. Send your name, address & phone number to Paul Tuveson at ptuveson@captioncall.com and he will arrange for installation.

CaptionCall is an excellent phone with a 40db receiver. It is easy to use, has great captions on both outgoing and incoming calls – and it looks cool!

All this, and it won't cost you a cent!

JANUARY MEETING SYNOPSIS
Judi Swan

CAROLE OPENED THE MEETING WELCOMING KRISTI, THANKING HER FOR PROVIDING CART.

THE SAD ANNOUNCEMENT OF MERRILEE'S PASSING WAS MADE AND SOME OF HER LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS. SHE LOVED BOOKS AND FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY; SHE BECAME A MEMBER OF SHHH (LATER HLA) IN 1998, SERVING AS PRESIDENT IN 2007 AND 2011.

MERRILEE WAS DIAGNOSED AS A SMALL CHILD WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES AND WENT ON TO CONTRIBUTE TO RESEARCH WITH THE JOSHIN DIABETES CENTER AND LILY DIABETES, RECEIVING AWARDS FOR THAT GENEROSITY (ONE WAS 50 YEARS SERVICE). SHE GENEROUSLY GAVE THE ULTIMATE AT THE END OF HER LIFE, THE DONATION OF ORGANS FOR RESEARCH. SURVIVED BY HUSBAND BOB, OUR TREASURER, DAUGHTER JANIS, GRANDAUGHTER DAPHNE, 2 SISTERS AND 1 BROTHER. HER CELEBRATION OF LIFE WAS HELD JANUARY 23 AT THE CRYSTAL VFW; A BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE TO A PRECIOUS ONE WE WILL ALWAYS LOVE AND REMEMBER.

JUDI INTRODUCED OUR SPEAKER, RHODA NELSON WHO CONTINUED WITH PART 2 OF HER "SEEING VOICES/HEARING LIPS." RHODA TOLD OF HER VARIOUS MEDICAL DIAGNOSES AND HOW HUMOR AND LAUGHTER HAS HELPED HER HEALING. SHE USES "SPOONERISMS" THE FLIPPING OF SOUNDS/LETTERS TOTALLY CHANGING ITS MEANING, AND SHE HAD THEM PEPPERED THROUGHOUT HER TALK.

HEARING LOSS ISNT A VISIBLE DISABILITY SO PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS, THEY THINK A HEARING DEVICE RESTORES TO NORMAL RANGE LIKE EYEWEAR DOES. OUR LOSS SOMETIMES BRINGS THE COMMENT, "I'M SORRY." WE DO NOT HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO ANYONE, BUT STATE OUR NEEDS SHE SAID. OUR LIVES ARE A CONSTANT TEACHING PEOPLE HOW TO INTERACT WITH US, KNOWING OURSELVES AND THE BETTER WE KNOW OURSELVES, THE MORE OUR HUMOR CAN COME OUT. "LAUGHTER IS LIKE A INNER JOG-IT STIRS UP YOUR RESPIRATION, YOUR MIND, HELPS BLOODFLOW, BREATHING AND LOWERS B/P. .AND IT'S CONTAGIOUS AND FREE." QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME FOLLOWED WITH RHODA GIVING HER USUAL FACTUAL AND FUNNY ADVICE.

VICKI SHARED SOME OF HER HEARING ACCESSORIES AND EXPLAINED HOW THEY ASSIST HER, STATING SHE WOULD LIST THIS INFORMATION IN THE NEWSLETTER.

JUDI DID THE "MEMBER SPOTLIGHT" TO FULFILL A PROMISE MADE TO MERRILEE AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY. SHE TOLD OF HER DOG, JACKSON, A BLACK AND WHITE SPRINGER SPANIEL. SHE ADOPTED HIM 9 YEARS AGO, WHEN HE WAS TOO AGGRESSIVE FOR HER DAUGHTERS NEW-BORN HOUSEHOLD. HE WAS RESCUED BY HER FROM AN ABUSIVE LIFE. A TRAINER WORKED WITH JACKSON FOR ONE MONTH, AND WITH MUCH WORK, PATIENCE AND LOVE, HE WAS BECAME A VERY CAPABLE "WORK DOG" FOR HER DEAF NEEDS. HE ALERTED HER TO DOOR, PHONE, AND ONCE WHEN A MAN STOOD OUTSIDE HER HOUSE AT 2 AM HE WOKE HER UP AND BROUGHT THIS TO HER ATTENTION. JACKSON PASSED AWAY IN OCTOBER 2011, AND IS GREATLY MISSED. MERRILEE ALSO ASKED THAT THE FULL STORY BE PUBLISHED IN AN UPCOMING NEWSLETTER, SO THAT WILL BE APPEARING THIS SPRING.

TREASURER BOB REPORTED THE WALK4HEARING GOAL WAS 25,000, BUT 31,500 WAS RAISED. OUR CHAPTER RECEIVED A CHECK FOR 7,666. HE SAID THE BOARD WILL DO A LOT OF GOOD THINGS WITH THIS MONEY. BOB ALSO REQUESTED EVERYONE TO SEND HIM VIA EMAIL THEIR CURRENT EMAIL AND PHONE CONTACT INFORMATION (RKnoll5200@aol.com)

DOOR PRIZE WAS DRAWN BY DAVE SWAN.

DEBORAH BAILEY, WHO MAKES THE GREAT LITTLE COMMUNICATION BOOKLETS WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND, DUE TO AN AUTO ACCIDENT THE DAY BEFORE.

OUR GUEST SPEAKERS FROM CAPTIONCALL, BRIAN AND PAUL DESCRIBED IN MUCH DETAIL THE UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE NEWEST "CAPTIONCALL" PHONE. THEY ARE VERY INVOLVED IN MARKETING AND INSTALLING OF THIS HIGH TECHNOLOGY UNIT. FEATURING GREAT VOLUME, LARGE TOUCH SCREEN, SCROLLING, AUTOMATIC DIALING, VOICEMAIL CAPTIONING AND AN AMPLIFIER THAT STAYS THE SAME THROUGH ALL FUNCTIONS. THEY ANSWERED QUESTIONS THEN AND AFTER THE MEETING WAS OVER. THEY WILL RETURN FOR THE MARCH MEETING. CAPTIONCALL PHONES ARE AVAILABLE FREE TO HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS.

Show and Tell

Vicki Martin

It may be “technology corner” to the geeks among us, but to me it is still “show and tell” -- at which, if I may boast, I excelled in first grade.

My first adult foray into this extra credit topic brought forth a lineup of headsets, eight in all: four to be used with T-coils and four without. Here is a list of the products displayed.

All are available from Harris (www.harriscomm.com) using your HLAA 15% discount (discount code *hlaadisc*), and numerous online vendors.

For use with T-coil



Standard Neckloop
Williams Sound NKL-001

Cost: about \$50

Enhances sound through your hearing aid T-coils when plugged in to ALDs, CD players, some telephones, etc.



Amplified Neckloop

Clear Sounds CLA7 v2

Cost: about \$100

Same as standard (above) but amplified
Has microphone for telephone use
Comes with several cords to work with listening only (ie: CD player), landline phones, cell phones



Silhouette (Hatis)

Cost: about \$100

Uses: same as standard neckloop
Places the induction closer to your HA
Available single or double



T-Link (Sensorcom)

Cost: about \$50

Like a silhouette, but smaller
Made to work with cell phone
Tiny, easy to fit in cell phone case
Available single or double

For use without T-coil



Earbud, Williams sound EAR013 or EAR014
Cost: \$15 - \$18

Available single or double

Inexpensive

Replaceable foam covers (good if lending)

Cannot use with hearing aid or T-coil



Ear Speaker, or “surround earphone”

Williams Sound EAR022

Cost: about \$15

Nothing in the ear, hangs entirely outside ear
Sanitary (good for lending)

Is reported by some users to work well with
In-the-canal hearing aids (no T-coil)



Folding Headphones

Williams Sound HED021

Cost: about \$15

Replaceable foam covers

Inexpensive

Fold flat for packing

Cannot be used with hearing aids



Behind the Head earphones

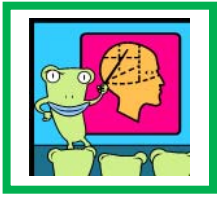
Williams Sound HED026

Cost: about \$20

Replaceable foam covers

Very comfortable

Better sound



Brain Training! (Part 2)

“Progress Plus”

By Vicki Martin

Most of the exercises I did with Sara were very similar to what I had practiced at home, the difference being that she was able to track my progress. That is oversimplifying, of course. Sara used carefully graded sets of exercises, enabling us to compare apples to apples when it came time for a retest.

I practice 30-60 minutes a day, and most of that consists of simply turning off my left hearing aid so I have to listen with my right. There is not a lot of extra time involved.

Four months into the experiment I have found, contrary to my initial experience, that the world actually sounds better and more natural when sound comes from both sides. It sounds much louder as well, even though I keep the volume the same or lower than before. I now prefer to hear with both ears, even if my overall comprehension in a normal environment has not improved. (The lower comprehension of the right ear actually detracts from what I would be able to understand with the left alone – the familiar “hearing in noise” problem.)

I can now usually tell when I am hearing a voice, and even if it is male or female. I can identify the direction of musical notes, and often the pitch. I had a semi-successful, albeit very brief, conversation with a stranger using only my right ear. I listened to a live orchestra concert with both ears. Although I will not say that I could tell what was happening musically any better than before, it definitely sounded better. Much better.

All these are subjective assessments. But could we actually prove that I had made progress? A second test, similar to my initial evaluation, would be the key. This test would cover the same types of exercises I had been practicing.

What specifically was on these tests? By sound alone, I had to:

- identify the phonemes MM/AH/EE/OO
- identify single-syllable words. (These were the hardest. I scored a low 8% on the initial testing on a limited group of one-syllable words)
- identify multi-syllable words (easier)
- select common sentences (eg: “how are you?, or “would you like fries with that?”) from a printed list of 10 or so options
- identify words in specific categories (eg: animals, fruits, vegetables)

The results are encouraging. After four months of listening practice, my percentage of right answers at least doubled on more than half of the tests. The remaining ones also showed improvement.

But for all that, things still sound “wrong”. Will that ever change? It’s a question that dogs me. But the even bigger question is, would change be worth the risk?

More on that next time.

(next month: Brain Training part 3, “Decision Point”)

Miscellany

Carole Blowers to appear in play

Upcoming Vaudeville Show at Collings Theater, 7441 Newton Avenue N., Brooklyn Park

Come and see different "mini-shows" performed involving dancing, singing, piano, etc!

Performance dates are:

Friday, February 17 at 7:30 p.m.;

Saturday, February 18 at 7:30 p.m.;

Sunday, February 19 at 2 or 3 p.m. (time not definite as of yet)

Friday, February 24 at 7:30 p.m.;

Saturday, February 25 at 7:30 p.m.; and

Sunday, February 26 at 2 or 3 p.m.(time not definite as of yet)

Tickets will be \$12 for children or adults

Carole Blowers and two other friends will be tap dancing to a song!

For tickets, call Barbara at (763) 561-4037 or (763) 560-4230. Reservations must be made in advance. Tickets can be picked up on performance date and paid for then.



Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group!!!

Sunday, February 19, 2012

1:30 - 4:30 PM

Maplewood Library
3025 Southlawn Dr
Maplewood, MN 55109
Ph: (651) 704-2033

Hosts: Beth Raeder & Deanne Carlson
Please send your RSVP to Sara Oberg
Email:
soberg3@fairview.org

You are welcome to bring a spouse, partner, friend, family member, and/or significant other to any of these events! The Maplewood Library does NOT allow us to bring in food or beverages. If you would like to purchase food or a beverage at the library you are welcome to.

You might not be able to do everything at once, you can however do it all in one place.



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Our next meeting is February 18, 2012

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Vice President – Judi Swan
vicepresident@hlaatc.org

Treasurer – Bob Knoll,
treasurer@hlaatc.org

Contact Info. – info@hlaatc.org

Photos – Ross Hammond

Newsletter Editors -

Vicki Martin gimme88@aol.com

Linda Senechal, cilinda97@yahoo.com

This month's editor is Vicki Martin

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