

# HLAA TC

## March 2022

### Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota



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



#### VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Zoom meetings continue through the end of the 2021-22 season:  
(email [treasurer@hlaatc.org](mailto:treasurer@hlaatc.org) for invite)

**March 19, 2022**

Kristin Swan  
Open discussion  
with our communication partners

**April 16, 2022**

Audiology Concepts  
Hidden Hearing Loss  
New technologies

**May 21, 2022**

Jim Rau, HLAA Wisconsin  
Communication access for veterans



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#### Officers' emails

- Christine Morgan – [president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)
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HLAA National - Maryland

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

Meetings of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom until further notice.

# President's Message



## ***HLAA-TC President's Message – March 2022*** ***Christine Morgan***

What happened to February??? I blinked my eyes and it was gone!

At our March meeting, the Board will present information regarding the nomination process for becoming a Board member. We would like to encourage you to step forward if you have any interest in being on the Board. You can do that at the meeting or by emailing me ([president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)) or Lionel ([treasurer@hlaatc.org](mailto:treasurer@hlaatc.org)). The Board will present the slate of nominations at the April Chapter meeting. Elections will be held during the May Chapter meeting.

We have an exciting line-up for the rest of the “season”. Be sure to invite your friends, communication partners, and/or anyone you know who frequently communicates with someone with hearing loss (meaning Hard of Hearing).

Kristen Swan, whom most of you already know, will lead the discussion with our communication partners (CP). We hope the CPs will speak candidly (but kindly) about what it is like to live with someone with hearing loss. Just like those of us WITH hearing loss, they need to know that they are not alone! Hearing loss affects us as well as our families, friends, and anyone we deal with on a regular basis.

In April, two audiologists from Audiology Concepts will be providing information on “hidden hearing loss”. They will also talk about new technologies now available and coming in the near future.

The May Chapter meeting details are still being decided.

We would love to hear from you! Let us know what you like, presentations you would like to hear, how we can better meet your needs when it comes to living in a “hearing world”.

Be well, be safe, and be peaceful!

*Christine*



## **Board Members**

**Christine Morgan**  
*President*

**Barb Schneider**  
*Acting Vice President*

**Christy Meyers**  
*Acting Secretary*

**Lionel Locke**  
*Treasurer*

**Laura Hagemann**  
*Acting Director at Large*

HLAA-TC Newsletter Editor  
*Vicki Martin*

Social Media Specialist  
*Laura Hagemann*

## March Program



Speaker/Moderator: Kristen L. Swan, MA, LP

Regions Hospital Health and Wellness Program Serving Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard-of-Hearing

BA, University of Minnesota-Duluth in Communication Disorders

MA, University of Minnesota-St. Paul Campus in Family Social Science

Kristen works with Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing individuals, couples and families

A licensed psychologist, Kristen:

- Travels throughout the state to provide direct psychotherapy services

- Provides face-to-face therapy services through video conferencing

- Facilitates a number of therapy groups including depression and relapse prevention

- Offers a once-a-month Hard of Hearing support group

- Speaks at conferences and events on issues related to hearing loss

- Provides in-services and consultations within the state

- Works closely with ENT and Audiology for CI evaluation and follow-up

Kristen will lead a discussion with our communication partners (family, friends, significant others) on the joys and challenges of living with a hard of hearing person. We need to hear this!

**Please encourage your communication partners to attend.**

## Summary of HLAA-TC Meeting February 19, 2022

*Barb Schneider*

President Christine Morgan opened the meeting at 10 AM, introduced the officers and newsletter editor, and welcomed everyone, including out of state visitors to the online meeting.

### Minnesota Hands and Voices presentation

Our speakers were Anne Barlow, Director of Minnesota Hands and Voices (MHV), and Brenda Hommerding, Manager of the Guide by your Side program at MHV. MHV joined the 25-year-old national and international organization ( <https://www.handsandvoices.org/> ) in 2006 providing information, support and referrals to families who have a deaf or hard of hearing child. MHV merged with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) in July, 2021, and serves an average of 300 new families every year with 20 full and part time staff. Anne and Brenda are both seasoned deaf/hearing loss community members.

MHV has a family-centric model, assuming the role of chief cheerleader and advocate. Anne explained: "...our main mission is to uphold parents as the experts for their children and to work very closely with all of the professionals that come into their lives, audiology, ENT, teachers,[etc.] ... to support their child ... make the decisions for their own child based on who they know their child to be. So, our motto is what works for the child is what makes the choice right." Another function is to connect parents and families with each other for support.

Different programs are centered around each family such as the Deaf Mentor program, which is also part of LSS, which teaches deaf culture and ASL. Early intervention and connecting with Public Health is important as are mental health and educational resources. DHH Guide or Role model program, which facilitates transition to adulthood. MHV acts as guide through all the myriad of resources and makes sure parents have the opportunity to choose what they need at each stage of the child's life. MHV maintains a state and national resource directory.

Brenda outlined the various steps involved when a child is identified as deaf/hearing impaired in Minnesota regarding supports. There are state-wide and Metro MHV teams ready with emotional support, and a roadmap to streamline the knowledge families need. MHV uses their website, literature, media and classes in addition to one-on-one support. Each family receives a large 3-ring binder of resources relevant to them.

MHV started educational advocacy with the Astra Program, which partners with Pacer Center, Deaf Plus, which works with Autistic and blind organizations like the deaf-blind project, and works with Family Voices of Minnesota which covers a broad range of disabilities. The MN Commission also serves as an important resource with MHV.

Contact: [brenda.hommerding@lssmn.org](mailto:brenda.hommerding@lssmn.org); [anne.barlow@lssmn.org](mailto:anne.barlow@lssmn.org).

(February meeting summary, cont.)

## Chapter business:

For Board updates, please see Christine's message.

Thank you to all who have stepped forward to help our chapter.

Please encourage individuals or businesses that would be willing to consider donating to or sponsoring HLAA-TC. Our need for part-time staff is great.

The Metro Advisory Committee needs members, contact Mary Bauer at [mary.bauer.state.mn.us](mailto:mary.bauer.state.mn.us) or Christine.

Communication cards for law enforcement in case you are pulled over can be downloaded from the DHS website: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfservlet/Public/DHS-7438-ENG>.

AARP article on one professional woman's journey with hearing loss:  
<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2022/cochlear-implant-surgery.html>.

May is Better Hearing and Speech month, so celebrate, educate, advocate for good hearing.



Hearing Journal (online) offers the following factoid for your amusement:

"Eyes have been called the window to the soul. It turns out that ear shapes offer the same view of personality, or so says the "Physiognomy Face Reading Dictionary," which purports to offer a way to assess character by ear morphology. Small ears convey sensitivity; bent ears signal high intelligence, says this source. But beware of swollen ears! They indicate thoughtlessness. No further explanation is offered."

*(Editor's note: Well, I took a look in the mirror, and I think mine are just...pierced.)*

## Singin' in the Rain



From one of many topics featured in [hearingtracker.com](http://hearingtracker.com):

“Researchers say they have found particular groups of neurons that appear to respond selectively to the sound of singing...

The results confirmed previous findings from fMRI scans that some neurons respond only to speech or respond more strongly to music. However, they also revealed populations of neurons that appear to respond selectively to the sound of singing, showing only very weak responses to other types of music or speech alone...

The singing voice is the only musical instrument that almost everyone is born with, so one might expect us to have a rather different relationship with human song, relative to other kinds of music,” she said.

We know that there are some significant differences between the brain systems that control how we speak and those that control how we sing, so it’s very interesting that some of these distinctions are also seen when we listen to human song...

Dr Ediz Sohoglu, a cognitive neuroscientist at University of Sussex, said the findings were striking.

One of the interesting questions that arises is why the brain has evolved or been shaped by experience to develop such specialised neurons. Why not just use the same neurons in a multi-purpose fashion to process more than one type of sound? he said.

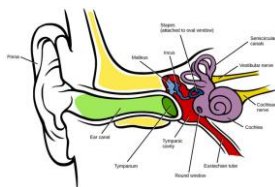
One possibility is that having specialised neurons helps a listener to focus on certain sounds in noisy environments. For example, if I am listening to my favourite singer in a concert, I might find it easier to ignore the loud conversation behind me – which would be represented in a different part of my brain.”

*(editor’s comment: experience using hearing aids and CI processors shows me that my brain is very quick to degrade the quality of instrumental music if something threatening is going on (think: driving in a storm with the radio on). Would this be true if the music was human voices? I’ll let you know next time it happens!)*

Read the article here:

- [Scientists find part of brain responds selectively to sound of singing](#)

## Hearing loss and Covid-19 – excerpt



“While hearing loss isn’t on the typical list of [symptoms of COVID-19](#), it should be taken seriously. Because as...time is of the essence in halting the progression of hearing loss and perhaps regaining function...When [a] virus attacks the nerve, you have a very short period of time to prevent permanent damage to that nerve...

Hearing loss...tends to turn up later in the course of the disease, rather than at the outset of illness...[It] can sometimes take many years to develop after damage to the inner ear structures, so we may not fully understand the possible link for some time...

The prevalence of hearing loss following a COVID-19 infection is about 8%...

When a patient with COVID comes in and mentions hearing loss, [the doctor must] move quickly. You’ve got to treat them within 72 hours to limit the extent of permanent hearing loss...

Some individuals may also develop tinnitus – ringing in the ear or ears – as a result of a viral [infection](#), and this can last for a long time. Tinnitus occurs when those nerve endings can’t pick up sound clearly anymore...

[Vertigo](#) can also be a lasting issue because the ear nerve and the nerve that controlled balance both run in that same canal that comes out of the brain...

It should be added that there’s zero scientific evidence of any connection between hearing loss and the COVID-19 vaccine. [Getting vaccinated](#) can help reduce the chances of developing complications like hearing loss if you do become infected with COVID-19.”

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Read the full article here:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/covid-19-and-hearing-loss/ar-AAUjbnJ>



# Bop-it

## Audio game for hard of hearing kids

In exploring games for our multiply-handicapped (adult) son, we came across one that kids with hearing loss may enjoy: the new Bop-it game by Hasbro. This version looks about the same as the original (except for color) and has three different games on it: Classic (same as the original), Action (three original moves plus 10 new ones such as "hammer it", "sing it", "cradle it"), and the Beat Bop game, which is exactly like the classic game except that the commands are non-verbal (drums for bop, whistle for pull, and rasping sound for twist).

Most of us know that if you are hard of hearing, it is much easier to hear noises than to understand what is being said. Thus, the whistle, rasp, and drum sounds could make the game accessible for people who can hear something, but whose hearing is too poor to recognize words.

Made by Hasbro, the original is just called "Classic". The newer one I described does not appear to have a unique name, but I see the numbers B7428 on the insert. Each was about \$15 or so, plus tax and shipping. The knobs are slightly different on the two games, so they can be differentiated by touch.

You may decide to get one of these for a kid you know, hard-of-hearing or not. Be careful not to get addicted to it while testing it out...or maybe you would just want to order two of them to begin with!







Be a STAR for STAR!

## STAR: A System of Technology to Achieve Results

A System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) is located within the [Minnesota Department of Administration](#). STAR's mission is to help **all Minnesotans** with disabilities gain access to and acquire the assistive technology they need to live, learn, work and play. The Minnesota STAR Program is federally funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration For Community Living in accordance with the [Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended \(P.L. 108-364\)](#).  
<https://mn.gov/admin/star/>

*April 6<sup>th</sup> is National Assistive Technology (AT) Awareness Day and STAR is working with the Governor's office on a proclamation declaring April 6, 2022 as AT Awareness Day in Minnesota.*

*To celebrate this important day, **we would like to create a video of individuals who use AT** what AT they use and why they love it or how it changes their life.*

*If you are interested in participating in this exciting project, please reach out to the STAR team at: [star.program@state.mn.us](mailto:star.program@state.mn.us) by March 14<sup>th</sup>. We will give you more information on the project at that time.*

*Please let us know if any of you have activities planned for AT Awareness day or if you are interested in participating in our video project!*

**Amy Perron**  
**Program Director**

**MN STAR Program**  
658 Cedar Street, Suite 358  
Saint Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 201-2295  
[amy.perron@state.mn.us](mailto:amy.perron@state.mn.us)

In the beginning...were captions!

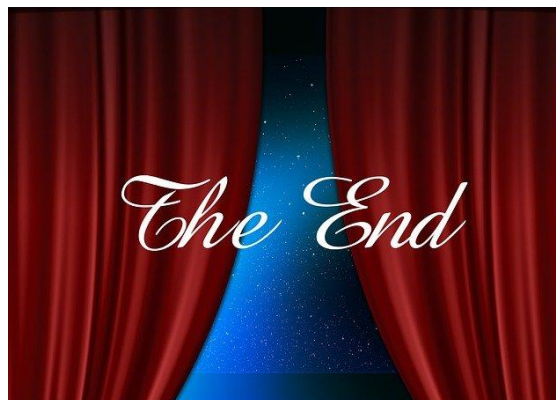
Did you realize that in the early days of movie theaters, captions preceded sound?



“Before the advent of “talkies”, films that have spoken dialogue, a night out at the movies could be enjoyed by both people with hearing and Deaf people. Since the characters couldn’t speak, everything had to be conveyed visually. Actors adopted an over-dramatic acting style and important information was displayed in text on title cards”...

That, and more, is part of the history of captioning! Read more here:

[https://captioncall.com/hearing-technology/the-fascinating-history-of-closed-captions#msdyntrid=sq8RPo2rY\\_LaVsquitpm2vOuyNzHKBJ8-8zHIqf7wSYE](https://captioncall.com/hearing-technology/the-fascinating-history-of-closed-captions#msdyntrid=sq8RPo2rY_LaVsquitpm2vOuyNzHKBJ8-8zHIqf7wSYE)



# Bring your CP!\*



MARCH 19, 2022 HLAA-TC ZOOM MTG:  
TOPIC & SPEAKER: "HOW HEARING LOSS  
AFFECTS OUR COMMUNICATION PARTNERS"  
BY KRISTEN L. SWAN, MA, LP,  
HEALTHPARTNERS



## REMINDER:

Have your "communication  
partners" (friends/family, etc.)  
attend our March Zoom meeting  
with you.

\* Communication Partner

HLAA TC  
PO Box 26021  
Minneapolis, MN 55426



**Next meeting: Zoom on March 19**

## First Class

### HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

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*Newsletter via email included in all memberships*

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**Mail to: HLAA Twin Cities Chapter  
PO Box 26021  
Minneapolis, MN 55426**



Welcomes You!

**President -**

**Christine Morgan -** [president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)

**Acting Vice President –**

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The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom on March 19, 2022. Open to socialize at 9:30 AM, formal meeting 10 AM.

Please visit the chapter's web-site at [www.hlaatc.org](http://www.hlaatc.org) or visit us on Facebook: groups/HLAA-TC.

**Accommodations:** All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning* ([www.paradigmreporting.com](http://www.paradigmreporting.com)).