

HLAA TC

April 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 for invite)

April 16, 2022

Audiology Concepts

Hidden Hearing Loss

New Technologies

Drs. Jeff King and Rachel Allgor

May 21, 2022

Jim Rau, HLAA Wisconsin

Communication access for veterans



Contents

✚ Virtual Meetings	Page 1
✚ President's Message	Page 2
✚ April Speakers	Page 3
✚ Mar. Meeting Summary	Page 4
✚ Noises of War	Page 5
✚ Tai Chi & Vestibular Sys	Page 6
✚ Hearing Under the Knife	Page 8
✚ Book Club	Page 9
✚ Discussion Questions	Page 10
✚ Nominating Committee Rpt	Page 11

Officers' emails

- **Christine Morgan** – president@hlaatc.org
- vicepresident@hlaatc.org
- **Lionel Locke** - treasurer@hlaatc.org
- secretary@hlaatc.org
- director@hlaatc.org

HLAA TC Website - Minnesota

www.hlaatc.org

HLAA TC telephone 763-447-9672

Contact Information - Minnesota

info@hlaatc.org

HLAA National - Maryland

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 – April 2022 ***Christine Morgan***

Happy Spring!

I was just informed on March 31st that April was proclaimed Deaf History Month by Governor Walz! It is great that Deaf citizens and supporting organizations are being recognized. The Board was surprised that HLAA-TC was named as one of the supporting organizations.

For those of you who may not be aware, HLAA was originally named (by the founder, Rocky Stone) SHHH – Self Help for the Hard of Hearing! Rocky recognized that the hard of hearing are the “silent majority” with hearing loss who communicate verbally.

Including the Deaf/Blind (who communicate verbally), we make up just under 20 percent of the population in Minnesota! The name of our organization was changed to HLAA in 2007. Earlier, there were a couple of Chapters in Minnesota but currently, the Twin Cities (which includes Greater Minnesota) Chapter is the only organization in Minnesota whose mission is supporting, advocating, educating, and providing information for people with hearing loss who communicate verbally (including their families, friends, etc.).

I am very excited that on our list of nominees, we have such talented, experienced people, with a variety of backgrounds, who have come forward and volunteered to serve on the Board. I hope you will join us in April to meet the nominees for the new Board of Directors. A list is included in this newsletter. Voting will take place in May. Our April speakers are two audiologists from Audiology Concepts presenting information on updates in hearing aid technology and “Hidden

Hearing Loss”. Jim Rau is our May presenter talking about communication access for Veterans.

We also have some exciting presentations coming up this Fall. So stay tuned!

The Board is working on the ability to provide hybrid meetings, which will allow members and guests to attend in person or via Zoom! We continue to monitor the Covid situation as we plan for the future and hybrid meetings will allow us to pivot back to only Zoom if the situation requires.

Spring has indeed sprung within HLAA-TC!

Christine

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Acting Vice President

Christy Meyers
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Lionel Locke
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Laura Hagemann
Acting Director at Large

HLAA-TC Newsletter Editor
Vicki Martin

Social Media Specialist
Laura Hagemann

April Program



Dr. Jeff King

“An Audiologist’s Perspective on Hidden Hearing Loss”



Dr. Rachel Allgor

“The Cutting Edge: Updates in Hearing Technology”

Dr. King earned his Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies and Disorders from St. Cloud State University before pursuing his Doctorate of Audiology from Central Michigan University. Jeffrey enjoys spending time with friends and family, hunting, fishing, and golf.

Why Audiology: Jeffrey always knew that he wanted to help others in life. He was unsure how he would do this until he took his first communication disorders course during undergraduate studies. After initially pursuing speech language pathology, Jeffrey discovered that his true passion was audiology. His goal is to improve the quality of life of patients and their family members by providing excellent hearing healthcare.

Dr. Allgor is dedicated to giving her patients excellent service by staying current in evidence-based best practices of diagnostics, amplification fitting, tinnitus/hyperacusis/misophonia treatment and hearing protection.

“I believe I’ve been given a unique perspective on audiology because I wear a hearing device every day. Between my history of growing up going to audiologists and my education, I believe I’ve been able to observe and learn what a great Audiologist should be like. I strive towards that daily. My goal is to help patients in the way they need it; a tailor fit for each individual.”

Dr. Rachel joined Audiology Concepts in 2016 as a graduate student. After graduating from A.T. Still University in 2017, she joined the team full time. She received her undergraduate degree from Minnesota State University Moorhead and is originally from Hastings, MN.

Summary of HLAA-TC Meeting March 19, 2022

Barb Schneider

President Christine Morgan opened the meeting at 10:00 with introductions of those serving in Board positions, Vicki our newsletter editor, and Lisa our captioner. Thanks to all who came, including those who are not members.

Our speaker was Kristen Swan, licensed psychologist at Regions Hospital who specializes in working with deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing patients. Her topic was “hearing from our communication partners (CP)”, who were invited to participate in our meeting. This generated many stories at the heart of what it means to be human. Only a few are included here.

The first question was: What are some of your biggest frustrations or pet peeves that happen as a result of trying to communicate with the person with hearing loss (PHL)? Or in general with your family? What feelings does this generate?

CP: We had only been married two years when C suddenly lost her hearing and my life was turned upside down, the whole family was affected. We had to make many adjustments, like going to restaurants; Covid isolation during the past two years made everything worse. We had to reassess who we were, how we communicated, and how we got along. Parts of me got lost for a while.

CP: The responsibility of having to translate in a noisy fast-paced environment like checking out at a store, or a health care setting, is high. It's hard to manage, I feel anxious.

CP: It's hard to stop and translate, so much gets lost – the flow of conversation is interrupted and I don't always remember exactly what was said. E's hearing loss has been life changing for us. [Kristen then mentioned the inability to have “pillow talk” when the hearing aids come off at night and how this affects a couple. The sadness and grief are very real.]

PHL: living with my parents after my accident and TBI, we all had to learn new ways of communicating. Humor, making and understanding jokes, which was a big part of our family, has largely been lost. There are many daily griefs just trying to navigate my (new) life.

CP: Hearing loss after being involved in all sorts of musical activities and events over more than 53 years was a big loss. Over time, S developed pitch distortion and had to quit the choir, and we now limit the concerts we attend. This was life-changing.

CP: riding in the car, our granddaughter in the back - C can't hear the conversation. Paraphrasing takes a lot of effort and is never as good as the original comment. Everyone loses. Our granddaughter started saying “Tell grandma what I said” instead of talking to her directly.

PHL shared that her parents both died the week of Christmas, and their funeral is coming up where people will be wearing masks. Mary Bauer had communication ideas – call her to discuss.

(March meeting summary, cont.)

Question #2: what do you find hard to remember in communicating with PHL? Comments: There's no day off; I have to adjust to PHL after being with non-PHLs; everyone is on their own acceptance timetable; the multi-pronged impact of grief; I'm the translator and advocate; how frustrating it is in conversations to not be able to understand; HL is the enemy, not the person;

Kristen finished by emphasizing that CPs have a life too and should pursue their own interests and take care of their stress. Both as individuals and as a couple/family, develop your true selves. John noted: CPs are the heroes who live in both hearing and hearing loss worlds, very hard to do. We will revisit this topic again – there are 14 more questions we didn't get to.

Board election in May, and exciting speakers in the coming year – don't miss!

NOISES OF WAR

War is noisy. It is not surprising that well over half of service men and women report hearing difficulties when they return home. Not all of these difficulties are hearing loss: “The effects of noise on servicemembers go far beyond hearing loss” (Hearing Journal April 2021). Tinnitus, cochlear synaptopathy (dysfunction of the synapses, i.e. “hidden hearing loss”), hyperacusis, and auditory processing disorders are also part of the picture.

Evaluation criteria, progress of hearing protection through war history, and the diversity of military noise sources are some of the topics addressed in this article. Click [here](#) to read the full article by Dennis Colucci (AuD, MA, ABA, FAAA):

Noises of War and Hearing Care: The Hearing Journal (lww.com)



Most of you know that I am a Certified Tai Chi and Qigong Instructor. Below is an excerpt from one of my latest weekly blogs that you may find of interest! I eliminated the number of studies on the Vestibular System and Tai Chi. However, the complete blog is available on my website: www.balancedlifetaichi.com

Tai Chi and the Vestibular System

By Christine Morgan on 03/21/22

Imagine spending your days with profound dizziness, vertigo, and imbalance! Sounds terrible, but it is the reality for too many people!

The visual, [proprioceptive](#), and vestibular systems are information sources that influence balance control (sensory organization), which is termed “sensory organization”. The [peripheral vestibular system](#) includes the organs of the inner ear (responsible for hearing), and the vestibular apparatus (responsible for balance, stability and spatial orientation). In other words, it is designed to keep you [balanced and oriented](#). This system is credited with organizing your head’s motions and stabilizing your eyes relative to the environment. It also sends signals to your musculoskeletal system which keeps you upright. The inner ear (within the vestibular system) sends impulses that ensure that your eyes coordinate with the body’s movements, no matter how small those movements are.

Many people have vestibular issues, where balance is off, once or twice in their lives. However, injury, disease, infections, cancer, and/or medication toxicity can trigger vestibular disorders. Unfortunately, at times, it can occur without a known cause. Symptoms commonly experienced by people with vestibular or inner ear balance disorders include imbalance, dizziness, vertigo, stress, anxiety, fatigue, and worse, serious injury or death. Obviously, the risk of falls increases and many of these people severely limit their activities.

Prolonged inactivity actually reduces the ability to compensate for the vestibular disorder. Inactivity can also contribute to other problems, such as loss of bone and muscles mass, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc. Now add in the emotional impact associated with social isolation and favorite activities and the result is a lower quality of life.

Unfortunately, as we age, the quality of input from the three information systems declines. According to the *Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi*, sensors in the inner ear [degenerate by 40 percent](#) after age 70. As well, neuromuscular reactions decline which affect head and neck movements. As the vestibular system changes and may not be working properly, there is [decreased speed of the signals](#) between the movement, the vestibular system, and the brain. Because of this, there is often an increase in balance issues, bumping into things, and worse, falls.

Vestibular rehabilitation (VR) is an exercise program aimed at improving balance impairment due to a damaged peripheral vestibular system. Vestibular rehabilitation and Tai Chi both benefit people with vestibulopathy. Vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT) and Tai Chi can often “re-calibrate the motor and sensory functions that are required for balance”. Some

vestibular disorders respond well to this. According to the Vestibular Disorders Association, exercises of both therapies involve focus on postural orientation (position of the trunk and head alignment) and postural equilibrium (coordinating movements which stabilize and center the body).

(Tai Chi and Vestibular, cont.)

Numerous studies have demonstrated the advantages of Tai Chi on visual, proprioceptive, and vestibular functions. Extensive medical literature and anecdotal reports from medical personnel support Tai Chi as an excellent complementary therapy to vestibular rehabilitation. Tai Chi is accepted as a complementary therapy for vestibular rehabilitation because it improves balance and reduces the occurrence of falls. It is recommended by the National Council of Aging, the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Otolaryngology, and the Arthritis Foundation. Tai Chi can help people of all ages and most physical conditions.



Believe it or not:

Speechread it!

Tech company Flawless AI can match an actor's mouth movements to literal dubbing, and use the actor's own voice to vocalize in any language. "Now that AI can learn the idiosyncrasies of each actor's voice and facial expressions, it is easier to dub films and TV shows in new languages while preserving the acting nuances and voices of the original-language performances...After training AI to learn specific actors' vocal and facial performances, the startup can generate modified versions of the original performance that change the actor's voice and facial expression to fit an entirely different language".

(Just imagine what an unscrupulous politician could do with this!)

Read more about it here: <https://spectrum.ieee.org/ai-modifies-actor-performances-for-flawless-dubbing>

Watch and hear a demo on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIfS7FXs-54>

Hearing Under the Knife

by Vicki Martin

During the Covid years so far, I have largely coped with the problem of communicating (or not) through masks by avoiding any clinic visits not essential or time-critical. You may have done the same. Emerging from this state of medical abstinence as Omicron cases declined and BA.2 was just a ripple, I bravely scheduled an ophthalmology appointment with the aim of having my clouded natural lenses replaced with a pair of transparent acrylic ones.

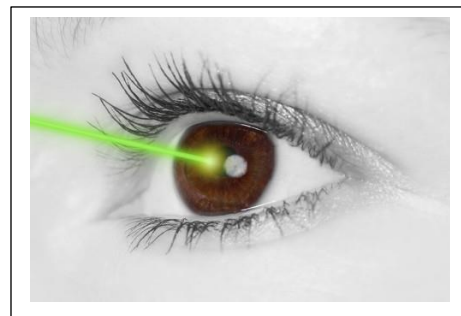
What followed was a series of about 10 appointments (scans, pre-ops, surgeries, post-ops), each one – but especially the surgeries - presenting its own set of communication problems. There was apparently a different nurse for each kind of eye drop: the tetracaine-drop nurse, the phenylephrine- drop nurse, the tropicamide-drop nurse, the diclofenac-drop nurse, the ofloxacin-drop nurse, the opcon-A-drop nurse, and the propacaine-drop nurse (and I have all their names to prove it). Inserting the IV required two nurses, with apparently different insertion skills, and there was even a “comfort-nurse” (my appellation), whose role was to stay with me every moment and make sure I didn’t move. If I had a question, she would answer it. If something itched, she would scratch it. Just DO NOT MOVE!

All of these nurses were wearing masks, of course. Each moved around in her own territory, talking as she moved. You already know that you need to inform each person on the team that you have hearing loss. That’s a given. But that does not mean they will speak plainly, look at you, or make sure you understand. You need to continue reminding them, and asking them to repeat what they said until you get it.

We addressed the issue of wearing hearing devices during surgery. Their plan was to remove the hearing device on the side of the surgery (that would be my CI processor), so as not to dislodge or damage it by dripping liquid. I was not crazy about that plan. We were still discussing this while en route to surgery. For what it was worth, I said if they could possibly leave my CI processor in place during surgery, I would be much happier with that. There was a bit of talk, not understood by me, when we entered the room. Then someone – I assume it was the “comfort-nurse” -- said “we’re going to leave it in place.” That was indeed a comfort! “Thank you!” I said, relieved. I didn’t even know this was on the radar, but one attendant – presumably the comfort-nurse – actually stood quite close to my head during the procedure, describing what was being done and what would happen next. She spoke plainly, and I understood, so there were no surprises – a good thing when you are not allowed to move.

If there is a moral to the story, it is this: you need to ask, and keep asking, for what you need. Ultimately, the medical crew will decide what is best. If they know what you need, they will try to do it – but they need to know.

Now for the other eye...



Book club is on April 26th with AUTHOR APPEARANCE!

By Laura Hagemann

HAAA-Twin Cities Virtual Book Club is meeting on Zoom to discuss the memoir "Burn Down the Ground: A Memoir" by Kambri Crews. Author Kambri Crews will join us for our discussion!

Our April book club got pushed out to Tuesday, April 26th from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm (Central Time). We are discussing "Burn Down the Ground: A Memoir" and we are having the author of the memoir, Kambri Crews, join us! She writes of her experience being a Child Of Deaf Adults (CODA). Email Laura Hagemann at social@hlaatc.org for the Zoom link. Even if you don't get the book read this would be a good one to attend! (Book clubs are FREE and open to everyone [you don't need to be an HAAA or HAAA-TC member]). And all book clubs offer live (AI/computer-generated) captions.

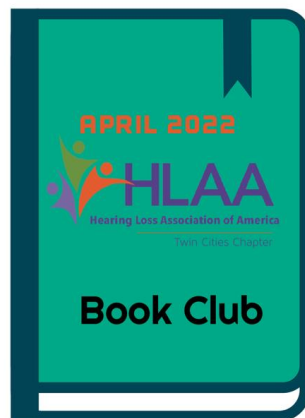
The synopsis of the book from Amazon is: "In this powerful, affecting, and unflinching memoir, a daughter looks back on her unconventional childhood with deaf parents in rural Texas while trying to reconcile her present life—in which her father is serving a twenty-year sentence in a maximum-security prison. As a child, Kambri Crews wished that she'd been born deaf so she, too, could fully belong to the tight-knit Deaf community that embraced her parents. Her beautiful mother was a saint who would swiftly correct anyone's notion that deaf equaled dumb. Her handsome father, on the other hand, was more likely to be found hanging out with the sinners. Strong, gregarious, and hardworking, he managed to turn a wild plot of land into a family homestead complete with running water and electricity. To Kambri, he was Daniel Boone, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ben Franklin, and Elvis all rolled into one..."

You can read more about Kambri Crews on her website (I recommend checking out the Press page to read more articles about her and her Dad (who she writes a lot about in the book): <http://kambricrews.com/press/>

To receive a link to the Zoom meeting email Laura Hagemann at social@hlaatc.org

To find out more information about HAAA-TC and the book club visit <https://www.hlaatc.org/book-club/>

Now meeting
on Zoom
(with captions)



Meeting Tuesday, April 26, 2022 @ 7:00
pm (CST)

Book: "Burn Down The Ground: A
Memoir" by Kambri Crews

**An additional meeting
to the chapter meeting.**

**Contact Laura Hagemann
if interested.**

social@hlaatc.org



**WITH GUEST AUTHOR
KAMBRI CREWS!**

Discussion Questions for Communication Partners
from presentation by Kristen L. Swan
By Laura Hagemann

On Saturday, March 19th, 2022 HLAA-TC had Kristen L. Swan present and facilitate a discussion between members and their Communication Partners. It was a very engaging discussion with a lot of audience participation. We hope to have a discussion meeting like this regularly but until then below are the discussion questions shared by Kristen L. Swan that might be useful when talking with your Communication Partner(s).

Discussion Questions related to problems with communication for Communication Partners and People with Hearing Loss As presented by Kristen L. Swan to HLAA-TC on March 19, 2022

1. What are some of your biggest frustrations, irritations or pet peeves that happen as a result of trying to communicate with the PHL or dealing with hearing loss in your family?
2. What is something that triggers sadness, grief, or disappointment for you?
3. What do you think is hardest for the Person with Hearing Loss (PHL)?
4. What does the PHL likely think is hardest for you?
5. What do you wish that the PHL would do differently?
6. What is one thing that you KNOW that you should do differently but find it hard to remember to do so?
7. Why do you think it is hard to discuss communication problems with one another and ~what prevents you from doing so?
8. What are some possible outcomes of avoiding these discussions?
9. In what ways has your partner's hearing loss changed things for you in going through the daily activities of your life, if at all?
10. What changes do you notice in yourself or the PHL related to your personality, attitude, etc.?
11. Do you feel that the hearing loss is more one person's challenge or responsibility than the other? Why?
12. Are there times when you think or feel that the PHL isn't trying hard enough or making the effort to understand?

(Discussion questions, cont.)

13. What is something positive that you have gained, if anything, from living with someone with hearing loss?

14. What are some creative things you have done or discovered that make your lives easier or help you stay connected?

15. What are things you do to take care of yourself, manage stress and ‘build a life worth living’? What could you do more of?

16. What has it been like to think about these questions and share your thoughts and feelings honestly and openly?

We are definitely going to have another discussion like this again. In the meantime, please use these questions to facilitate a conversation with your Communication Partner(s) and let us know how it goes.

HCAA-TC NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

APRIL 2022

Submitted by Lionel Locke

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HLAA TC
PO Box 26021
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Next meeting: Zoom on April 16

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
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Welcomes You!

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Christy Myers secretary@hlaatc.org

Acting Director at Large -

Laura Hagemann director@hlaatc.org

Contact Info. - info@hlaatc.org

Newsletter Editor -

Vicki Martin editor@hlaatc.org

Photos – Vicki Martin

Social Media - Laura Hagemann social@hlaatc.org

The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom on April 16, 2022. Open to socialize at 9:30 AM, formal meeting 10 AM.

Please visit the chapter's web-site at 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).