

# HLAA TC

# June 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.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**September 17, 2022**  
Can training improve  
understanding speech in noise?  
George Washington University

**October 15, 2022**  
Preventing noise-induced  
hearing loss  
Conference Program

**November 18, 2022**  
Grief (Loss and Hearing Loss)  
Kristen Swan

**December 16, 2022**  
Family-Centered Hearing Care  
Barbara Joy Schneider



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#### Officers' emails

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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 and in person starting September 2022

# President's Message



## ***HLAA-TC President's Message – June 2022*** ***Barb Schneider***

Greetings to everyone as summer gets underway. Vacations, picnics, families and friends typify the warm weather in the Northland.

After a marathon nine years with Christine and Lionel at the helm, they and an assorted crew have truly held things together for us to get to this point. A big “Thank you!” is in order to them and to everyone who has helped us get here – past Board members and regular attenders alike. Our community is doing well thanks to everyone’s efforts.

We have a full slate going into the Summer with our able fundraising and membership consultant, Doug Stewart working with us, and Rebecca Baumann, a stellar Board consultant ready to get us new leaders “on board” for the next year.

Confidence is high that the combined talents and experience of the new Board will ensure a smooth transition and continued solid leadership. Christine has graciously agreed to continue to schedule informative and inspiring speakers as in the past. The lineup going into 2023 is very exciting!

On October 15th we will have our first hybrid meeting online and at the Marriott in St. Louis Park to both test our technical capabilities, and to complete our contract agreement with them from before the covid restrictions. Our plans for another community-wide educational event at the Marriott in 2020 have been on hold since then. Our October meeting will be in collaboration with a DHS employee hearing education event scheduled to take place the day before in St. Paul. We are still formulating plans for this.

We look forward to meeting in person again, probably at Courage Kenny but that has not been finalized. We need a looped venue. Thanks for your understanding and patience as we work out our transition to hybrid meetings – that is the goal. Be on the lookout for announcements as September approaches.

Thanks so much for your participation and feedback! Invite your friends with hearing loss friends to join us as members – we are stronger together. Have a wonderful Summer and be watching for meeting information.



## **Board Members**

**Barb Schneider** *President*

**Signe Dysken** *Vice President*

**Susan Arquette** *Secretary*

**Robin Coninx** *Treasurer*

**Christine Morgan**  
*Immediate Past President*

**Laura Hagemann** *Director at Large*

**Ed Benck** *Director at Large*

**Karla Sand** *Director at Large*

**Adrienne Haugen** *Director at Large*

HLAA-TC Newsletter Editor  
*Vicki Martin*

Social Media Specialist  
*Laura Hagemann*

## Synopsis of May 21, 2022 HLAA-TC Chapter Meeting

*By Signe Dysken*

President Morgan opened the meeting and introduced the Board members and volunteers. The Board and its membership need to expand in order to spread out the work and responsibilities involved, as well as to recruit new talent and foster enthusiasm for expanding the reach and effectiveness of the organization.

President Morgan introduced Jim Rau, an advocate for veterans with hearing loss and President of the HLAA of Wisconsin in about 2020. Jim developed noise-related hearing loss during military service in Vietnam when hearing protection was not supplied. Upon discharge, he did not have a hearing exam, so his hearing loss was not really noted in the 1980's. He received his first hearing aids from a private audiologist in the 1990's, saw a VA audiologist in 2000, and has had regular VA audiology care at the VA since. None of the hearing aids have helped much because of the severity of his high-range sensorineural hearing loss.

The Veterans Health Administration, known as the VA, provides care to eligible veterans in its nationwide hospitals and clinics and outreach programs. Not all VAs operate in the same way.

VA's "Community Care," provides care in the veteran community if: (1) the veteran lives more than 40 miles from VA care; (2) getting to the VA requires over 30 minutes travel; or (3) if the wait for an appointment is longer than 30 days. Community care providers must be in the VA network, although emergency care can be given anywhere and anytime needed.

Audiology is considered a specialty clinic, available in larger facilities generally. Any veteran receiving VA care is eligible for audiology care. Generally, disability as determined by the VA qualifies a veteran for VA care. The veteran must apply for VA care and be approved. Location, time of in service, scope of duties and financial status of the veteran can also be significant in determining eligibility.

The VA supplies top-of-the line hearing aids from about five or six different manufacturers, and generally the top level of each brand of hearing aid. (Cochlear implants are also covered.) Hearing aid adjustments and aural rehabilitation and accessories are NOT automatically scheduled. The veteran must also request an appointment for hearing aid adjustments. Accessory devices are mailed to the veteran, who either figures out how to hook them up or makes an appointment with the audiologist for help. The veteran is not always followed by the same audiologist. Follow-up issues pose significant shortcomings in VA audiology care, as follow-up adjustments are essential for the veteran to get a good or even reasonably acceptable result.

There are barriers to receiving optimal VA hearing care. Front-line health care staff are interested in improving hearing accommodations. Opposition seems to come from administration, who don't see the necessity -- eg, video clinic visits for veterans do not include captioning. Jim is working with VA Headquarters in Washington to get captioning added.

*(April meeting summary, cont.)*

HLAA-TC efforts to connect with VA audiology have gone nowhere. Jim has met with VFW members who also show little interest in hearing loss issues. He thinks this reflects in part the culture of the military, where soldiers follow orders and are not encouraged to advocate for themselves. Many older veterans lack computer skills and smartphones.

Jim has worked with veterans' groups to emphasize the importance of improving hearing and to help veterans minimize the related social problems. Veterans' service officers note the same difficult issues in engaging veterans. County veteran service officers are not VA employees but strive to help veterans get the care and benefits to which they are entitled.

The national HLAA has a support group for veterans called "the Veterans Across America Virtual Chapter." Monthly meetings are on Zoom. This group is small and has about 30 members.

The St. Cloud VA audiology department was mentioned as more responsive and better-staffed than the Minneapolis audiology department.

Jim was thanked for his presentation. And the meeting resumed after a short break.

Christine discussed plans for speakers for the fall of 2022 and into 2023 and expressed gratitude for the efforts and support by Board members and volunteers over the past eight years of her presidency. She thanked Christy and Laura for stepping up and helping out so generously.

Lionel expressed appreciation for the community that is HLAA-TC. He is currently working on plans for meeting space. Courage Kenny (Allina Health Systems) has lifted restricting visitors, members must wear masks, and meetings are limited to 20-24 people. Lionel is working on getting a hybrid system set up to offer a Zoom and in-person option for meetings.

Lionel then announced the annual election of the board of directors. The nominating Committee candidates are: President: Barb Schneider; Vice President: Signe Dysken; Secretary: Susan Arquette; Treasurer: Robin Coninx; Immediate Past President: Christine Morgan; At Large Board Members: Laura Hageman, Ed Benck, Karla Sand, Adrienne Haugen. The vote was unanimous. The new Board will officially take over their positions at the June Board meeting.

Issues and solutions were discussed regarding technology in public situations such as churches, and for watching TV – and the importance of assistive devices that work for the individual – as well as hearing loops and telecoils.

Christine expressed appreciation to Vicki Martin for our fantastic newsletter for many years. Appreciation was expressed to Christine and Lionel and the Board for keeping HLAA-TC thriving under difficult conditions. Special appreciation was to Lionel for his talents and energies over the last 8 years with HLAA-TC. He has served in each Board position except President. Christine's email is [cmorgan@hlaatc.org](mailto:cmorgan@hlaatc.org).

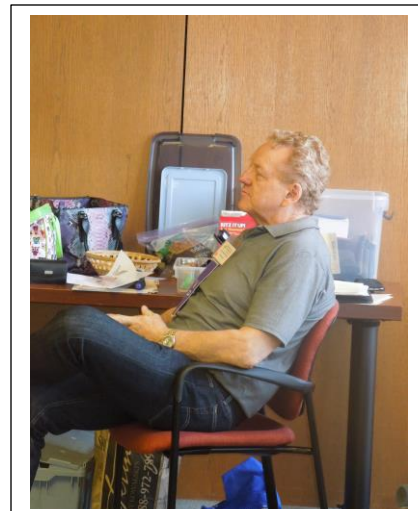
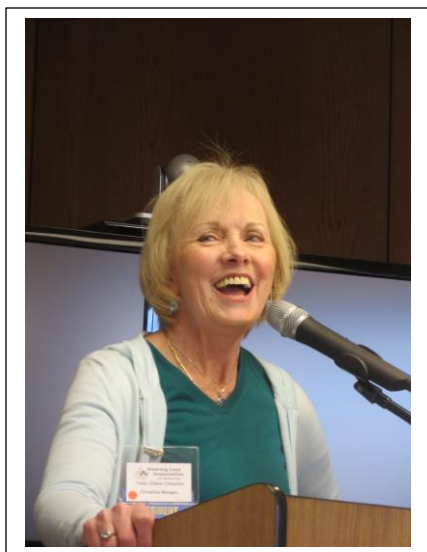
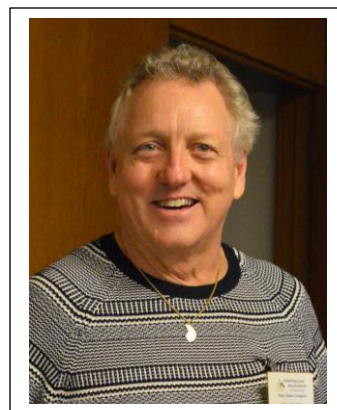
Meetings will resume in September 2022!

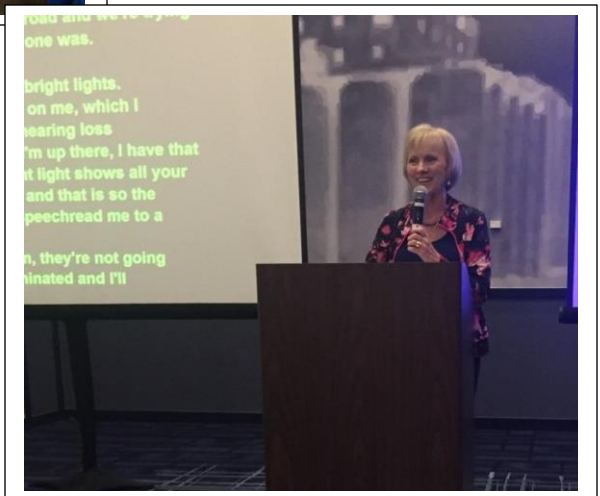
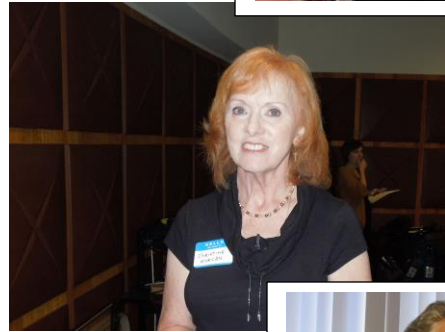


## A Christine and Lionel Retrospective

It's hard to believe that Christine and Lionel have been on our board for nearly ten years! When they stepped up to the task, we mused in our hearts: "I could get used to this!" And we did.

Now it is time to say "thank you" (but not good-bye!) to two of our leaders about to step into new roles. There is no doubt much more behind the scenes, but here are a few highlights of some of the things they have accomplished while guiding HLAA-TC through some of our best - and most challenging - years.





And there's more...

Christine:

2011 -2012 Joined HLAA-TC

2013-2014 Vice President

2014-2022 President

2015 Spoke to CI Group at Mayo Clinic, Rochester

2016 to Present TPT Filmed presentation

“Hearing Loss Matters” for Public Television (still being aired)

Won top 10 documentaries – October 29, 2016 Emmy Awards

Jan 1, 2016-May 2025 Metro Advisory Committee – MDHHS

2016 to Present Advisory Board, University of Minnesota Center for Applied and Translational Sensory Science

2018 Keep Moving Forward Program (radio commercials, photos, website – Ampers Radio with MN Council on Disability

July 2019 Appointed to MN Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing

October 2020 U of M Journalism – Video story on impact of Covid for those with hearing loss

May 2021 Worked with Walker Art Center (along with Laura) to provide correct captions for their experimental film – More the Dawn Chorus

Aug 2021 Filmed Covid video for Minnesota Council on Disability

Sept 2021 Interview with journalist for AARP magazine on Coping with Hearing Loss

Lionel:

Nov 2017

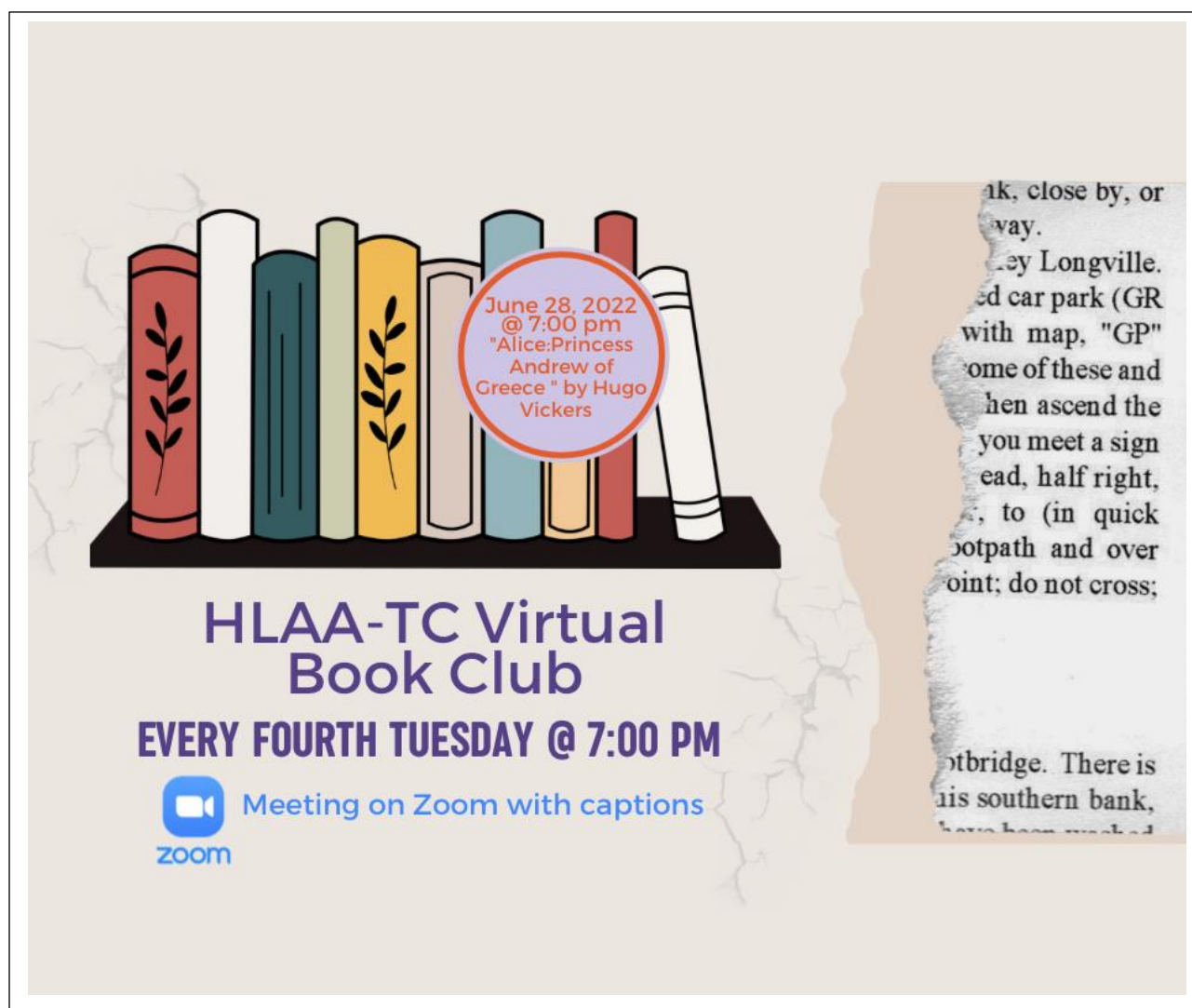
Nov 2018 Brought the successful “Live Well With Hearing Loss” conference into being (not to mention all those years of handling our money and our community affairs.)

**Thank you, Christine and Lionel!**



# June Book Club

*By Laura Hagemann*



HLAA-Twin Cities Virtual Book Club is meeting on Zoom on Tuesday, June 28th at 7:00 pm (Central Time) to discuss the nonfiction/biography "[Alice: Princess Andrew of Greece](#)" by Hugo Vickers. We alternate between reading fiction and nonfiction books each month and our selections often deal with hearing loss, deafness or disability.

The synopsis of the book from [Amazon](#) is: "Hugo Vickers's Alice is the remarkable story of Princess Andrew of Greece, whose life seemed intertwined with every event of historical importance in twentieth century Europe. 'In 1953, at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Alice was dressed from head to foot in a long gray dress and a gray cloak, and a nun's veil. Amidst all the jewels, and velvet and coronets, and the fine uniforms, she exuded an unworldly simplicity. Seated with the royal family, she was a part of them, yet somehow distanced from them. Inasmuch as she is remembered at all today, it is as this shadowy figure in gray nun's clothes...' Princess Alice, mother of Prince Phillip, was something of a mystery figure



even within her own family. She was born deaf, at Windsor Castle, in the presence of her grandmother, Queen Victoria, and brought up in England, Darmstadt, and Malta.”

The meeting will be captioned. It will start at 7:00 pm and end around 8:30 pm (central time). (All meetings are free and open to HLAA members or non-members.)

To receive a link to the Zoom meeting email Laura Hagemann at [social@hlaatc.org](mailto:social@hlaatc.org)

During the months of June through August HLAA-TC is on hiatus from monthly chapter meetings which resume in September. The virtual book club continues to meet through the summer with plans to meet every fourth Tuesday of the month usually at 7:00 pm Central Time. For more information about the book club and a tentative schedule of books for the rest of 2022, visit the HLAA-TC Book Club Page: <https://www.hlaatc.org/book-club/>

*(Excerpted from the Pioneer Press Sunday May 15, 2022)*

### ***A gift for Father's Day***

## **I watched male loved ones deny their hearing loss. Left untreated, it devastated their lives**

**By Louise Andrews**

Purging closets bursting with hideous ties reminded me of how difficult it is to “gift” a father with something of value on Father’s Day...Here is what I wish I had given them: ...The gift I would bestow on all fathers is the courage to address the curse that took the intellect of my father, one grandfather and my father-in-law: age-related hearing loss...

Although I owe all of my education to my financially astute grandfather, his stubborn refusal to address hearing loss ultimately led to social isolation...The exact same denial in my once-gregarious father led to ostracism in his retirement community... My even more sociable father-in-law developed a form of dementia that was surgically curable, but the hearing loss he refused to address [caused a delay] until it was too late for surgery. By contrast, my physician grandfather, who used hearing aids, practiced medicine until he died at 81.

...If your father is one of the 500 million worldwide with hearing loss, try this gift: Remind him that you love him dearly and want him as a trusted adviser for as long as humanly possible. Urge him to have his hearing tested and to get hearing aids if indicated. These devices are both effective and almost invisible, and effective alternatives are also available over-the-counter.

Honor your father by giving him this courage and love on Father’s Day.

## **Important: Pass along! MAASA Bill**

*Sent by: Ade Haugen, Minnesota Speaking DeafBlind Group*

This message is directed by an audiologist who is an Advisory Committee Member of the West-Central Region of the DHHS (Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services). After her message are two links to check out and to be encouraged to send your support of this MAASA Bill to your Congressperson.

Post by TC Audiology:

Something to support in Audiology is the MAASA bill which is the Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2021. It has bipartisan support. It's a bill that is just sitting there and hasn't been voted on yet.

Short answer: it will allow Medicare to pay for office visits, testing, etc, and will reduce the amount of out of pocket payments patients make! It reclassifies audiologists as practioners vs technicians. It is supported by all 3 audiology groups (ADA, AAA, ASHA), which is rare. It could pave the way for Medicare covering hearing aids vs these Medicare advantage plans that only offer discount devices and 80% of audiologists in MN will not work with them, as they are very limiting. I could talk about those plans for hours.

Long answer: MAASA will improve outcomes for beneficiaries by allowing direct access to audiologic services and streamlining Medicare coverage policies so that audiologists can provide the full range of Medicare-covered diagnostic and treatment services that correspond to their scope of practice. The legislation would also reclassify audiologists as practitioners, which is consistent with other Medicare recognized non-physician providers. By classifying audiologists as practitioners under Medicare, audiologists would be able to furnish services through telehealth permanently, which is only partially permitted during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency.

Website link to details about the bill: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1731>

Here is a site that has information and a quick way to send a letter to your congressman no matter the state:

<https://www.chooseaudiology.org/congressional-connect>



## **Tonight! Video chat with the Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) staff:**

### **When**

Thursday, June 9, 2022, 6:00 p.m.- 7:30 p.m.

### **Where**

Zoom video conference platform. You will get the link by email when you register.

### **Accessibility**

Presented in English with ASL/English interpretation and real-time captioning.

To request other accommodations, please contact us by May 31, 2022.

### **Register**

You can find the link to register on our [News and Events](#) page

### **For more information or to request other accommodations**

Please contact DHHSD by:

Videophone: 651-964-1514

Voice or preferred relay service: 800-657-3663

Email: [dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us](mailto:dhs.dhhsd@state.mn.us)

Web: [mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing](http://mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing)

### ***Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division – Metro Advisory Report Christine T. Morgan – update from recent meeting***

**Check out the new publications on the website, also available for printing.**

**Communication cards: also available on the website**

**TED Program: distributes advanced wireless devices or iPads and iPhones**

#### **Telephone and internet discount programs**

1. [General Information about telephone and internet discounts](#)
2. [Affordability Connectivity Program](#) (Discount internet)
3. [Lifeline Federal Program](#) (Discount on wireless service OR broadband OR landline)

Free phones through the federal Lifeline program

Individuals are eligible to receive one Lifeline discount per household. Life Wireless provides free phone service as well as free government phones by state, with qualifying enrollment through the Lifeline phone program. Eligible users can apply for free cell phones, and also get additional free data with approval from the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Life Wireless provides access to reliable 5G (where available) 4G LTE coverage nationwide.

HLAA TC  
PO Box 26021  
Minneapolis, MN 55426



**Next meeting: (hybrid) on September 17**

## First Class

### HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

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Address.....

City.....

State.....Zip.....

Phone.(area code).....

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*Newsletter via email included in all memberships*

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$15

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



Welcomes You!

**President - Barb Schneider** [president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)

**Vice President - Signe Dysken** [vicepresident@hlaatc.org](mailto:vicepresident@hlaatc.org)

**Secretary – Susan Arquette** [secretary@hlaatc.org](mailto:secretary@hlaatc.org)

**Treasurer – Robin Coninx** [treasurer@hlaatc.org](mailto:treasurer@hlaatc.org)

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**Karla Sand** [karlaviolets@hotmail.com](mailto:karlaviolets@hotmail.com)

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**Photos** – Vicki Martin

**Social Media** - Laura Hagemann [social@hlaatc.org](mailto:social@hlaatc.org)

The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom and in person Sep 17, 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)).