

HLAA TC

September 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?
Ed Auer,
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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The Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter meeting (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom in September 2022

No Duffers Here

by Joy Schneider

In a recent interview on NPR about the new OTC hearing aid regulations, HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelly said: “Some people just don't want to take that step to treat their hearing loss because they associate it with older people.” (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-the-fdas-new-rule-expands-access-to-hearing-aids-for-millions>)

Sadly, we know this is true in the United States. But why? What's the matter with being an older person?

Let's look at the record: When they were young, older people built this country with their skills, talents, gifts, ingenuity, hard work, courage to try new things, the sweat of their brows, and their caring hearts. Philanthropy, the abundant fruit of their labors, helps the poor and needy, teaches others the value of giving back, provides opportunities for young people to have a second chance. None of that happens overnight: it takes decades of living, creativity, and right attitudes. We become wiser, more whole, and yes, more valuable human beings with experiential capital not possible in younger years. In general, that is the social and moral perspective on what “becoming old” looks like. It is without shame and deserves society's respect and support, not derision.

A personal illustration:

My late husband, Mike, was concerned that his new hearing aids would make him “look like a ‘duffer’”. He already had serious medical issues and medication schedules to follow. Our son Scott pointed out that he looked more like a duffer when Menard's employees had to almost shout the answers to his product questions while in full view of other customers. *Ouch!*

Mike got the point and started wearing his aids. He quickly realized that his conversations and interactions with others were much easier when using his hearing aids, and gave up the idea that he looked like a “duffer”. At 68, Mike decided that since he had worked hard all his life, raised a family, and gained wisdom, he should look like it. He participated in life more and wore his age, and hearing aids, proudly. This had a wonderfully positive effect on him and all our family, in spite of his other health factors.

My hope is that we can help end this terrible stigma of hearing loss that only shames and isolates people needlessly. With the industry opening up for OTC appliances, we have a unique opportunity to advocate for those who don't have advocates, who stay on the fringes of life simply because they can't communicate effectively with other human beings. I have heard especially heartbreaking stories of veterans who have lost all hope, whose only companion is the television set. This must not continue.

Please plan to attend – and tell your friends about - our October 15th event: “Hearing – Handle with Care: When is loud too loud?” in St. Louis Park. Either in person or live streamed, both with CART, it is FREE and open to the public. Speakers and registration information are in this newsletter and on our website: www.hlaatc.org .

With your involvement in HLAA and our Twin Cities chapter, you join tens of thousands in Minnesota and across the nation who care and want to help all of us have both hearing communication and a voice.

September Speaker

(September 17, 10 AM on zoom)



Ed Auer, George Washington University

"Can Training Improve Understanding of Noisy Speech by Listeners with Hearing Loss?"

Ed Auer, PhD, is an Associate Research Professor in Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences at The George Washington University. His research areas include multisensory speech perception and spoken word recognition with a specific focus on examining the perceptual, cognitive, and neural consequences of experience and training.

(For the Zoom meeting link email secretary@hlaatc.org)

HLAA-TC Meeting Information for Fall 2022

By Laura Hagemann (originally published on August 25, 2022 on hlaatc.org blog)

The new season (2022-2023) of HLAA-TC monthly chapter meetings begins with our first meeting on September 17th from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. The September meeting will be a Zoom meeting (email secretary@hlaatc.org for the Zoom meeting link.) You can always find information about our meetings on the [Meetings](#) page of our website.

Below is a listing of the Chapter meetings with topic and speaker for the remainder of 2022. We will announce the 2023 chapter topics and speakers and book clubs at a later date.

HLAA-TC Monthly Chapter Meetings

September 17, 2022: **Zoom Meeting:** "Can Training Improve Understanding of Noisy Speech by Listeners with Hearing Loss?" by GW University (For the Zoom meeting link email secretary@hlaatc.org)

October 15, 2022: Conference at Marriott Minneapolis West in St. Louis Park, MN (and Zoom broadcast, for the Zoom meeting link email secretary@hlaatc.org)"Preventing Noise-Induced Hearing Loss" by HLAA-TC with DHHSD **For more details, read the Press Release [here](#).**

November 19, 2022: Format and Location To Be Announced: "Grief (hearing loss and loss)" by Kristen Swan, MA, LP, HealthPartners

December 17, 2022: Format and Location To Be Announced: "Family-Centered Hearing Care" by Barbara Joy Schneider, HLAA-TC President

Below is a listing of book clubs for the rest of 2022. For book club Zoom links email social@hlaatc.org and to find out more about the book club check out our [Book Club](#) page on our website: <https://www.hlaatc.org/book-club/>

HLAA-TC Book Club

August 23, 2022, 7pm (CST): **Zoom Meeting:** "A Maiden's Grave" by Jeffrey Deaver (Fiction/Mystery)

September 27, 2022, 7pm (CST): **Zoom Meeting:** "The Radical Lives of Helen Keller (The History of Disability, 1)" by Kim E. Nielsen (nonfiction) **WITH AUTHOR ATTENDANCE!**

October 25, 2022, 1pm (CST): **Zoom Meeting:** "The Quality of Silence" by Rosamund Lupton (fiction/novel). **WITH AUTHOR ATTENDANCE!**

November 22, 2022, 7pm (CST): **Zoom Meeting:** " A loss for words: story of deafness in a family" by Lou Ann Walker (nonfiction). **WITH AUTHOR ATTENDANCE!**

December 27, 2022, 7pm (CST): **Zoom Meeting:** "Rules for Visiting" by Jessica Francis Kane (Fiction).

Hearing – Handle with Care: When is loud too loud?

Whether high-volume music, the drone of machinery, or sports stadiums, noise can damage unprotected hearing. Few people notice when their hearing slips away through noise exposure. Hearing loss is permanent and can affect literally every area of life and relationships. Even if you have a hearing loss, more hearing can be lost when exposed to loud noises, unless protected.

A team of experts will address this public health concern on Saturday, October 15 from 9:00 am -1:30 pm at the Minneapolis Marriott West Hotel, 9960 Wayzata Blvd, St. Louis Park, 55426, phone 952-544-4400. The event also will be live-streamed on Zoom. Doors open at 9:00, presenters start at 9:30.

University of Minnesota Audiologists Kerry Witherell, AuD, CCC-A and Peggy Nelson, PhD, CCC-A will speak on the dangers of even short duration noise exposure, and the prevention of further hearing loss.

Monique Hammond RPh will advise on how to protect your hearing in the workplace.

Kristen Swan, MA, LP will discuss grieving the loss of hearing, and of additional hearing loss.

It is **FREE** and open to the public. Both Zoom and Marriott will have CART captioning. **Registration is required for both Zoom and Marriott by Friday, October 8th.**

To register: email secretary@hlaatc.org and for other hearing accommodations as needed.

Sponsored by the Hearing Loss Association of America, Twin Cities Chapter in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division, and the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.

For further info: <https://www.hlaatc.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/hlaatc>

5 Ways Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids Will Be Different **From Prescription Ones**

[Condensed from <https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2022/over-the-counter-hearing-aid-facts.html>]

Here are five ways over-the-counter devices differ from prescription versions.

1. Over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids are for mild to moderate hearing loss, while prescription hearing aids are for severe hearing loss.

Over-the-counter hearing aids: They are intended for adults with perceived [mild to moderate hearing loss](#), the FDA says. That means your hearing loss range is between 20 and 60 decibels (dB). And you don't need a hearing test to try out an over-the-counter device, the FDA says.

Prescription hearing aids: If you have severe hearing loss, hearing loss in only one ear, was caused by excessive noise damage, or those whose hearing loss was caused by chemotherapy or another drug, you need prescription devices.

2. Prescription hearing aids are ordered from a hearing specialist or audiologist, but OTC hearing aids will be available in stores, pharmacies and online without a fitting or exam.

Over-the-counter hearing aids: Retailers including Best Buy, Walgreens and CVS have already announced they plan to carry the hearing aids in their stores and online. All over-the-counter hearing aids will need to meet FDA quality standards.

Prescription hearing aids: They are ordered by an audiologist or a hearing instrument specialist who has tested your hearing using advanced diagnostic tools. The hearing professional will help you fit and adjust your new hearing aids at a follow-up appointment once the devices come in.

3. OTC hearing aids are expected to cost substantially less than prescription hearing aids.

Over-the-counter hearing aids: The average price of over-the-counter devices remains to be seen, but they are expected to offer a [substantial savings](#) compared to prescription versions. Government officials estimate Americans will save on average \$2,800 a pair. Most private insurers and Medicare don't cover the devices.

Prescription hearing aids: They cost on average about \$4,600 per pair, with premium models priced as high as \$12,000. The total price covers the cost of the devices, the professional fitting, follow-up treatment, as well as maintenance and troubleshooting visits for the life of the device.

(5 ways, cont.)

4. Prescription hearing aids require the help of a health professional for adjustment, while OTC hearing aids can be adjusted by the user.

Over-the-counter hearing aids: You will configure them yourself, most likely using software or a smartphone app. If you are [having trouble hearing](#) after using the built-in device settings, you may want to look for an audiologist willing to help with fitting over-the-counter hearing aids. Barbara Kelley, executive director of the Hearing Loss Association of America, predicts more audiologists will offer that service as over-the-counter options become available.

Prescription hearing aids: A hearing health professional will program your hearing aids to make sure they fit comfortably in your ears and provide the maximum benefit. He or she will also help you practice putting them in and taking them out and show you how to adjust the settings for different environments.

5. OTC hearing aids may eventually have new designs and look different from prescription hearing aids.

Over-the-counter hearing aids: Experts say allowing manufacturers to market directly to consumers will foster competition and eventually spur innovation in hearing aid design.

Prescription hearing aids: If you get a prescription pair, you will have a [range of options](#) when it comes to design, including behind-the-ear, in-the-ear and discreet custom styles. With the help of an audiologist, you will be able to try out different designs for comfort and fit.

[Editor's Note: HLAA-TC member Joy Schneider adds the following information:

HLAA recommends having a hearing test by an audiologist:

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/hearing-loss-basics/symptoms-diagnosing/>

Returns are NOT part of the new law. Some retailers may offer this, ask and get their policy in writing: <https://www.hearingloss.org/otc-hearing-aids-returns-a-key-piece-of-the-puzzle/>

Not all audiologists “bundle” services into one price; ask about their practice.

Quality of OTC aids may differ from prescription aids.]



Minnesota Speaking Deafblind Group (MSDBG)

Mission: outreach throughout Greater Minnesota.

Focus: to share resources and provide community support to unserved / underserved adults, seniors and elderly affected with both hearing and vision loss.

Community connection through: MSDBG email support list, monthly recorded conference calls with special topics, and an annual 24-hour retreat in St. Cloud MN.

Founded in April 2017, the MSDBG grassroots pioneer membership has 25+ years of combined experienced advocacy for those who are affected with dual sensorial losses of hearing and vision in local, state and national levels. Each of the original members are driven to share knowledge and kindred personal experiences of deaf-blindness in hopes to ensure quality of life to its best level.

Due to limited grant funding MSDBG is unable to send out printed mail. MSDBG relies solely on a cooperative support system by agencies who work with speaking (non-signing) deafblind (SDB) Minnesotan patrons through 'by word of mouth' linking.

MSDBG has a great referral base provided in part by the following organizations: ASLIS (American Sign Language Interpreter Services), DBSM (DeafBlind Services Minnesota), VLR (Vision Loss Resources), DHHS (Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services), MCDHH (Commission Serving Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans), Duluth-Lighthouse Center for the Blind, ICC (I Can Connect) Program, TTAP (Technology and Training Access Project), CDI (Consumer Directives, Inc: DeafBlind. Consumer Directive Budget Grant Program), Northern Lights Chapter of the Foundation Fighting Blindness and SSB (State Services for the Blind).

Please send referrals interested in joining MSDBG to:

Adrienne Haugen (Ade) / MSDBG Host

iPhone: 320.522.0987 (Voice or Text)

Email: adrienne.haugen67@gmail.com

September Book: "The Radical Lives of Helen Keller"
with author Kim E. Nielsen attending

By Laura Hagemann (originally published on August 24, 2022 on the HLAA-TC Blog)

Announcing the September book and book club: **September 27, 2022:** "[The Radical Lives of Helen Keller \(The History of Disability, 1\)](#)" by Kim E. Nielsen (nonfiction). We will meet at the usual time of 7:00pm (Central Time) on Zoom. We will be joined by author and professor Kim E. Nielsen. Dr. Nielsen has written several books on Helen Keller and her research focus is disability. You can read more about Dr. Nielsen at her [University of Toledo webpage](#).

The graphic features a purple background with a large white outline of a person's head and shoulders. At the top, the text "SEPTEMBER HLAA-TC BOOK CLUB" is written in bold, dark purple capital letters. In the center-left, there is a small image of the book cover for "The Radical Lives of Helen Keller" by Kim E. Nielsen. To the right of the book cover is a circular orange portrait of author Kim E. Nielsen, with the text "WITH GUEST, AUTHOR KIM E. NIELSEN" written in bold black letters above her. Below the book cover and portrait, the text "Email social@hlaatc.org for Zoom link" is written in black. At the bottom, a green banner contains the text "TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH AT 7:00 PM (CENTRAL TIME) BOOK: 'THE RADICAL LIVES OF HELEN KELLER' BY KIM E. NIELSEN" in bold black capital letters.

The HLAA-TC book club met on Tuesday, August 23rd to discuss the novel "A Maiden's Grave" by Jeffrey Deaver. The book club alternates each month between fiction and nonfiction and we choose books that often focus on hearing loss, deafness or disability. The discussion about "A Maiden's Grave" focused on the differences between being late deafened (as many of our members are) and being born Deaf. It leads us naturally into our discussion next month on Helen Keller with author Kim E. Nielsen.

The book club meets year-round on Zoom on the fourth Tuesday of the month. If you are interested in learning more about the book club and the books we have read and are planning to read, please visit our book club webpage: <https://www.hlaatc.org/book-club/> And if you would like to attend a book club, please email social@hlaatc.org for the Zoom link.

About This Webinar

Hearing Health Foundation

**Meniere's Disease: Definition,
Evaluation, and intervention**



Ménière's disease is an inner ear condition that affects both balance and hearing. Symptoms, which can fluctuate, include vertigo (sometimes severe), hearing loss, ear fullness, and tinnitus, usually affecting one ear. This presentation will cover both foundational and current research about Ménière's disease and its clinical manifestations, otologic and audiologic evaluation, and intervention.

Our webinar presenter Wafaa Kaf, M.D., Ph.D., CCC-A, FAAA, is a professor in the department of communication sciences and disorders at Missouri State University. A 2015 Emerging Research Grants scientist, Kaf earned her both her degree in medicine and surgery and a master's in audiology during her medical residency from the faculty of medicine and the ear, nose, throat department at Assiut University Hospitals in Egypt. She received her Ph.D. in audiology from the University of Pittsburgh.

[This free, hourlong event will take place Monday, October 17, at 5pm ET, 2pm PT.](#)

Registration and Accessibility

[Registration is required](#) for this event. You can submit a question when you register, and also for a limited time during the event itself. Captioning will be available. For Zoom support, see HHF's [technical guidelines](#). All webinars are recorded with captions, transcripts, and bibliographies and available a week after broadcast on [HHF's webinar page](#).

Register

CMS (Medicare) is proposing broadening Cochlear Implant eligibility requirements and soliciting comments from the public.

Reconsideration of Proposed National Coverage Determination for Cochlear Implantation
DATE: July 6, 2022

From the Conclusions section:

“The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is ... proposing to expand coverage [for cochlear implants] by broadening the patient criteria and removing the requirement that for individuals with hearing test scores of > 40 % and ≤ 60 %, cochlear implantation may be covered only when the provider is participating in and patients are enrolled in either an FDA-approved category B IDE clinical trial, a trial under the CMS Clinical Trial Policy, or a prospective, controlled comparative trial approved by CMS. **We are proposing that the evidence is sufficient to determine that cochlear implantation may be covered for treatment of bilateral pre- or post-linguistic, sensorineural, moderate-to-profound hearing loss in individuals who demonstrate limited benefit from amplification.** Limited benefit from amplification is defined by test scores of less than or equal to 60% correct in the best-aided listening condition on recorded tests of open-set sentence cognition.”

Get more details from the Medicare coverage database: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/ncacal-decision-memo.aspx?proposed=Y&NCAId=306>

Submit feedback:

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/nca.aspx?ncaid=306>

Saint Paul Pioneer Press September 2, 2022

A woman writes to Dear Abby regarding one of her daughters: “She treats me like someone she wishes she didn’t know. She and her husband plan vacations with his family and never think of including me. When I asked her why, her response was, ‘Mom, you’re always broke, and you embarrass me.’ I’m on disability and yes I’m loud, but that’s because I’m hard of hearing...”

Abby counsels Heartbroken to dry her tears and focus on those who treat her better. It may be cold comfort, but a large percentage of adults share her condition. “Dear Heartbroken: Your...daughter not only lacks compassion, but her values are seriously out of whack. That she would blame you for having limited finances or being hard of hearing is shameful. According to the NIH, 15% of adults over the age of 18 have some hearing trouble. Nearly 24% of those between 65 and 74 have it as well. If you are 75 or over, it’s 50%...”

I can’t help wishing that Abby had included hearing aids in her solution. They really can keep us from being too loud!

On the other hand, there’s probably nothing that can keep us from embarrassing our children...

HLAA TC
PO Box 26021
Minneapolis, MN 55426



Next meeting: (zoom) on September 17

First Class

HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

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Newsletter via email included in all memberships

- _____ Individual \$15
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**Mail to: HLA A Twin Cities Chapter
PO Box 26021
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Welcomes You!

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The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) will be held on Zoom 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 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).