

HLAA TC

December 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

December 17, 2022

Info sharing re:

Technology and hearing devices

HA maintenance for caregivers

Sharing holiday stories

Holiday Trivia

Holiday costume contest

Email (secretary@hlaatc.org)
for meeting link.

January 15, 2022

Darlene Zangara:

Report from the Minnesota
Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind
and Hard of Hearing (MNCDHH)



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Officers' emails

Robin Coninx – president@hlaatc.org

Signe Dysken - vicepresident@hlaatc.org

Susan Arquette - secretary@hlaatc.org

Robin Coninx – treasurer@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

The November Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter meeting (HLAA TC) will be a Zoom meeting on December 17, 2022

Email the secretary (secretary@hlaatc.org) for meeting information and link.

President's Message

HLAA-TC President's Message – December 2022

Robin Coninx



Can you believe that 2022 is in its last month? For me, it has been a whirlwind of change! I will admit that the last thing I thought would be in my life would be the responsibility of HLAA TC Board President to my fellow board members and the membership of the listening and spoken hard of hearing community.

Recently at our November Chapter meeting, Kristin Swan, MA, LP gave a talk about grief and hearing loss. I love how she walks through our human process of grief and how we can acknowledge what we are going through, and how that even in our self-centeredness there is the expectation in the process of grief for emotional growth: we can allow grief to go through the center of our being, leading us to see what we have in the here and now to be grateful for in our lives.

For me this brings forward the importance of being self-aware of our of own and others' journeys, so that when we hear stories of our community at HLAA, we listen and perhaps understand that those we are listening to don't need a reply from us ~

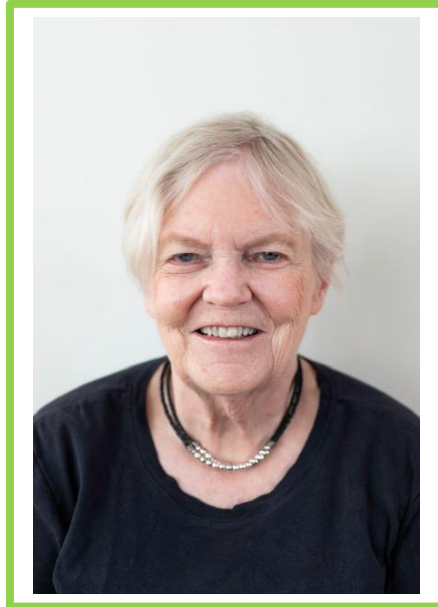
What they need is a safe space of positive understanding where they are in their journey with hearing loss.

It is my hope that HLAA-TC will be a safe space to express oneself in one's journey with hearing loss; that people will find support, information and a community of individuals who are on the same journey, who understand what one is facing when diagnosed with hearing loss.

~Byrdie

Please join us on the 17th of December for our HLAA-TC! Social time begins at 9:30 a.m.

Meet the Board



Vice President
Signe Dysken

Signe Dysken is a real person, despite her lack of visibility. Signe is a bit shy, and I have not been able to get her to talk about herself very much (or at all), so I told her I would have to make something up if I didn't hear from her. This did not faze her one bit.

Now I need to come up with something sufficiently outrageous to make you sit up and take notice.

Just what Signe wouldn't want (at least that "take notice" part).

It isn't easy.

But one thing she can't deny is that she is indeed the vice-president of our HLAA-TC group. This is fortunate, because she has both the responsibility and the ability to distill a one-hour presentation plus business meeting into a one- or two-page readable article.

Check it out! Read her meeting summary on pages 4-5 in this and future newsletters.

Summary of HLAATC meeting Saturday, Nov 19, 2022

Byrdie opened the meeting at 10 AM and introduced the speaker for the day, Kristen Swan, MA, LP, who is a clinical psychologist who has worked with the deaf and hard-of-hearing community since 1976.

Kristen's topic was grief that accompanies deafness and hearing loss of various types. Kristen shared that she has worked for many years with deaf and hard-of-hearing clients and has given many presentations on the issues faced by clients with these issues. She also shared that she herself has developed progressive hearing loss over recent years, and that this has helped her to be more understanding and compassionate about the challenges faced by her clients.

Major points of the presentation:

1. Grief and loss are universal experiences that all humans face at various times throughout life. Francis Weller, a well-known psychotherapist and author, commented "Everything we love we will lose." David Kessler, an expert on grief, wrote: "Loss and grief are a package deal."
2. Loss creates new circumstances in which we must live. This inevitably causes feelings of vulnerability, loss of control or helplessness. This also is universal, so that the question is not "Why me," by "Why not me?"
3. When we try to escape grief, we ultimately suffer more. Even one's physical health can suffer if grief is ignored or completely suppressed.
4. Losses are different for each individual – some are more intense, some more tragic, some more minor, but all have validity. Examples of various types of losses that are all consequential include loss of a pet, loss of a spouse or close family member, loss of health or ability to function as usual, loss of health in a close family member or friend, loss of traditional roles, loss of dreams or hopes.
5. Grief related to hearing loss: People with hearing loss face a new diagnosis, anxiety about the future and the realization that one's hearing will never be the same regardless of hearing aids or cochlear implants. Consequences of hearing loss can include social issues such as failure of friends or family to understand one's new needs, disregard of one's sense of isolation, as well as feelings of irrelevance, helplessness and loss of confidence. Not hearing one's children or grandchildren is a major stressor for many. Other major issues can include loss of career, loss of easy communication with friends and family.
6. Transitioning through grief: The American author William Bridges stated that transitioning starts with the "ending" of something. This transition initially involves a neutral zone, which can feel strange, dark, solitary, and can lead to despair. Eventually, an attitude of acceptance, "It is what it is" reflects growing insight and the possibility of healing and hope. The length of time to make a transition to acceptance and hope depends on many factors including personality, age, level of resources, culture, and presence or absence of faith and/or rituals to deal with losses.

(meeting summary, cont.)

7. Ways to engage in the process of letting go: This requires us to connect with what we have known before, to recognize the brevity of all things, the sense that everything is “on loan” as a condition in everyone’s life. Turning energies toward what we still value can lead to “Radical Acceptance” or “It is what it is” as well as a realization that we can’t change the loss, but we can change our response to the loss
8. Factors that help: openness about one’s feelings about the loss; reliance on friends, church, organizations such as HLAA; development of rituals, development of a sense that there is something bigger than oneself. An attitude of doing what we can, adjusting expectations, recognition of oneself AND others.
9. Bolstering self esteem: asking for what one needs, not expecting others to be mind-readers. Remembering that you are the same person you always have been, and that limitations don’t mean defectiveness or inferiority.
10. Practicing gratitude is very helpful. As one appreciates what one has, fear diminishes. Eastern philosophy can be very helpful in acceptance of limitations. Losses and endings are life-altering, but don’t have to be life-shattering. When grief is put into perspective, it doesn’t go away, but life gets bigger, so that it is possible to live again with hope. For many, the ability to learn to cope with grief gives a feeling of resilience.

Following Kristen’s presentation, Laura took over as meeting moderator and led a brief discussion of the presentation and made a few announcements:

1. Two positions on the Board are open: Treasurer and Director At Large – please email Byrdie at president@hlaatc.org if you can volunteer for one of these positions.
2. Speaker for the December meeting cancelled. Ideas are welcome for a substitute speaker or other ideas for a program for the December meeting.
3. Laura shared information about the upcoming book club discussion, which will include a virtual visit by the author.

Laura closed the meeting at Noon.

Mary Bauer reports:

“I will be retiring soon from my position at Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division. I have had the great joy to work with each of you at HLAA-TC – it has been such a joy working with you! ...Where did the time go?! My last day at DHHS will be December 27th. This is definitely not a good-bye...it’s a see you later! Take care, my friends and see you around!”

Warm regards,
Mary

**HLAA-TC wishes Mary Bauer all the best
as she enters a new phase of her life and career!**

Surviving the Holidays with Hearing Loss and Holiday Party
By Laura Hagemann



For our December HLAA-TC Zoom meeting we are having a "Holiday Themed" meeting.

Please join the HLAA-TC board (on Saturday, December 17th from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm) as we gather on Zoom to share tips on surviving the holidays with hearing loss. HLAA-TC President Byrdie Coninx, HLAA-TC Vice President Signe Dysken, HLAA-TC Secretary Susan Arquette, HLAA-TC Director-At-Large Laura Hagemann, HLAA-TC Director-At-Large Karla Sand and HLAA-TC newsletter editor Vicki Martin will be sharing information about these three major areas:

(Surviving and party, cont.)

- 1) Technology and hearing devices
- 2) Hearing Aid maintenance (for caregivers)
- 3) Sharing holiday stories

We will also have holiday trivia and are putting together a digital holiday recipe book. So if you have a recipe that you would like to share please email it to Laura Hagemann at social@hlaatc.org and she will compile a recipe book that will be emailed.

Wear a holiday outfit for our annual costume contest. As always, please email secretary@hlaatc.org to request the Zoom meeting link. We look forward to sharing our tips and tricks for holiday survival with you and we are digging out the holiday sweaters and hats!

Book Club: If you would like to join the HLAA-TC Book Club for our December club, we are reading "Rules For Visiting" (a novel) by Jessica Francis Kane and we are meeting on Tuesday, December 27th at 7:00 pm (Central Time) on Zoom. Please email Laura at social@hlaatc.org for the Zoom meeting link.

Hearing loss and memory: one explanation

“Having hearing loss means you need to use extra brainpower to concentrate on the sounds you’re hearing so you can make sense of them. Many people with hearing loss have trouble discriminating between certain high-frequency sounds like consonants, so it takes a lot of focus to understand exactly what is being said.

This phenomenon, known as cognitive overload, unfortunately means the brain cannot store the information coming in. The brain is too busy trying to listen and interpret to also be able to memorize the content of the utterance. So when you try to remember what was said, the information is simply not there.”

(Culled from internet searches)

Google, Please, I'd Rather do it Myself!

By Vicki Martin

We have a smart TV. It's so smart it does "updates" and "improvements" without even being told to. And without it even telling ME what it's doing, not to mention why.

One of these unexpected changes occurred just before I wanted to listen to the evening news. "Smarty" wisely removed some stray caption fragments that had been staring at me from the screen for months. But I had gotten used to seeing "I think" and "it can" floating unattached on the screen, so I could have lived with that.

But it did something else: It removed the sound. There was still captioning at the bottom of the screen, but I could find no program, button, menu, or command that would bring the sound back. I even loudly demanded, "Hey Google, turn on my TV sound!", and she politely acknowledged the request, saying "Okay. I think you want your TV sound turned on." But did she do it? You're kidding, right?

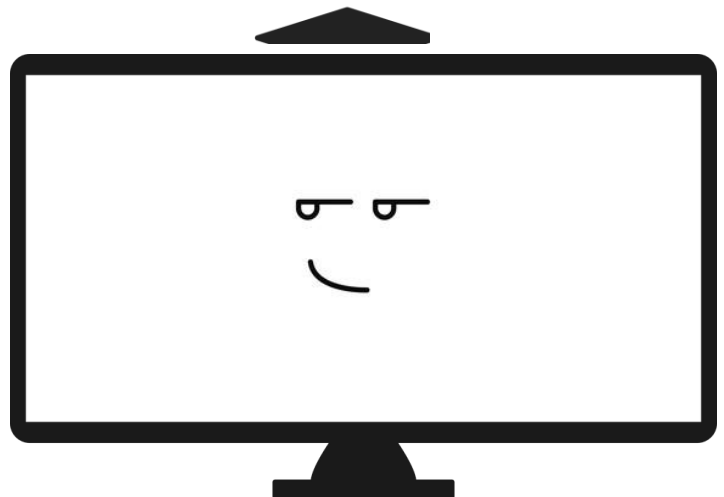
So I did what any self-respecting Luddite would do: I turned the remotes over to my husband. Dennis may not know much more about "smart" devices than I do, but he is much braver than I when it comes to tinkering with electronic black boxes. I left the room.

45 minutes later, the sound came back on. The news, of course, was history by that time. But we had sound. "What did you do?", I seriously wanted to know. Dennis shrugged that "I haven't the slightest idea" look, and shook his head.

But I did learn something. I learned that, even with captions, I NEED SOUND. That's right. Captions alone, especially on news programs or anything else of real importance, can leave you more confused than you would be without it. Maybe perfect captions, perfectly synchronized, would have sufficed. But we live in a world of imperfections, and in that world, redundancy is a necessity.

Captions, sound, video – I want it all!

Will it ever be enough?



New book club book announced - and November book club summary

By Laura Hagemann

On Tuesday, November 22nd, the HLAA-TC book club met to discuss the poignantly written memoir “A Loss For Words: The Story of Deafness in a Family” by Lou Ann Walker. We were joined by author Lou Ann Walker for a discussion of her book about her experience growing up as a hearing child with profoundly deaf parents. Lou Ann updated us on the happenings of her life since the memoir (the book was published in 1986) and lead a very interesting discussion about how those of us with hearing loss prefer to be called.

With people attending here in Minnesota, and other states like California, Florida and Wisconsin, we had a wide range of answers of how people with hearing loss prefer to be called. This conversation was a good example of the conversations that we have at book clubs as we usually use the books and their themes as jumping off points for broader discussions (usually about hearing loss).

The graphic features a purple background. At the top left, the word "NOW!" is written in a stylized, bubbly font inside a white cloud. To its right, the word "READING" is written in a large, white, outlined font. Below "NOW!" is a stack of colorful books (green, red, blue, orange). In the center is a large book titled "Rules for Visiting" by Jessica Francis Kane, with illustrations of various potted plants on its cover. To the right of the book is a purple box containing a Zoom icon, a calendar icon, and the text "MEETING DATE & TIME TO BE DETERMINED". Below this box, it says "FOR MEETING LINK, EMAIL: SOCIAL@HLAATC.ORG". At the bottom of the graphic, the website "WWW.HLAATC.ORG/BOOK-CLUB/" is displayed in white text. In the bottom left corner of the graphic, there is a circular logo for HLAA (Hearing Loss Association of America) Twin Cities Chapter BOOK CLUB.

The next book we are reading is the novel “Rules for Visiting” by Jessica Francis Kane. The synopsis of the book from Amazon is: “A beautifully observed and deeply funny novel of May Attaway, a university gardener who sets out on an odyssey to reconnect with four old friends over the course of a year.”

(Book club, cont.)

The December book club is Tuesday, December 27th at 7:00 pm (Central Time). We are still discussing as a group the next several books that we will read. If you would like to be involved in that discussion (and if you have suggestions for books for us to read, etc.), please email Laura Hagemann (HLAA-TC Social Media Specialist) at social@hlaatc.org

About the HLAA-TC Book Club: The HLAA-TC Book Club meets every month throughout the year on the fourth Tuesday of the month (usually, unless otherwise stated). We alternate between reading fiction and nonfiction books each month and our selections often deal with hearing loss, deafness or disability. We are meeting virtually on Zoom and have had several authors and special guests join us to discuss the books. We meet on Zoom (with computer/AI captions). For more information about the book club and to request an upcoming meeting link, please email Laura Hagemann (HLAA-TC Social Media Specialist) at social@hlaatc.org

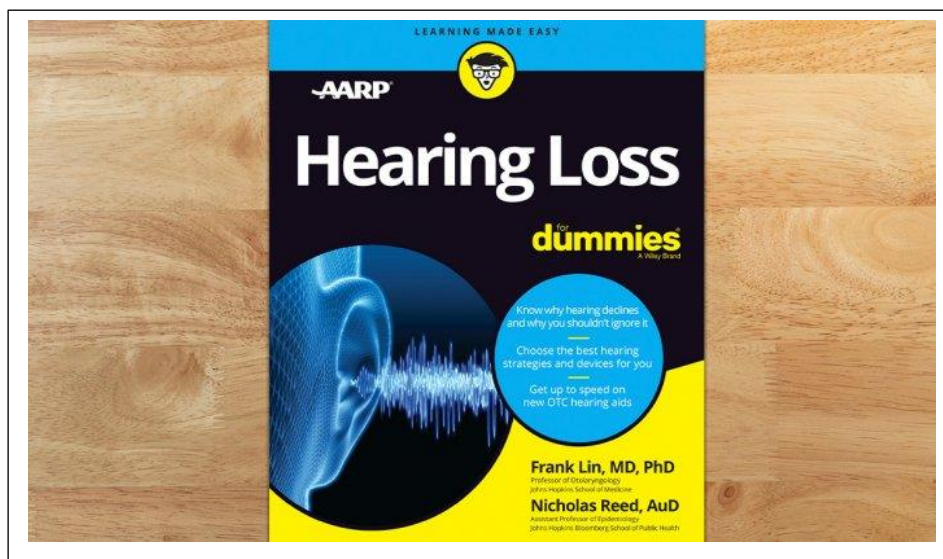
Hearing Loss for Dummies

Did you know that AARP has a book out, “Hearing Loss for Dummies”? Here is their bait:

“If you’re concerned about your own or a friend or relative’s hearing, this is the one book you’ll need. For what can seem like a complicated, stressful and lengthy process, *Hearing Loss for Dummies* tackles the topic head-on and provides you with expert guidance to put your mind at ease on the path to better hearing.”

You can read more and/or order the book on the link below. You can also read comments – good and bad - that people have made about the book.

[‘Hearing Loss for Dummies’ Provides Tips to Live Better \(aarp.org\)](https://www.aarp.org/health/ear-hearing/2019/07/19/hearing-loss-for-dummies/)



"Stream" of consciousness

Vicki Martin

get landline call
answer it
terrible sound
get cut off
call back
connect to bad sound
try calling back again
get "call in progress"
wait and try again
no sound
call on cell phone
call streams
and streams
and streams
cannot be turned off
find i-phone for dummies book
find out how to turn off phone
what is "side button"?
what is slider bar"?
short or long press?
if long will it reset?
if reset will it erase settings?
did it anyway
phone turned off
waited
turned back on
streaming stopped
phone OK

...why?

HLAA TC
PO Box 26021
Minneapolis, MN 55426



Next meeting: December 17 on Zoom

First Class

HLAA Twin Cities Chapter

Name.....

Address.....

City.....

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

Phone.(area code).....

E-Mail.....

Newsletter via email included in all memberships

_____ Individual \$15

_____ Professional \$50

_____ Supporting \$100

_____ Newsletter only \$15

_____ Contact me for newspaper advertising

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



Welcomes You!

President – Robin Coninx president@hlaatc.org

Vice President - Signe Dysken vicepresident@hlaatc.org

Secretary – Susan Arquette secretary@hlaatc.org

Treasurer – Robin Coninx treasurer@hlaatc.org

Directors at Large:

Laura Hagemann social@hlaatc.org

Karla Sand

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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 Dec 17, 2022. Open to socialize at 9:30 AM, formal meeting 10 AM.

Email the secretary (secretary@hlaatc.org) for meeting information and link.

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).