

# HLAA TC

# March 2024

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

**March 16, 2024**

Round Table Discussion:  
Technology and Community for  
Hard of hearing

*led by: HLAA-TC President  
Robin Coninx, with  
Dan Millikin the Director of Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing Services  
Division*

**April 20, 2024**

To Be Announced



See page 11 for registration details

## Contents

✚ Upcoming Meetings	Page 1
✚ President's Message	Page 2
✚ Meeting summary	Page 3
✚ Traveling with a disability	Page 4
✚ Accessibility at MSP	Page 5
✚ March Pgm/Lecture Loop	Page 6
✚ Book Club	Page 7
✚ Virtual Hearing Loss mtgs	Page 8
✚ Walk4Hearing	Page 9
✚ Musicophilia	Page 10
✚ Meeting info	Page 11

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HLAA National - Maryland

The March Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter meeting (HLAA TC) will be a hybrid meeting (in person and Zoom) on March 16, 2024  
Click "register here" on the HLAATC website to receive link for zoom meeting

See page 11 for further details

**President's Message**  
*HLAA-TC President's Message – March 2024*  
*Robin Coninx*



Spring has Sprung, and I for one am glad! The four seasons of Minnesota are wonderful, and each has its own season-centered activities that one can do. As for winter, I like to travel to some place sunny and warm and escape the blustery weather. But no matter where I go, I still am hard of hearing. 😊

Hearing loss is a hidden issue that has visible impact on your life. My unilateral hearing loss may be considered minimal by some, however, my daily experience of what I miss tasks me as the HLAATC President to support the Hard of Hearing community.

One place I hope for that to happen is at the monthly HLAATC chapter meetings at Courage Kenny Center in Golden Valley. I encourage all of you to attend in person our chapter meetings. The community that gathers there is a great place to connect socially and is a place to learn tips and tricks to navigate the world when you do have hearing loss and need perhaps a little more information on how to use our ever-changing technology.

The other topic that is near and dear to me is how being hard of hearing can create isolation for HOH folks especially in our older population. Recently, a plan was developed an ACT called the '**Older Americans Act**'. More information to come about this plan discussion at the state and national policy level and the importance of acknowledging that losing one's hearing as we grow older is real, and has a major impact thing on our lives. It needs to continue to be part of the discussion within the world of those who make our state and national policies.

Byrdie, HLAATC President

### **HLAA-TC BOARD MEMBER OPENINGS**

The board of HLAA TC is soliciting applications to serve on its Board of Directors for two-year terms beginning in May.

If you'd like to support people with hearing loss and want our organization to continue and thrive, please contact our President, Robin Coninx at [President@hlaatc.org](mailto:President@hlaatc.org)

# Summary of HLAA-TC meeting Saturday, February 17, 2024

*By Laura Hagemann, Vice President*



The February hybrid chapter meeting of HLAA-TC was a presentation by Phil Burke (representing MSP airport) and Betsy Campbell (representing Delta Airlines) on the topic of accessibility in airports/travel.

Monique Hammond (a past president of HLAA-TC and current vice president of Loop Minnesota) introduced the speakers, the first of whom was Phil Burke, Assistant Director of Customer Experience at Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC). Phil mentioned that Monique is a “passionate and engaged advocate” for the hearing loss community (Monique serves on the Travelers with Disability Advisory Committee, which helps express the needs of various disability communities). The airport also participates in a survey program: Airport Service Quality Program (ASQ) to find out needs and opinions of customers. MSP airport has earned Airport Council International’s *ACI Accessibility Accreditation*. The committee is currently working to loop all the Information Booths at both terminals (1 and 2). A feature of the [Airport Accessibility Programs website](#) is you can filter (by clicking a button) to find the accessibility features that benefit different needs (e.g. hearing loss). Features of note for the hearing loss community: Hearing Loop Technology, Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program, Video Relay Interpreting, and Visual Paging & Emergency Messages.

You can learn about all the accessibility features Phil spoke of that are available at the MSP Airport by going to the MSP Airport Accessibility Website: <https://www.mspairport.com/airport/accessibility> To view more links and information about both presentations, please see our blog post on the [February Accessible Travel Links](#) (also published in this newsletter).

At MSP there is also a “travel confidently MSP education center” which is a mock aircraft cabin used for guide dog training, wheelchair providers, etc.

Betsy Campbell next spoke about the various accessibility features of Delta Airlines. She spoke of various services of the airline. See [Delta Accessible Travel Services Delta Website](#). For Deaf/Hard of Hearing Travelers, contact Delta once you’ve booked your flight by calling **404-209-3434** or filling out an Accessibility Request Form in the [My Trips](#) section on the Delta website (once you have booked your flight). Delta Airlines TTY phone number is 800-831-4488.

When asked about getting text notifications for boarding, etc. Betsy recommends using the Fly Delta App ([Apple Store](#)) or ([Google Play](#)) An IMPORTANT NOTE: When planning any airport trip, it’s important to factor in potential construction at any airport that could interfere with your ease of accessibility. Check out the airport website and your connecting airport website for such information. [MSP Airport Website](#)

After the break, Byrdie mentioned the various open board positions: Treasurer and Secretary positions are open immediately and President and Vice President are open in May.

Thank you to Phil Burke and Betsy Campbell and their respective companies and organizations for all the efforts you are doing at maintaining accessibility in air travel. Thank you to everyone who attended in person or via Zoom.

## Traveling with Disabilities: Information from Meeting

By Laura Hagemann



Phil Burke, Assistant Director of Customer Experience at Minneapolis St. Paul Airport (MSP) shared the following websites and information about Accessibility programs at MSP airport:

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** When planning any airport trip, it's important to factor in potential construction at any airport that could interfere with your ease of accessibility. Check out the airport website and your connecting airport website for such information.
- MSP Airport Website: <https://www.mspairport.com/>
- MSP Airport has earned the ACI Accessibility Accreditation

Betsy Campbell from Delta Airlines shared the following information on Accessibility features offered by Delta Airlines:

- Delta Airlines TTY phone number: 800-831-4488
- Accessible Travel Services Delta Website: <https://www.delta.com/us/en/accessible-travel-services/overview>
- For Deaf/Hard of Hearing Travelers, contact Delta once you've booked your flight by calling **404-209-3434** or filling out an Accessibility Request Form in the [My Trips](#) section on the Delta website (once you have booked your flight).
- When asked about getting text notifications for boarding, etc. Betsy recommends using the Fly Delta App ([Apple Store](#)) or ([Google Play](#))

If you would like a copy of some of the slides from the presenters, please email HLAATC president Byrdie Coninx [president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org)

(travel links, cont.)

**Accessibility Programs at MSP Airport website:**  
<https://www.mspairport.com/airport/accessibility>

<b>Hearing Related Accessibility Services at MSP</b>	<b>Mobility and Other Accessibility Services at MSP</b>
<a href="#">Hearing Loops in Airport</a>	<a href="#">1:1 Meet and Assist Program</a> staffed by trained Travelers Assistant Volunteers (NOTE: The hours for this service are limited, see site).
<a href="#">Video Relay Interpreting</a>	<a href="#">TSA Cares to connect to a Passenger Support Specialist</a>
<a href="#">Visual Paging &amp; Emergency Messages</a>	<a href="#">Accessibility Services Maps at MSP Airport</a>
<a href="#">Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy &amp; Complaint Procedure</a>	<a href="#">Airline Accessibility Services</a>
<a href="#">Navigate MSP App</a>	<a href="#">Airport Assistance</a>
<a href="#">Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program</a>	<a href="#">Electric Carts</a>
Talk-to-Text is a visual display of gate announcements that is being used in most of Terminal 1, (Terminal 2 roll out TBD).	Adult Change Tables in Restrooms

## HLAA-TC March Program

Topics ~

- Information from Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Requesting accessibility in community and appointments
- Setting up tech to access captions
- Filing complaints

Dan Millikin, the Director of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division will be partnering with Byrdie at the round table discussion. The first hour will be sharing basic support that DHHS can give our hard of hearing membership.

After the break we will come back for a hands-on workshop on requesting accommodations for medical appointments, community activities and local theaters, plus assistance in setting up closed caption on individual devices such as mobile phones and personal computers.

Attendees are encouraged to bring their technology and questions to this informal discussion.

### Lecture Loop at Courage Kenny

*Vicki Martin*

Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Brain Recovery Lecture #1 on February 26, 2024:

This lecture series is being held in the Board Room at Courage Kenny – the same room that HLAA-TC uses for in-person meetings. As you are aware, HLAA-TC installed a hearing loop in the room, to be used at all of our meetings, and any other meetings that may be held there.

I went to this program with Dennis in part because I was interested to find out whether the hearing loop is in use at times other than HLAA-TC meetings. Dennis inquired before the meeting to see if they could make sure it was activated. As is usually the case, those involved in planning the meeting did not know about the loop. Anticipating a problem because neither Dennis nor I know how to set it up, we arrived a little early to check it out.

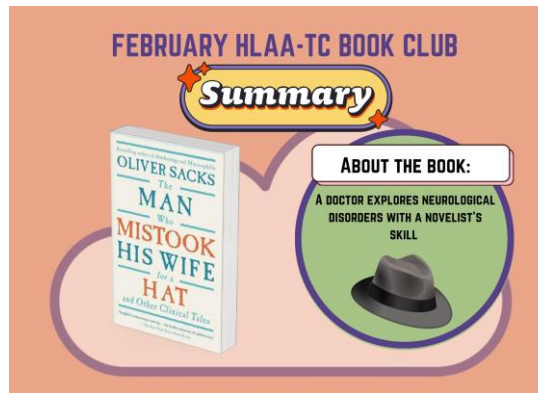
We were able to check out the microphone prior to the lecture, so we could try making whatever connection was needed for it to be turned on. On the first try, I turned on my T-coils and – it was on! Yay! Apparently, it is in “always on” status whenever the microphone is turned on. This is exactly as it should be! It worked well for the entire lecture (which was interesting too). I did notice that there was no signage showing that such a system existed, and neither the lecturer nor the presenting organization knew what it was or how it worked until we used it.

I would love to see some signage, perhaps just outside of the door, and also inside of the room, near the door. Many of the walls are moveable, but the door and its surrounding support would remain in place. It would also be wonderful if Courage Kenny staff knew about the loop, and could advise all parties making use of the room for a lecture or program to announce its presence.

Any suggestions on how to accomplish this? Please advise!

# Book Club February Summary And March preview

By Laura Hagemann



The HLAATC Book Club met on Tuesday, February 27th to discuss the nonfiction book "[The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales](#)" by Oliver Sacks. This book didn't deal directly with hearing loss, however it is a well known book (published in 1985 and reprinted many times over the years) and its author was a well known neurologist and author. Our discussion of the book yielded many interesting insights and listed below are some:

Further Information on Oliver Sacks:

- The Wikipedia entry on Oliver Sacks (includes a list of books published): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver\\_Sacks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Sacks)
- Oliver Sacks had a condition called Prosopagnosia (or Face Blindness) where he couldn't recognize faces (including his own), read this article about it and the book he wrote about it: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/prosopagnosia-oliver-sacks-battle-with-face-blindness/>
- The Oliver Sacks Foundation Website: <https://www.oliversacks.com/>
- Documentary about Oliver Sacks "Oliver Sacks: His Own Life": <https://www.oliversacksdoc.com/watch-now>
- "Radiant Minds" an Audible podcast on Oliver Sacks and his work: <http://tinyurl.com/3uv56es8>
- An article by his partner about their relationship: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/26/bill-hayes-insomniac-city-my-life-with-oliver-sacks-new-york>
- About the movie based on one of his books, "Awakenings": <https://www.oliversacks.com/watch-listen/stream-awakenings-featuring-robin-williams-and-robert-de-nero-on-netflix/>
- TedTalks "What Hallucination Reveals About Our Minds" by Oliver Sacks: <https://www.oliversacks.com/watch-listen/tedtalks-what-hallucination-reveals-about-our-minds/>

Other topics discussed during book club:

- One of our new attendees shared that she coaches on hearing loss: <https://beingheard.net/>
- We talked about how to tell people you have hearing loss (without apologizing),
  - We actually have communication tips on our own flyer: [HLAATC Information Flyer](#)
  - [this article also covers communication tips](#),
  - this [Blog by Starkey](#) covers how to tell different groups of people that you have hearing loss

- We also talked about various apps for transcription, etc. and we have previous posts that talk about apps for hearing loss:
  - [this HLAATC blog lists various apps for hearing loss help.](#)
  - [and this HLAATC one talks about apps and various technologies to help with hearing loss.](#)
- We also talked about how to advocate for yourself and the accommodations that you need
  - [Great advice and tips on Advocacy for Accommodations from the National Association of the Deaf](#)
  - [This video on Communication Access and Self Advocacy](#) is by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing Division.

Thank you to all who attended for your open and engaging conversation (see, we're not JUST a book club)!

## Next Book and March Book Club:

**March 2024: ["The Silent House"](#) By Nell Pattison (fiction) BARD/NLS: DB 111629. Tuesday, March 26th, 7:00pm – 8:30pm (CST) [[ZOOM REGISTER HERE](#)]**

Note: The author won't be joining us but has agreed to answer questions about the book. Two weeks before March book club send your questions for Nell Pattison to Laura [social@hlaatc.org](mailto:social@hlaatc.org)

## March - April Hearing Loss Virtual Meetings

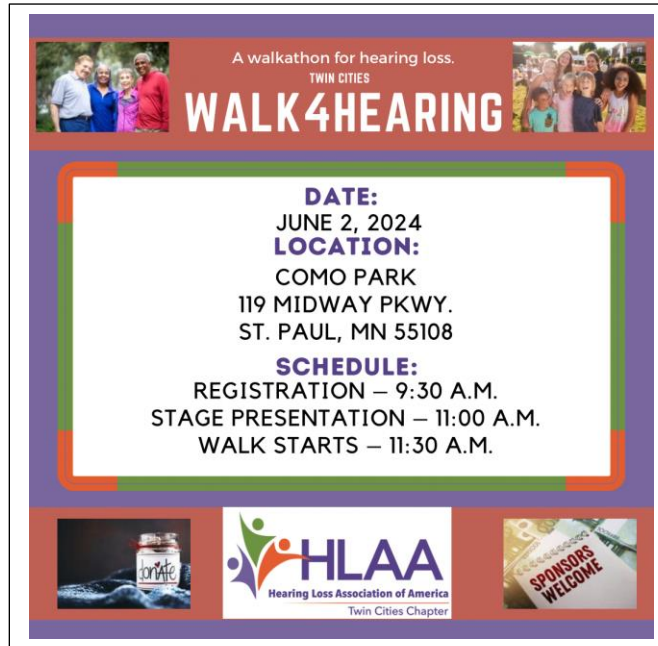
As we did last month, here is a list of upcoming virtual events and meetings related to hearing loss. All meetings mentioned are FREE. **Online hearing events:**

- **March 6th, 4pm-5:15pm (PST) 6pm-7:15 pm (CST) HOPE/HLAA Washington** "Monthly gathering of HOPE (Hearing Other People's Experiences)" Register for Zoom: <https://hearingloss-wa.org/what-we-do/hope-hearing-other-peoples-experiences/>
- **March 9th, 1-2:30pm (CST) HLAA- Greater St. Louis**, "Know Your Rights. Ask For What You Need." Register for Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpd-2prTsjGtWacrgYnONAV0k3S5pBOgst#/registration>
- **March 16, 9:30am-12:00pm (CST) HLAA- TC HYBRID MTG.** "Round Table on Technology for Hearing Loss" Register for Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwucOmgpjwoHtVikJRf6VAfNXIGDNgkL0TB>
- **March 16, 9am-11am (EST)/ 8am-10am (CST). HLAA-Eastern Connecticut Chapter** "Hearing Loops 101 - Why You Deserve to be Heard" Presentation by Juliëtte Sterkens, Audiologist and HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate. Click for WebEx: <https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/kmc02015>
- **March 19, 6pm-7:30pm (EST) 5pm- 6:30 pm (CST) HLAA- NYC** "Succeeding in the workplace with hearing loss." Register for Zoom: [https://nyulangone.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEpd-6srzIvH9CvKh4QZSeeqgXzS6\\_21Jbd](https://nyulangone.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEpd-6srzIvH9CvKh4QZSeeqgXzS6_21Jbd)
- **March 26, 7pm-8:30pm (CST) HLAA- TC Book Club ["The Silent House"](#)** (fiction/mystery) by Nell Pattison. Register for Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEld-yoqzsoE9HgL6RLwAlzAV7HK5s7B1Cs>
- **April 16, 6pm-7:30pm (EST) 5pm- 6:30 pm (CST) HLAA- NYC** "Captioning: The Universal Tool for People with Hearing Loss." Register for Zoom: <https://nyulangone.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqceugpj8iEtWV36lYvD5IsG2SyQx1SgT3>
- **April 20, 9:30am-12pm (CST) HLAA-TC HYBRID MTG.** Speaker and Topic TBA. Register for Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwucOmgpjwoHtVikJRf6VAfNXIGDNgkL0TB>
- **April 23, 7:00pm-8:30pm (CST) HLAA-TC Book Club.** ["Walk in my shoes: An anthology on Usher Syndrome"](#) (nonfiction) edited by Charlotte DeWitt. Register for Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEld-yoqzsoE9HgL6RLwAlzAV7HK5s7B1Cs>



## Twin Cities Walk4Hearing is June 2, 2024

By Mark Daly with Laura Hagemann



Do you personally know someone who is deaf or hard of hearing? Almost everyone does. In fact, 48 million Americans have some degree of hearing loss. That's one out of every seven people in the United States! Hearing loss affects many people in our lives, it may even affect you. HLAA-TC Director-At-Large Mark Daly knows firsthand what experiencing hearing loss is like: "I began experiencing significant hearing loss in my early 30s, and so I know how debilitating it can be when you simply can't hear what others are saying."

Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is having a 5K Walk at Como Park in St. Paul, MN - **SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2024** - and everyone is welcome!

What can you expect? All sorts of fun and games, a little exercise, great conversations, and tons of information, support and resources to help our neighbors and loved ones who are challenged by hearing loss.

Perhaps the best part of all this is the opportunity to form teams to raise funds for hearing health and support people on their journey with hearing loss. Join HLAA and HLAA-TC (the local chapter of HLAA), hearing care professionals and our nonprofit and business partners committed to helping every person with hearing loss thrive **simply by walking around Como Park**. Bring your family, friends, and co-workers.

Visit these links to learn more about how to participate: to [REGISTER](#), to [DONATE](#) or visit [the Walk4Hearing Twin Cities page put together by HLAA](#). You can also visit the Walk4Hearing page by HLAA-TC: <https://www.hlaatc.org/walk4hearing/> and [To View an Informational Flyer on the Twin Cities Walk4Hearing](#)

Also, please join the [HLAA Walk4Hearing Facebook page](#) and join the [Facebook Group called HLAA Walk4Hearing Community Central](#). If you have any questions, you can contact the Walk4Hearing manager, Ronnie Adler [radler@hearingloss.org](mailto:radler@hearingloss.org)

Now, find a comfortable pair of sneakers or walking shoes and we'll look forward to seeing you at Como Park in a few months.

Follow HLAA-TC to keep up to date on news about the Twin Cities Walk4Hearing: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

If you enjoyed The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat for February's Book Club, you may also like another book by the same author, Musicophilia. You can read about it below.

## Book Review: Musicophilia by Oliver Sacks

By Vicki Martin



Oliver Sacks (1933-2015), neurologist and author of the well-known Awakenings, left a legacy of fascinating books, mostly on topics dealing with neurology.

It's been said that "we hear with our brains, not with our ears", so it is not surprising that the way we perceive sound (or don't perceive it) and how it affects us would be of interest to Sacks. Sacks' work, Musicophilia (New York, 2007), focuses particularly on how we perceive and respond to music, and how neurological pathologies affect the music/brain connection. Of particular interest to me is the chapter on tonal distortion in music ("Pitch Imperfect"). Relative pitch, and even perfect pitch (enjoyed by 1 in 10,000 people) can be severely distorted by hearing loss, yet to some extent restored by great attention to sound and the subsequent remapping and enlarging of the cortex.

"If there are changes in the sensory input or the use of the body", writes Sacks, "...The brain's mapping of the body image...adapts quite rapidly. Thus if a finger, for example, is immobilized or lost, its cortical representation will become smaller or disappear entirely...If, conversely the finger is used a great deal, its cortical representation will enlarge, as happens with the Braille-reading index finger in a blind person...One might expect something similar to happen with the mapping of tones from a damaged cochlea" (pp. 135-136). He shows that our cortical representations shrink or enlarge according as "we pay attention to or focus on sound" (p. 136).

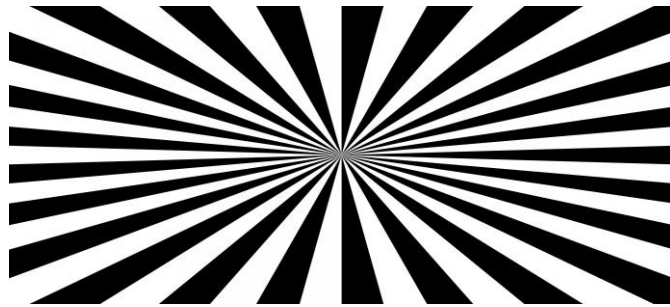
Cats, whose hearing is legendary, also develop hearing loss and distorted tonotopic maps when exposed to noise trauma. "If, however, the cats were exposed to an enriched acoustic environment for several weeks following exposure...their hearing loss was less severe, and distortions in their auditory cortical mappings did not occur" (p. 142). A rich acoustic environment, then, can minimize tonal distortion.

But I am not a cat. And the peace and relaxation that come with a quiet environment are of great value too. What is the proper balance? Sacks does not try to answer these questions, but he is expert at raising them, and suggesting tantalizing possibilities.

Musicophilia touches on dozens of ways in which sound and neurology interact, from "earworms" (can't get that song out of my head) to emotional effects to tinnitus. It's a fascinating read, and some of its chapters may inspire us to experimentation, in the hope that we can optimize our own auditory neurological connections.

*(reprinted from May 2018 HLAA-TC newsletter)*

## Which is faster – hearing or vision?



“Vision from input to recognition operates in the time span of several hundred to several thousand milliseconds...but hearing is an objectively faster processing system...it only takes about 50 milliseconds or less for you to identify a sound and point to where it’s coming from.”

The Universal Sense: How Hearing Shapes the Mind by Seth Horowitz

## Meeting information

The next meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA-TC) will be held at Courage Kenny 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley MN March 16, 2024, and on ZOOM.

**To register for ZOOM meeting:** Prior to the meeting, click “register here” on the HLAATC website (or click here for direct link to register: [ZOOM- REGISTER HERE](#)) You will receive a confirmation email containing a link to the meeting.

**To register for the IN PERSON meeting,** email: [president@hlaatc.org](mailto:president@hlaatc.org) or call 763-447-9672 and leave a message with how many people are attending in your party. Then, join us at Courage Kenny 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley MN 55422 on March 17 (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month).

**Meeting time:** Social time in person begins at 9:30 AM (no social time on ZOOM). Formal meeting is at 10:00 AM for both in-person and ZOOM

**Accommodations:** All meetings are realtime captioned by Captioners from Veritext/Paradigm ([www.captioning-paradigm.com](http://www.captioning-paradigm.com)).

**HLAA TC**  
**PO Box 26021**  
**Minneapolis, MN 55426**



**Next meeting: March 16, 2024 in-person and Zoom**

**First Class**

**HLAA Twin Cities Chapter**

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City.....

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*Newsletter via email included in all memberships*

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**Mail to: HLA A Twin Cities Chapter**  
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Welcomes You!

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