

New Voice News

New Voice Club of Broward County

Serving the tri-county area

www.newvoiceclub.org

May 2006

Mike Rosenkranz, Editor



**NEXT
MEETING
Sunday
May 28th
2006**

Main Meetings Held at the Margate Community Center

6199 NW 10th Street, Margate, FL

4 blks N of Atlantic Blvd.
2 blks W of 441 (St. Rd. 7)

12:00

1:00

Rap Sessions Meeting & Program
Refreshments after Meeting

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Bring your appetites to the May 28th meeting for our Franks&Beans party prepared by chefs Al Smith and Wini Mogk. Enjoy this traditional social event which is your club's gift to you.

And Still Rolling Along

By Warren Goodman

I really do not know where to begin to give you an idea of who I am, but I guess I have had a pretty interesting life which started almost 83 years ago.

Like a lot of other folks around here, I was born in Brooklyn and attended schools there including Erasmus Hall High School. From there, a short stint at North Carolina State College in Raleigh, NC where I was active in the ROTC and ended up enlisting in the army in 1942.

My army career, if that is what you might call it, was mostly in the infantry where it gave me the fine opportunity to be part of the group that first met the Russians at a small town called Torgau. Shortly thereafter, with the war ending, I became the acting PX officer for an ordnance group and then got home in 1946.

From there, back to college for a time and then into the business world where I retired after 35 years from having a small bunch of retail camera stores where I was one of the pioneers in setting up in-store photo finishing. And then down to sunny Florida.



May Birthdays

2nd Richard Sewell
5th Pat Hopping
8th Tony Russo
9th Carmen Sumpter
12th McNoland Pinard
14th Sy Falk
14th Cathy Fowler
16th Howard Grabowski
17th Irving Levenson
29th Lenny Weinstein

Happy Birthday To All

Instead of just sitting around I remained active with a sideline I had developed, where I conducted motorcycle tours of the Alps and shipped motorcycles over to Europe and still do that to this day.

In 2001, the tumor that was causing my voice to sound just miserable was diagnosed and I ended up with a laryngectomy. With good luck I joined two support groups that enabled me to develop a "voice". I would say that they were equally important, but the one that I am now president of contributed the most to my 'success'. The other group, which is part of the Veterans Administration, definitely assisted me and of course provided just about everything a laryngectomee would need equipment-wise.

I look forward to continued activities which include motorcycle riding and touring, playing tennis, and just generally enjoying life.

Warren

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Local Happenings

On April 11th, a full capacity audience was introduced and familiarized with a new form of treatment available in Head and Neck cancer, called Photodynamic Therapy (PDT). Penny Fisher, MS, RN, CORLN explained that PDT was initially approved by the FDA in 1994 as treatment for various other tumors, including lung, esophageal and breast cancer, and is now available at Sylvester Cancer Center as research by Drs. Civantos and Arnold.

The procedure involves infusion with a photo-sensitizing chemical, Photofrin, followed by application of cool red laser light via endoscopy directly to the superficial tumor mass. Although the chemical infiltrates all cells in the body, requiring 1-2 months of protection of the skin and eyes from visible direct light, it is concentrated and persists in only cancerous cells, where activation by the red wavelength laser light causes cell death and reduction in the size of the tumor.

Side effects include local pain and swelling of the lining of the windpipe or esophagus. This exciting new therapy has been used at many stages of laryngeal cancer, where it can produce a reduction in cancer-induced pain, difficulty breathing and swallowing, starting after only two or three days and lasting several months, resulting in an increased quality of life.

Following the presentation and a brief discussion, Penny proceeded to lead a spirited support group in reviewing screening and self-examination for Head and Neck cancers. Participants included several members of the New Voice Club. All in attendance created a large get-well card for support group member Sylvia Santos, who is undergoing treatment for a malignant complication in her spinal column at Boca Raton Community Hospital. Best wishes for her recovery!

Pascale's meeting: Interesting discussion with Pascale for the first half, and then enjoyed a great, spirited, inter-active presentation by **Denise Weppler, PTA** on physical therapy for laryngectomees. The topic for May's meeting is HMEs.

Lynn's meeting: We were visited by **Esther** who suffers from progressive neuropathy, wears a trach, and recently voiced for the first time in three years with a loaner EL. We offered suggestions which improved her voicing.

Margate meeting: **Warren** presided over a small but enthusiastic meeting. We helped **Lenny Weinstein** celebrate his 91st birthday with refreshments provided by Lenny. Our guest speaker, **Pascale Bourne**, explained the move of our 1st Wednesday of the month free speech therapy meetings from FMC to HealthSouth Rehab Hospital in Sunrise. **Miriam Paul MA, CCC-SLP** will co-facilitate the meetings. This move will take place effective June 7th.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Rehabilitation Institute of Florida

4850 W Oakland Park Blvd, Suite 100

Pascale Bourne MA, CCC-SLP

* **FREE SPEECH THERAPY (1st Wednesday)**

Next Meeting - Wednesday May 3rd

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

More information: (954) 730-2789

Boca Raton Community Hospital

DAVIS THERAPY CENTER

Oaks Plaza - Glades Road at 13th Street

Lynn Carrier MS, CCC-SLP

* **FREE SPEECH THERAPY (3rd Thursday)**

Next Meeting - Thursday May 18th

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

More information: (561) 955-2100 Ext 7430

Veterans Medical Center

7305 N. Military Trail

West Palm Beach, FL 33410

Loreen Blumenthal, M.S.P.A., CCC-SLP

* **Veterans Laryngectomee Group 2nd Thursday**

(Veterans & family members only)

Next Meeting - Thursday May 11th

11a.m. - 12 noon

More information (561) 422-6237

UMSylvester/Deerfield

Comprehensive Cancer Center

1192 East Newport Center Drive, Suite 100,

Deerfield Beach

* **Tuesday, May 9th, noon – 1:00 p.m.**

How Cancer Can Be Prevented

W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D.

Director, UMSylvester

* **Tuesday, May 9th, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**

Mort Silverblatt Head and Neck

Cancer Support Group

Facilitated by

Penny Fisher MS, RN, CORLN

* **Monday, May 15, noon - 1:00 p.m.**

Taking Care of Your Bones

J. David Pitcher, M.D., Associate Professor,
Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation Services

* **Tuesday, May 16, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

Blood Cancers & Marrow Stem Cell Transplantation
Hugo Fernandez, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine

From you nurse.....

Penelope Stevens Fisher MS, RN, CORLN

Disclaimer: This article will address STRESS. You know the feeling that upsets your world! Stress is a non-avoidable life event. It can be good and bad. It can help or hinder. The information here comes from several sources: books; internet and classes I have taken over the years. The information is shared to motivate some ideas and offer strategies for normal every day stress. More serious stress may need professional counseling and, as always, you are all individuals, and each situation may need specifics that are best provided by your personal health care provider.

STRESS

“ People are disturbed not by things but their perception of things.”Epictetus

Stedman’s medical dictionary defines stress as “reactions of the body to forces of a deleterious nature and abnormal states that tend to disturb its normal physiologic equilibrium.” Stress is the “wear and tear of our bodies as we adjust to our environment” and life (www. ivf.com/stress .html). It can cause the loss of balance in one’s daily activities and routines **and can result in illness.**

There are many types of stress. Life events, normal or crisis, can cause stress. Job stress ranks high on the list and 25% of workers state it is the number one cause of their stress. Illness alone triggers stress and creates a domino effect to contribute to other related stressors like financial burden and feeling of losing control of one’s own time.

Stress can be positive and/or negative. It can change our behavior and therefore impose stress on others. Stress demonstrates itself individually to each of us. Some characteristics and behavior outcomes are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Positive Stress Characteristics	Negative Stress Characteristics
Compel action	Create distrust
Stimulate creativity	Support rejection
Increase anticipation	Foster anger
Nurture excitement	Cause depression
Enhance awareness	Develop health care problems

Each person responds to stress in his/her own way. In keeping with the mind and body theory of stress responses (Table 2), methods for coping must be learned and developed. Research supports that these learned strategies were taught by our parents or caregivers as we grew up. Individual methods are known as coping strategies. When stressed as adults, we re-

vert to stress coping mechanisms that we learned as children. Some life events require a higher level of coping skills and an adult philosophy to survive the situation without consequences. During childhood, we may not have learned that particular skill, and this itself adds more stress.

Table 2 Stress Responses

Body (Somatic)	Mind (Psychological)
Headaches	Anger
Upset stomach	Frustration
Rashes	Sadness
Ulcers	Depression
Insomnia	Fatigue
High blood pressure	Emotional outbreaks/rage
Stroke	Violence
Heart problems	Sarcastic / over-critical of things/others

A teacher once taught me to picture stress. If I could picture it, I could then define my own stress and, in the defining, recognize my reactions to what I pictured. I pictured a train coming down the track at me. My mind knows that if I do not move, the train will kill me. The mind says “move”. This is the theory of fight or flight. There are times we cannot move due to many variables. My teacher said to identify the things you start doing when the stress level elevates. For me, rubbing my stomach, pacing back and forth and wringing my hands were those characteristics that indicated personal levels of higher stress. Knowing such reactions allows us to then build coping strategies to counteract the escalating stress before it becomes distress.

Distress changes our behavior and causes illness.

Look at table 2 again. Each thing listed, if not managed, may lead to an illness and significant consequences. Stress control is a much needed life skill for each of us. Unfortunately, most wait until the consequences cause problems before seeking help to learn additional coping techniques.

In certain cancers, the T cell count is too low and makes the body an opportunist host for the disease. Stress has been related to lowering of the T cell count, while relaxation responses have been demonstrated to raise the cell count. Relaxation responses that are beneficial to T cell counts have been monitored and improvement noted after walking, exercising, listening to music and watching a relaxing video.

Mark Petticrew, PhD (University of Glasgow, Scotland) reported that a positive mental attitude offers the patient better coping skills and is therefore less likely to suffer from anxiety and depression. The medical and nursing literature has recently begun reporting studies that will lead to new usable information on linking positive coping skills for stress to cancer success stories.

“There is no profit in curing the body if in the process you destroy the soul.... City of Hope Duarte, CA

Table 3 Coping Strategies to Handle Stress

Strategy	Action idea	Other options
Be aware of your stressors	Notice stress: determine the cause	Ask someone close if they see any identifiers
Recognize what you can change	Avoid, eliminate, shorten exposure time to stressor	Set a time to deal with it Work at it
Reduce the intensity of emotional reactions	Check your expectations Put situation into perspective	Adopt moderate views
Moderate physical reactions	Deep breathe, relaxation techniques	Biofeedback, medications
Build physical reserve	Cardiovascular exercise four times weekly; good nutrition	Avoid nicotine, excessive caffeine; mix leisure with work; time-out breaks
Maintain emotional reserves	Develop mutually supportive friendships	Realistic goals

References: www.cancer.org www.mindtools.com
www.stress.org www.ivf.com/stress

Be All That You Can Be

By Stan Mruk (*Laryngectomy - 1995*)

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Let's face it. Whether we like it or not, we are essentially living in a world where the general attitude is "What's in it for me?". Unfortunately, this attitude thrives even in our little "laryngectomee world". By that, I mean that too many larys feel no need to belong to a support group, do hospital and post-op visits, or get involved in a tobacco education program. They feel they are doing quite nicely on their own and, besides, there's nothing in it for them.

Now I don't want someone in Pocatello, Idaho getting upset that I am picking on them. My reasoning for this point of view is based on being a lary for 11 years, right here in Northeastern Pennsylvania. A good part of that time has been spent working with a small band of loyal larys in trying to maintain a working active support group. However, most of the time we have a better chance of finding a twenty dollar bill on the street than finding a lary willing to join our cause. Yet, the Middle Atlantic is probably the fourth or fifth most heavily populated laryngectomee section of the nation.

A "newbie" who has had the benefit of a pre or post operative visit and perhaps has had a more experienced lary guide them through those first rough months is indeed very grateful for the help. Unfortunately, and all too often, once they gain their "vocal independence", they either go into hiding or simply forget the help they have received.

I feel that because of my laryngectomy, I got a new lease on life and owe it to others who come after me to make their road just a little smoother. I am fortunate to have a small band of friends who feel the same way.

All well and good, you say, but "What's in it for me?" Maybe this will help you understand. Wednesday we had our monthly support group meeting. I had the pleasure of giving a ride to a 40 year old man who had his surgery in Dec. 2004. When he left the hospital, the speech department gave him an old Servox --- except no one showed him how to use it. The man hadn't spoken in 18 months, but he spoke Wednesday night. With the help and encouragement of the entire group, we showed him how to use the Servox and are now working with him to get help from an SLP. If you could see the look of happiness on that man's face and still ask "What's in it for me?" then there is something seriously wrong with your logic. Additionally, last month we were joined by a 4 month lary and his wife. This man is being seen by an SLP at the facility where we meet, and she recommended that he join our group. Both his wife and his SLP told me that just meeting other larys made a tremendous positive impact on his attitude. If I'm any judge of people, he and his wife will be loyal members for a long time to come.

To wrap this up, let me mention that of the 11 active members in our club, I was the first contact for 9 of them. To this day, when we have a new member, someone will invariably talk about what that first contact meant to them. If you like to feel warm and fuzzy all over and feel that you've done something meaningful in your life, having someone sing your praises will certainly do the trick. I never went into helping other larys with thoughts of personal reward. But the rewards are there and it really doesn't require much more than being yourself and sharing your experiences. I know I am not alone in this attitude. I learn, too, from the Pat Sanders, Herb Simons, Roy Boyds, Paul Sampsons and all the other selfless laryngectomees I've met over the years.

So if you've been sitting around feeling sorry for yourself or looking for something to do, find a Lary Club and get active. If there's none in your area, start one. Remember, you were born with a brain and, thanks to your surgeon, a voice to speak out. Use them and you will find out... "What's in it for me".

(Reprinted from the April '06 *Whispers on the Web*)