



# The New Voice News



**New Voice Club of Broward County**  
Serving the tri-county area  
of southeast Florida  
[www.newvoiceclub.org](http://www.newvoiceclub.org)

**February 2008**

**Editor:**  
Mike Rosenkranz  
(954) 236-0980  
[smike24@comcast.net](mailto:smike24@comcast.net)

**~ Next Meeting Sunday, February 17th, Noon to 2 p.m. ~**  
**Conference Center at Holy Cross Hospital**  
**4725 N. Federal Hwy, Ft. Lauderdale, FL (south of Commercial Blvd)**  
**Noon: Rap Sessions Followed by Light Refreshments 1:00 Meeting and Program**

From I-95, east on Commercial Blvd to Federal Hwy (U.S.1) Turn R (south) on Federal Hwy to 47th St. (1st street after the Holy Cross Main Entrance). Turn R onto 47th Street to the Ortho Parking Lot on your right. Park anywhere in the parking lot. Conference Center is the building to the right.

Look for New Voice Club Banner

**A WebWhispers Post** Jan.11, '08: A laryngectomee who works as a *first responder* wrote in: **Please make a list of the medicines you take, prescription and over the counter, and carry it in your purse or wallet.** You don't know how exasperating it is to be filling out a run sheet and ask someone what meds they are on and they say, "Well, I take a little yellow pill in the morning and a red and white one at noon, etc". Folks, knowing what you take could save your life.

**The reply:** Four weeks ago, I had a very nasty fall while taking out the garbage and ended up in a tangled heap jammed between the curb of the driveway and a parked car. I could not move or straighten out my tangled legs, and then realized the moisture pouring down was from my bleeding face and arms.

Larys are not very good at shouting, so there was little point in shouting for help. My EL was hanging around my neck, and my cell phone was clipped to my waist. I used the cell phone to call 911, and because I spoke slowly and articulated as well as I could, they were able to understand me. I was completely hidden from the street, so the 911 operator acted as a relay between me and the EMS unit so I was able to guide them to where I was lying.

When they arrived, the first thing they asked was how old I was, and the second was what medication I was on. I could see the frustrated looks on their faces in anticipation of the answer, but I fooled them. I asked them to reach in my back pocket which I could not reach myself, and they pulled out two sheets of paper, one with all my meds, and the second with my medical history. At the top of the medical history page in bold print was Total Neck Breather. Everyone, especially larys, should carry that information on them at all times, and in this modern day that goes for your cell phone as well.

There was one silver lining to that dark cloud. I have yet to be permitted to take out the garbage. I know this is only a temporary respite, but I will enjoy it while it lasts.

Mike Rosenkranz  
Plantation, Florida  
Class of '99

**President:**  
Warren Goodman  
(561) 737-9122

**1st Vice President:**  
Allan Smith  
(954) 724-1971

**2nd Vice President:**  
Ralph Friedman  
(561) 495-8644

**Secretary:**  
Ruth Henegan  
(954) 968-3198

**Treasurer:**  
Lenny Weinstein  
1427 E. Hillsboro Bv #529  
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441  
(954) 427-7043

**Visitation & Liaison:**  
Earl Mogk  
141 Eleuthera Drive  
Dania Beach, FL 33004  
(954) 929-0136  
[earlmogk@wmconnect.com](mailto:earlmogk@wmconnect.com)

**Directors:**  
Howard Grabowski  
Earl Mogk  
Gary Morey  
Mike Rosenkranz  
Patty Sewell  
Richard Willenborg





# What's Doing Around Town

As we go to press, long-time member Gene Kimble is in the ICU of Westside Regional Medical Center with pneumonia. We hope by the time you read this he will be home and well on his way to good health. Good luck, Gene. We're all thinking of you .....current President, Warren Goodman, met former President, Hy Sherman, and his wife Adele, in Delray while breakfasting.....Lenny Weinstein made a pre-surgery visitation to our newest member, Ken Smith, prior to Ken's laryngectomy in late January.

**Penny's Meeting:** Howard Grabowski, Lenny Weinstein and Gary Morey were at Penny's Power Point program on January 8<sup>th</sup> which was about *Survivorship* and the steps after diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. She reviewed Susan Leigh's organization of this into three stages, acute, extended and permanent, ranging from dealing with potential vs. actual loss, disruption of family roles/responsibilities, treatment side-effects and follow-up, along with the anxiety, ambivalence and fear of recurrence and change

Another member of Penny's group is Robin Smith, a larynx cancer survivor, who very much appreciates the support from the group and the benefits of associating with those who have experienced similar challenges, and although not a laryngectomee, has become a dues-paying member of the New Voice Club.

**Lynn's Meeting:** At Lynn's January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, John Mackay, Seymour Platt, Lenny Weinstein, Frank Argiento, Tony and Judith Russo, and Paul and Florence Margolis welcomed Bert Goldman, a recent laryngectomee, Most of the meeting was spent on introductions and in helping Bert with his TEP, and learning to use an electro-larynx. Bert has difficulty voicing because of a heavy flap below his chin. Additional surgery is planned to remove the flap.

**Main Meeting:** We had a great turnout at our January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting where we welcomed back Pat Mallett who has completed treatment for a new challenge.....Tony and Laura Talmich brought enough food to feed fifty people..... tuna salad, noodle pudding, cookies and a carrot cake. Everyone had plenty to eat. They brought a special guest, Bob Herbst, an IAL Director. Bob has been active in the IAL, and is certified to speak at schools and institutions. Guest speaker Pascale Bourne, MA, CCC-SLP spoke on *Safety Issues for Laryngectomees*, and delivered a comprehensive presentation which encompassed mucus plugs, stoma shrinking, respiratory failure, aspiration and communication. This well prepared presentation was appreciated by all. Pascale has agreed to attend all our main meetings.

A proposal has been made to change the name of our club to New Voice Club of Southeast Florida to better reflect our service area.. The Executive Committee will vote on the change at its February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. A poll at the main meeting resulted in a unanimous vote in favor of the change.

## Upcoming Events

**Main Meeting 3rd Sunday of each month**

**Next meeting February 17th Noon-2 p.m.**

**Rap Sessions at noon**

**Light refreshments at 12:45 p.m.**

**Meeting and Program at 1:00 p.m.**

**Conference Center - Holy Cross Hospital  
4725 North Federal Highway, Ft. Lauderdale  
(U.S. 1 just south of Commercial Blvd.)**

**More information: Christina (954) 267-7770**

**This Month's Guest Speaker**

**Karen Niosi - Ft. Lauderdale Fire/Rescue**

**An EMS presentation and  
how it relates to laryngectomees**

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**Support Group Meeting**

**Boca Raton Community Hospital**

**Davis Therapy Center**

**Oaks Plaza, Glades Road at 13th Street**

**Lynn Carrier MS, CCC-SLP**

**3rd Thursday of each month**

**Next Meeting - February 21st**

**10:30 - 11:30 a.m.**

**More information: (561) 955-2100 Ext 7430**

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**Veterans Administration Medical Center**

**7305 N. Military Trail**

**West Palm Beach, FL 33410**

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

**Veterans Laryngectomee Group**

**(Veterans & family members only)**

**2nd Thursday of each month**

**Next Meeting - February 14th**

**11a.m. - 12 noon**

**More information (561) 422-6237**

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**UMSylvester/Deerfield**

**Comprehensive Cancer Center**

**1192 East Newport Center Drive, Suite 100,**

**Deerfield Beach**

**Penny Fisher MS, RN, CORLN**

**Mort Silverblatt SPOHNC Support Group**

**2nd Tuesday of each month**

**Next Meeting - February 12th**

**1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**

**More information (305) 243-4952**

# Who and What is a Survivor?

*"If children have the ability to ignore all odds and percentages, then maybe we can all learn from them. When you think about it, what other choice is there but to hope? We have two options, medically and emotionally: give up, or fight like hell." ~ Lance Armstrong ~*

How do you define a survivor? We've received responses ranging from "You are a survivor from the instant a tumor begins to form" to "You are a survivor as soon as all of your treatments are over" to "You are a survivor as soon as the tumor is surgically removed."

While these are all good definitions as they apply to individuals, they are not broad enough to include all cancer survivors because they assume all cancers are the same in that there is "a tumor" (sometimes there isn't), in that there is surgery (sometimes there isn't), and that there is a finite number of treatments for every patient (sometimes there isn't).

These definitions also assume that there is a set point, a certain number of years out from diagnosis at which a person can begin to call himself a survivor, but that doesn't work either because some cancers have a low risk of recurrence and are considered beaten after a certain number of years while other cancers have a high risk of recurrence and are never considered beaten. Even though my husband and I were diagnosed at the same time twelve years ago, can he call himself a survivor now because his type of cancer has a low risk of recurrence, but I cannot because my type of cancer can recur many years later? What would the magic number of years be? The answer is, of course, that there is no magic number.

We've also heard from subscribers who don't like the term "survivor" because they feel it somehow implies that they are cancer-free now and forever when, for many of us, that isn't the case. Others don't like the word for a variety of reasons, most of which reflect a great deal of anger, anxiety and fear.

We would like to offer another - and, we believe, infinitely healthier - way of interpreting the word survivor."

Our favorite definition is the one created by and for the *National Cancer Survivors Day Foundation*, and it is the one to which we at *The Cancer Crusade* adhere: A survivor is "anyone living with a history of cancer - from the moment of diagnosis through the remainder of life."

We also believe that the word "survivor" is about being a warrior, a fighter who is going to go the distance and do whatever it takes to give himself the best odds of

beating his disease. Being a survivor is about attitude and state of mind, not one's physical condition, current treatment status or prognosis.

If achieving this attitude is difficult for you, try using a technique called "creative visualization." Take a few minutes to breathe deeply and focus on relaxing all the muscles of your body. Then close your eyes and form a mental picture of yourself clothed in armor, chest out, head held high, ready to march into battle. Hold the image for as long as you can, but for at least 3-5 minutes. As you practice this technique, watch your warrior-self actually go into battle against your disease and defeat your disease every time. Practice this visualization at least twice a day.

*From the Cancer Crusade's Weekly Affirmation 12-28-07*

## Reflections on an Anniversary

*By Mike Rosenkranz*

Watching the Survivor Movie has once again reminded me how fortunate I am to have made the many friends I have over the past nine years. I have grown in ways which would never have occurred to me before my laryngectomy on January 6, '99. That anniversary has caused me to reflect on the years that have passed since that date..

My first cancer experience in '91 resulted in no major change in my life other than a prolonged recovery which culminated in my decision to retire. I made no attempt to become involved with a support group or to work toward making anyone's life a better one....not even my own.

Learning to live with a hole in my neck motivated me to join the New Voice Club and WebWhispers and to actively work on behalf of its members to provide the best life possible for all. I hope I have made a difference.

I have lost far too many of the friends I have made, but that has made me cherish even more the vast majority who have survived. I have met many of these friends in person, but in the world in which we now live, I have met many only through the internet. It is amazing how close you can feel to someone whom you have yet to meet face to face. We know each other so well. And we are all survivors.

The Survivor Movie [www.thesurvivormovie.com](http://www.thesurvivormovie.com) has been seen by many of us, but there are many more who have yet to view it. Although my natural tendency is to be an upbeat person, there are times when even I may feel a little down, and it is at those times I watch the movie and remind myself that, as a survivor, my time is better spent doing what I can for others, rather than dwelling on those things over which I have little control. It is rather refreshing to note that when we keep busy helping others, we find little time to feel sorry for ourselves.



# February Birthdays

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1st Rose Donovan  | 9th Larry Wiederhorn |
| 1st Archie Smith  | 12th Jo Collier      |
| 3rd Hilda McGee   | 12th Sue Rosenkranz  |
| 7th Eugene Pinard | 12th Linda Weiss     |
| 7th Seymour Platt | 13th Penny Fisher    |
| 9th Beverly Arndt | 21st Grace Gonzalez  |
|                   | 25th Betty Dyer      |

## Happy Birthday to All

A police officer was patrolling just before midnight in a well-known make-out spot.

He sees a couple in a car, with the interior light brightly glowing. The officer carefully approaches the car to get a closer look.

Then he sees a young man behind the wheel, reading a computer magazine. He immediately notices a young woman in the rear seat, knitting.

Puzzled by this surprising situation, the officer walks to the car and gently raps on the driver's window.

The young man lowers his window. "Uh, yes, officer?"

The cop says: "What are you doing?"

The young man says: "Well Officer, I'm reading a magazine."

Pointing towards the young woman in the back seat the cop says: "And her, what is she doing?" The young man shrugs: "Sir, I believe she's knitting a pullover sweater."

Now, the cop is totally confused. A young couple, alone, in a car, at night in Lover's Lane...and nothing obscene is happening

The cop asks: "What's your age, young man?" The young man says "I'm 22, sir."

The cop asks: "And her...what's her age?"

The young man looks at his watch and replies: "She'll be 18 in 11 minutes."

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Hugging is good medicine.

It transfers energy, and gives the person hugged an emotional boost.

You need four hugs a day for survival, eight for maintenance, and twelve for growth.

~Unknown~

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## Race, Gender Affect Laryngeal Cancer Survival

A patient's sex and race, along with the type of treatment they receive, can impact their survival after a diagnosis of advanced laryngeal cancer, say U.S. researchers.

They analyzed data from a national cancer registry on more than 7,000 patients diagnosed with advanced laryngeal cancer between 1995 and 1998. Of those patients, 53.6 percent had a total laryngectomy (removal of the larynx), 30.6 percent had radiation therapy (radiotherapy) alone, and 15.8 percent had combined chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

"Controlling for the other included factors, the radiotherapy and chemo-radiotherapy groups had lower odds of survival than did the total laryngectomy group. The increased risk associated with death is approximately 30 percent for the chemo-radiotherapy group and 60 percent for the radiotherapy group," wrote study authors Dr. Amy Y. Chen, of Emory University and the American Cancer Society, and Dr. Michael Halpern, of the American Cancer Society.

They also found that men were less likely to survive than women; patients with stage IV disease were less likely to survive than those with stage III disease; black patients were more likely to die than white patients; and uninsured patients or those with Medicaid, Medicare or other government health plan coverage were more likely to die than those with private health insurance.

"We do not believe that insurance status in this analysis represents differential treatment or quality of care for patients with advanced laryngeal cancer. Rather, insurance status is likely a proxy for multiple medical issues, including usual source of medical care, participation in screening and preventive care activities and exposure to related risk factors, including alcohol and/or tobacco use and poor diet, all of which can influence overall survival," the study authors wrote.

"In conclusion, this analysis demonstrates that total laryngectomy yields the highest likelihood of survival for patients with advanced laryngeal cancer," the researchers added.

*"Published in the December issue of the Archives of Otolaryngology -- Head and Neck Cancer"*