

# THE VOICE

of the

LARYNGECTOMEE CLUB OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND

SERVING THE GREATER WASHINGTON, DC METROPOLITAN AREA

Established in 1970

Affiliated with the American Cancer Society South Atlantic Division, Inc  
Member of the International Association of Laryngectomees



## APRIL, 2012

### MEETING MINUTES

March, 14, 2012

The meeting was called to order by **President Stanley Lipscomb** at 11 A.M. Others present at the meeting were Yvette Milling, Addie Shaw, Betty Money, Helen Kane, Bill & Annetta Rapp, Charles Pickett, Herb & Sally Simon, Amir Ebrahimi, Jan & Kate Larson, Larry Dawkins and Edward Akwe. **Addie** read  
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### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

THE LARYNGECTOMEE CLUB  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

APR. 11th – 11:00 AM

### GUEST SPEAKER

**DAVID A. DiTORO**  
InHealth Technologies  
(Article on page 4)

Business & Social Meeting  
Refreshments by HELEN KANE

Will be held at  
**HERB & SALLY'S HOME**  
403 Hamilton Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

FOR INFORMATION  
CONTACT: HERB SIMON  
301-588-2352 or  
H457@aol.com

### RECIPE FOR HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND



- 1 tongue that does not slander
- 1 heart, generous and kind
- 1 dash of wit
- 2 eyes, overlooking others faults
- 1 dash sunny disposition
  
- 2 ears, closed to gossip
- 1 mind, full of tolerance
- 1 large dash of smiles
- 2 hands extended to help others
- 1 dash of cheerfulness

**Blend together and form into one being  
and serve in generous portions daily to  
everyone you meet.**

--- Author Unknown  
Submitted by Addie Shaw

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Friendship improves happiness and abates misery  
by doubling our joy and dividing our grief"

--- Addison

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?



**IT'S 2012 DUES TIME!**

Make your check payable to:

**The Laryngectomee Club  
Of Montgomery County  
OR to LCMC**

Send it to:

**HERB SIMON, Treasurer  
403 Hamilton Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20901**

Annual dues are \$5.00 per person or \$10 per family. Many of us send additional money with our dues, to make a donation to the club. These donations help us to continue our helpful and charitable endeavors.

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Apr. 1st      | Diana Cross       |
| Apr. 3rd      | Lottie Jeter      |
| Apr. 6th      | Robert Evans      |
| Apr. 6th      | Rudy Dupler       |
| April 13th    | Henry Kemper      |
| Apr. 14th     | Susanne Stevenson |
| Apr. 24th/34  | Lafayette McCray  |
| Apr. 30th     | Elmer Pinckney    |
| Apr. 30th /40 | James Seegars     |

**National Head and Neck  
Cancer Awareness Week**

## MEETING MINUTES

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the Prayer for a Laryngectomee using her Servox EL. Stanley extended a warm welcome to everyone. We all introduced ourselves and welcomed **Jan and Kate Larson** to their first LCMC meeting. Jan became a laryngectomee on February 14th and is already quite adept at using an EL. The minutes for the February meeting were unanimously approved as published in the March issue of *The Voice*. **Treasurer's Report:** **Herb** reported there was very little change in the club treasury in the last month.

**Aunt Bea's Sunshine Report:** **Sally** briefly described "Aunt Bea" who, before passing, was a club member for many years. She was an excellent esophageal speaker and spent countless hours calling club members to see how they were doing. She would then report all the news at monthly meetings. **Herb** read email messages from **Michel Pommier, Itzhak Brook** and **Bob & Carol Kanjian**. **Michel** is enjoying himself in France and said to send his warm wishes to new members **Jan & Kate** and everyone else at the meeting today. **Itzhak** wrote that he is very humbled to be invited to be the keynote speaker at the upcoming **American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery Annual Meeting**. **Bob & Carol** are longtime LCMC members who now live in Clearwater, FL. They wrote that they will be attending the IAL Conference in Durham, NC in June. **Bob** has accepted an offer to serve as a delegate for LCMC at the IAL Annual Business Meeting. **Herb** also told us that **Irwin & Tema Title** are planning to attend the IAL Conference and **Irv** will also serve as a delegate for LCMC.

**General Discussion:** **Amir** questioned TEP speech. The pros and cons were discussed and those present felt this was a personal choice. The most important aspect is being understandable no matter which method of speech you choose. **Amir** expressed concern about an upcoming PET scan. **Addie** reminded him that attitude is extremely important and that each step in treatment makes one a stronger and better person. **Larry** told us that he had not been feeling well due to a bout with pneumonia. He is now experiencing a problem with a pinched nerve in his neck. **Charles** recommended neck exercises, which he does on a daily basis. **Herb** offered to make copies of neck and shoulder exercises to pass out at our next meeting. **Sally** recommended the use of a firm, contour pillow. She and **Herb** have been pleased with new pillows they recently purchased at [www.mypillow.com](http://www.mypillow.com). **Herb** also suggested using a Servox on the opposite side of his neck. **Charles** shared that he has been experiencing more mucous and has needed to use saline solution more often. He also uses a vaporizer at night. **Addie** pointed out that it is essential that any saline solution contain sodium chloride and water only. Many of the nasal saline sprays contain additives. **Herb** stated that drinking sufficient water can also aid in thinning mucous. **Stanley** asked if any club members had recently spoken at schools. **Herb** said that we have not received requests for speakers, but we are willing to offer this service. **Herb** spoke briefly about the 2012 Annual Meeting and Voice Institute that will be held in Durham, NC in June. He reminded us that first-time attendees are reimbursed \$500 by LCMC to help defray travel and hotel expenses. A few members present expressed interest in being a delegate and **Herb** is to find out the number of delegate slots allocated to LCMC. **(8 Delegates)**

**Old Business:** **Helen** asked **Herb** if he has been reimbursed for gas mileage. **Herb** said he would take care of this in the near future. **Stanley** questioned if there was anything new regarding a meeting location. **Herb** volunteered to check out a nearby church that is, close to the beltway.

**New Business:** A motion was made, seconded and passed to purchase 10 new Servox batteries from **Lauder Enterprises**. **Herb** reminded us that **David DiToro**

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## MEETING MINUTES

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from **InHealth Technologies** will be the guest speaker at our April meeting. Herb also told us that the next meeting of the George Washington University Hospital **ENHANCES** support group for head and neck cancer patients will be held on April 4<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 PM

---Respectfully submitted by,  
Helen Kane

## ENHANCES

A SUPPORT GROUP  
WORKING TO SHAPE LIVES



**APRIL 4th – 2:00 PM**

at

**George Washington Univ. Hospital  
900 23rd St. N.W.  
Washington, DC  
(In the 4th Floor Rehab Dining Room)**

The featured topic at this meeting will be **NUTRITION** and will feature Guest Speaker, **Rachel Wong**, who is a registered clinical dietician here at GWUH. Rachel works with the GW Cancer Institute, where she provides nutritional counseling to patients who have undergone or are undergoing cancer treatment. Her talk should be informative and interesting to all of us.

As always, if you have suggestions for discussion topics for future meetings, don't hesitate to tell Mona or myself.

---Tracy Higgins M.A., CCC-SLP

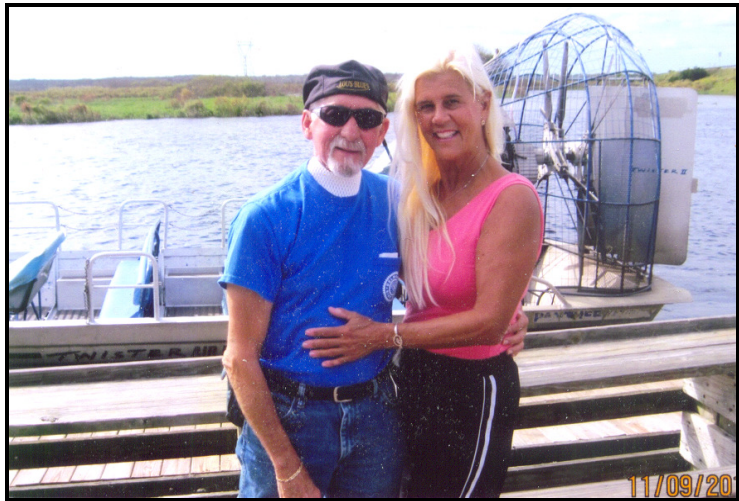
**To RSVP, or if you have any questions, please contact Mona or Tracy by Phone: 202-715 – 4075 or by Email:**

[Mona.Faddah@gwu-hospital.com](mailto:Mona.Faddah@gwu-hospital.com)

[Tracy.Higgins@gwu-hospital.com](mailto:Tracy.Higgins@gwu-hospital.com)

## LOVING LIFE

by Gary Davis



**Gary & Gene Ann**

Hello, my name is Gary Davis. I appreciate the opportunity to write this article. I am a throat cancer survivor who is enjoying life. I don't know most of you, but I feel that I do because I keep up with the newsletters. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet with Sally and Herb in 2006. They both were so gracious to welcome me into their home to meet with me prior to my surgery. I was eager to learn about how I would talk after my surgery. It helped a lot. I quickly grasped the electro-larynx.

I was born and raised in Silver Spring, Maryland. My father was a Montgomery County police officer, and my mother was a homemaker. There are six children in my family. I worked as a machinist, a mechanic, and had my own home improvement business. Unfortunately I was a smoker for 47 years, which was the cause of the cancer.

I have my health care through the Veteran's Administration (VA), and I personally feel that the VA provides the best health care in the country. Due to the healthcare provided by the VA and the management of my care by my life long partner, Gene Ann, I am alive and well today. I have had a number of surgeries related to cancer since 2006. However, I am now cancer-free, thank goodness. When I first had my surgery in 2006, my doctor suggested for me to get out of the harsh winters in Maryland. Gene Ann and I are now snowbirds --- flying south to be in Indian Harbor Beach (on the East Coast of Florida near Cocoa Beach) in October through May of each year. In 2009 we moved from Silver Spring to Ocean City, MD. It was hard to leave the Montgomery County area, but we made the adjustment. We now spend our summers in Ocean City.

Gene Ann and I are enjoying life. We are constantly on the go. I think it helps me to keep a positive attitude. I have a 1949 Chevy pick-up truck and enjoy many "crusin" events." I also still ride my Harley motorcycle. We enjoy being with friends, entertaining, and taking advantage of all the activities and festivals in our new hometowns. I am living my dream of being healthy, being in warm weather and being at the beach all year.

## APRIL GUEST SPEAKER



**DAVID A. DiTORO**

**Northeast Territory Manager  
InHealth Technologies - Blom-Singer  
Voice Restoration Products**

My name is David A. DiToro and I am the Northeast Territory Manager for InHealth Technologies. I have worked in the healthcare field for over 13 years throughout the Philadelphia area and now covering the entire Northeast (from Maine to Virginia and New Jersey to Kentucky). In my current position, I cover 15 states working with SLP's, nurses, ENT Surgeons, patients, caregivers, hospital staff and Voice Clubs. I enjoy working with a variety of customers and helping them solve problems and issues when they need help. I enjoy building close and lasting relationships with everyone I meet and to let them know that I want to be a valuable resource to them at anytime. My goal is to help patients that are having problems, answer any of their questions and find the right products that make the most sense for their needs.

At the meeting, I want to share some of our new products that we have to offer you and your members. I will bring samples so all your members can try our new Easy Touch HME and Contour adhesive housings. I will also have lots of literature and information to share with the group. In addition, I will answer any questions regarding Voice restoration, products, service or anything else that is on your mind. I want to make sure this is a productive meeting and everyone enjoys my visit.

## WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO EXIST IN A WORLD WITHOUT A VOICE

*By Sharlette Snead*



**SHARLETTE SNEED**  
**M.S., CF-SLP**

“If all my possessions were taken from me with one exception, I would choose to keep the power of communication, for by it I would soon regain all the rest”

— [Daniel Webster](#)

What does it feel like to exist in the world without a voice?

Talking is something that we were created to do. It's automatic; most of us enter the world with a voice. It's like the air we breathe. It's our stamp; it's like a finger print unique, colorful, and meaningful, but for some it's not a reality. To suddenly be without voice, to be aphonic, is a life changing event.

I had never felt this impact until I met a 58 year old lady residing at Specialty Hospital of Washington Capitol Hill Nursing Center during my clinical fellowship year (CFY) as a Speech-Language Pathologist with Ergo Solutions. To maintain patient confidentiality I will refer to the patient as Rose. Rose is a tracheostomized patient who was diagnosed with subglottic stenosis, a severe narrowing within the laryngeal wall which significantly reduces the amount of air flow through the vocal tract rendering speech impossible. This diagnosis prohibits the use of a speaking valve. Although Rose is not a laryngectomee patient she is classified as a neck breather and has been so since January 2011.

I discussed this matter with my supervisor, Tanya Spinner. She suggested that Rose would be a great candidate for an artificial laryngeal device and recommended that I contact Herb Simon from the Laryngectomy Club of Montgomery County (LCMC). Herb responded by providing Rose and myself with an electro larynx and a crash course on the speaking device. Limitations in health benefits denied Rose the opportunity to purchase the device, however, LCMC graciously provided the electro larynx to her.

Rose put the electro larynx to her face and gradually counted out numbers one thru 5. This was the start of her regaining human communication and the reality of her being able to once again be heard. As she heard the new voice her face lit up. She's now regaining the voice she lost, her connection to human kind. It was truly an emotional moment for Rose as it was for me, tears came to my eyes. Family members entering the room heard her counting. They had looks of disbelief and joy and were praising God for hearing her speak. With skilled speech therapy she can now express herself more effectively. This is a start to a new beginning. The Laryngectomee Club of Montgomery County restored the power of communication which was lost.