

# 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



## **DECEMBER, 2011**

### MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President Herb Simon at 11:13 A.M. Others present at the meeting were Sally Simon, Addie Shaw, Betty Money, Larry Dawkins, Charles Pickett, Paul & Joan Corridean, Helen Kane, Michel Pommier, Stanley Lipscomb and Peggy Bradberry.

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### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

THE LARYNGECTOMEE CLUB  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Business & Social Meeting  
Refreshments by HELEN KANE

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

**DEC. 14th – 11:00 AM**  
**ELECTION DAY**



2012 LCMC OFFICERS

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

## SEASON OF PEACE



Extended families gather near  
at this most precious time of year.

Arguments are set aside,  
narrowed hearts are opened wide.

Broken bonds are newly mended,  
gardens of kindness freshly tended.

Cherished memories reminisced,  
departed loved ones dearly missed.

Festive laughter floods the air,  
heads are bowed in grateful prayer.

In every corner of the earth,  
the dream of peace is given birth.

---Reprinted from *Lost Chord News*  
*North Staffordshire Newsletter*

## 2012 LCMC OFFICERS



### NOMINATIONS & ELECTION

The election of the LCMC Officers for 2012 will be held at the December 14th meeting. **Addie Shaw** and **Michel Pommier** will serve on the Nominating Committee this year. Addie will once again chair this committee. Before nominating someone to serve as a Club officer in 2012, please make sure they are willing and able to serve in that position, before notifying a member of the Nominating Committee. If you wish to nominate someone, please email: **ADDIE:** [Addie15@aol.com](mailto:Addie15@aol.com) or **MICHEL:** [mjlpommier@gmail.com](mailto:mjlpommier@gmail.com) with the name of the nominee. If you do not have email access and would like to nominate someone to serve as an officer in 2012, please contact **ADDIE** by phone at 301-982-3201. Nominations will also be taken from the floor on the day of the election.

### HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOUR FLU SHOT YET?



If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet and want to find out where you can get one near you, go to: [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

**EASE**

“Simplicity at it's finest”

---Jackie Woods

## MEETING MINUTES

(Continued from page 1)

**Addie** read The Prayer for a Laryngectomee using her Servox EL. Herb extended a warm welcome to all in attendance. The minutes for the October meeting were unanimously approved as published in the November issue of *THE VOICE*.

**Treasurer's Report:** Herb reported that the Treasury had not changed very much since last month. A check for \$509.00 was sent to the Hair Fashions Company to pay for the wigs we recently donated to the ACS. He also reported that LCMC has 47 dues paying members for 2011.

**Aunt Bea's Sunshine Report:** Larry reported that **Charles Carter** is doing fine. He had also spoken to **Charles Dyson**, who could not make it to this meeting because he was tired due to chemotherapy. Charles did send best wishes for good health to everyone. **Herb** told us that **Itzhak Brook** and **Annetta and Bill Rapp** were not able to be here today because they had doctor appointments. He also told us that he recently saw **Ernest Johnson**, who is doing well following his recent surgery. We will all pray that his test results turn out well. Herb read an email message from **Chuck Silsbee**, a club member who lives in Gillette, Arkansas. Chuck requested that the newsletter include articles about a member or a spouse. Herb mentioned that autobiographies of many club members have appeared in our newsletter in the past and he welcomes more. Anyone interested can provide Herb with a 300-500 word story about their life. Herb read a portion of a letter he received from LCMC member **Gary Mitchell** who recently moved from Clinton, MD to Courtland, VA. Gary is doing well, but misses the friends he made while living in MD.

**General Discussion:** Larry told the group of an EL-speaking gentleman he had met who is in definite need of a support system. He is having trouble with speech and Larry provided him with **Mona Faddah's** business card. Herb provided some straws for the EL to hopefully assist with the problem and some stoma covers. **Paul** asked **Michel** about the care of his TEP. Michel said that he cleans his twice daily. Michel stated that it is important to have an EL as an alternative method of speech should the need arise. Michel asked whether the change in season could cause more secretion and coughing. He was told the use of a humidifier was important, and saline solution was also suggested. **Sally** reminded us that it is good to drink a lot of liquids in colder weather. Paul played his introductory message on his iPad. Herb welcomed **Betty**, our newest club member. She is the first dues-paying member of 2012. **Stanley** told us about his problem with keloids around his stoma. He has been receiving injections of Kenalog-40 that have dramatically reduced the keloids.

**Old Business:** Larry spoke about the first meeting of **ENHANCES**, the new support group for head and neck cancer patients being held at George Washington University Hospital. LCMC members Herb, Larry and Charles Dyson attended the inaugural meeting earlier this month. Although the meeting was informative, it was basically an introductory meeting to get suggestions for a monthly agenda. Herb said that attendees introduced themselves and shared ideas. Larry passed around photographs taken at the meeting for all to see. Information regarding the next meeting will be published in the next issue of *THE VOICE*. All are welcome to attend. Addie asked if Herb has been reimbursed for gas usage. He has not and suggested for members who will be reimbursed to submit their mileage tallies at the end of the year so that one annual check can be written. It was suggested that the IRS rate of 51 cents per mile be used. It was decided that this will be fine tuned later. Sally again reminded that club members should be reimbursed for laryngectomee conference registration fees. **Helen** reported that she had checked

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## MEETING MINUTES

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**Old Business:** out a few more potential new meeting locations. Herb is going to check on a church right off the Beltway near his home. Sally generously offered to hold club meetings at the Simon home until we find a suitable new meeting place.

**New Business:** Addie has kindly accepted her appointment to chair the Nominating Committee for the December elections of the 2012 club officers. She explained the duties of the committee and Michel volunteered to assist her. There will be more in the next newsletter on this subject. Herb read the bylaws article pertaining to the purpose of the club. He passed out a copy of this article and also the article detailing the duties of club officers. Herb told us about the IAL Annual Meeting and specifically about the Annual Voice Institute that is held at the same time. He explained that some foremost speech pathologists lead in-depth training sessions during this three day program. SLPs from all over come to learn and work with the many laryngectomees in attendance. In this way, laryngectomees are helping those who will be working with us in the future. It also helps laryngectomees to learn how to handle problems they may be encountering and to adjust to life after surgery. A motion was made to make a \$1,000 donation to the IAL to be used for the 2012 Voice Institute that will be in Durham, NC in June. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed. Herb said he will be happy to provide monthly training for anyone interested in doing visitations and briefly described his method of visitation. Addie expressed interest and stated that she has tried to reach out to a neighbor who recently became a laryngectomee. It was suggested that since we hold elections in December and our holiday party is in January, we will ask ATOS Rep **Mandy Pietropaulo** to reschedule her December presentation for our February meeting. We all thanked Sally for providing the refreshments at today's meeting and Helen volunteered to bring the refreshments to the next meeting. A motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting at 1:10 P.M.

*---Respectfully submitted by,  
Helen Kane*

## Let's work together to CHANGE a MEDICARE Rule!



International Association of Laryngectomees Board of Directors passed a resolution in November 2011 urging **ALL** U.S. clubs and their individual members to communicate with Medicare and their Congressional representatives in order to change reimbursement rules for the indwelling TEP prosthesis users. The Association requests that **ALL** laryngectomees, regardless of their method of speaking or individual situations, join together in this effort. With only about 50,000 laryngectomees in the United States we must be willing to stand together in support of one another.

Previously it was possible for patients to order their own indwelling TEP voice prosthesis directly from the manufacturer with their doctor's prescription. The laryngectomee would pay for the prosthesis and take it to their clinic to have their MD or SLP insert it. They would then submit a request and receive reimbursement from Medicare.

Currently the only way for the cost to be covered by Medicare is if the prosthesis is provided by the MD or SLP at the time of insertion. Many clinics are not able to afford to spend \$1000-\$2000 to maintain a stock of different types and sizes of prostheses. A related problem is that Medicare currently only reimburses a maximum of about \$99 for an indwelling prosthesis, which costs from \$177 - \$350. This represents a financial loss, and most clinics cannot recover the rest of this cost through other fees. Because of this, most clinics no longer offer this service. Many laryngectomees now have to travel long distances to a participating clinic. Because of this we are often no longer able to choose the type of prosthesis we prefer to use. Instead we have to pay in advance for the prosthesis of choice and bring it with us to our appointment to have it changed. An alternative is to use a patient changed prosthesis. Some of us may lack good enough eyesight or the dexterity to achieve this on our own and may not have the necessary caregiver help. There are many other problems that may and often do occur because of present Medicare rulings that are too numerous to list here.

A large percentage of laryngectomees are senior citizens on Social Security and Medicare, who cannot afford to pay the entire cost of an indwelling prosthesis out-of-pocket.

**We and YOU can Make a Difference!!** U.S. citizens can change this situation by working through Medicare and communicating with our Congressional representatives. Writing or calling your Congressional representatives is an effective way to express your opinion. In addition to your own Congressional representatives it may turn out to be as important (or even more so) to communicate with the members of the House of Representatives and Senate committees that provide oversight over Medicare.

**To Contact your Representatives:** If you have access to a computer you can find the mailing and phone information for your member of the House of Representatives by going to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and click on: "**Find your Representative**" by entering your ZIP Code. To identify your Senators go to <http://www.senate.gov> and click on: "**Find your Senators**" and then click on your state. It is important to contact members of the House and Senate Committees that have oversight over Medicare (it is especially important to contact them if your Representative or Senator is a member of one of these committees).

**For more information go to the IAL web site: <http://www.theial.com/ial/>**



## POLICE PULLOVERS

by Wayne Baker

It happens to the best of us. We get pulled over by the police. They approach the car and ask for your license.

If you are a user of an electro-larynx and it happens to you, you will do well to observe one simple rule of conduct: **KEEP YOUR HANDS IN SIGHT. NEVER REACH FOR SOMETHING OUT OF SIGHT.**

The police regard everyone as a potential problem and they will do what they have to in order to protect their lives. You know you are not a Charles Manson. They don't. In fact, they are trained to think you are. It is the way they live so long.

Police can be nice or not. It is sometimes (but not always) up to you. Help them out. Be slow. Be obvious. Wait for permission. Be polite.

---Reprinted from  
*Let's Talk* (4-99)



# Happy Birthday

- |           |                   |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Dec. 1st  | Elaine Samuel     |
| Dec. 2nd  | Nick Goodpaster   |
| Dec. 7th  | Ron Finn          |
| Dec. 8th  | Bernard J. Becker |
| Dec. 9th  | Jim Roby          |
| Dec. 13th | Sue Wilcom        |
| Dec. 13th | Robert Fuller     |
| Dec. 22nd | Pat Fleming       |
| Dec. 22nd | Caroline Gregory  |
| Dec. 23rd | George Dickens    |
| Dec. 23rd | Vivian Riggs      |



## SEASON'S GREETINGS

## ENHANCES

The next meeting of this George Washington University Hospital (GWUH) support group for head and neck cancer patients, will be held on:

**DECEMBER 7th - 2:00 PM**

at

**George Washington University Hospital**

**900 23rd St. N.W.**

**Washington, DC**

**in the 4th Floor Rehab Dining Room**

This meeting is open to the public. Participants do not have to receive services from GWUH to attend. This support group is a free, participant driven service that is sponsored by the hospital. This meeting's guest speaker will be from the GWUH Psychiatry Department. To **RSVP** or if you have any questions, call or email **Mona: 202-715-4075** or [Mona.Faddah@gwu-hospital.com](mailto:Mona.Faddah@gwu-hospital.com)



**Photo above is from the first ENHANCES meeting**

From Left to right are GWUH student Martha Krahn, SLPs Tracy Higgins and Mona Faddah and student Jaclyn Woodyatt on the far right. The men in the picture are LCMC Members Herb Simon, Larry Dawkins and Charles Dyson.

**SMART  
MOVE  
OF THE  
WEEK**

**Don't text and drive.** You may have heard that texting behind the wheel isn't smart, but a new study from Texas A&M University underlines the potential hazard. Researchers found that texting doubles the reaction time of drivers, whether they're sending or just reading a message. When you're on the road, put your thumbs down and keep your eyes up.



---Reprinted from Parade Magazine