

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



MARCH, 2013

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

THE LARYNGECTOMEE CLUB
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Will be held at:

Christ Congregational Church
9525 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Wednesday Mar. 13th

10:30 AM

Socializing and Refreshments
Refreshments to be furnished by:
Helen Kane

11:00 AM

Business & Social Meeting

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

"Kindness is more important
than wisdom,

and the recognition of this
is the beginning of wisdom."

---Theodore Isaac Rubin

CAREGIVER'S BILL OF RIGHTS



I have the right to **take care of myself**. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the ability to take better care of my loved one.

I have the right to **seek help from others** even though my loved one may object. I know the limits of my own endurance and strength.

I have the right to **maintain parts of my own life** that do not include the person I care for just as if he/she was healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can do for this person.

I have the right to do some things just for myself.

I have the right to get angry, be depressed, and **express difficult feelings** once in a while.

I have the right to **reject any attempt** by my loved one to make me do things out of guilt or anger. (It doesn't matter if he/she knows they are doing it or not.)

I have the right to **get considerations, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance** for what I do for my loved one, as I offer these in return.

I have the right to **take pride in what I'm doing**. And I have the right to applaud the courage it has taken to meet the needs of my loved one.

I have the right to **protect my individuality**. I also have the right to a life that will sustain me when my loved one no longer needs my full-time help.

---Author unknown

IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN!



IT'S 2013 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.



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|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mar. 1st | Leon Chapman |
| Mar. 10th | Marina Cruz |
| Mar. 10th | Roosevelt Robinson |
| Mar. 13th | Janet Coyle |
| Mar. 14th | Gene Ann Logan |
| Mar. 17th | Happy St. Patrick's Day |
| Mar. 21st | Stanley Lipscomb |
| Mar. 25th | Viola Sells |
| Mar. 25th | Horace Johnson |
| Mar. 25th | Edward Akwe |
| Mar. 30th | Johnny Dale |



March is Nutrition Awareness Month

MEETING MINUTES

February 13, 2013

The meeting was called to order by **Vice President Michel Pommier** at 11:15 A.M. Others present at the meeting were Herb & Sally Simon, Larry Dawkins, Addie Shaw, Albert Turner, Helen Kane, Bernard Lewis, Itzhak Brook, and Stanley Lipscomb. We were all happy to see **Bernard Lewis**, who lives in Ellicott City, MD. He read the Prayer for a Laryngectomee using his Servox EL. Michel extended a warm welcome to everyone and we introduced ourselves. The minutes for the December meeting were unanimously approved as published in the January issue of *The Voice*.

Treasurer's Report: **Herb** reported that there had been little change in the funds in the Treasury. He wrote two checks in the combined amount of \$95.00 and made one deposit in the amount of \$165.00.

Aunt Bea's Sunshine Report: **Addie** told us that her good friend and LCMC Member **Betty Money** passed away suddenly on Jan. 22nd. We were stunned by this news (a memorial article is on page 3 of this issue). Herb read an email message from LCMC member **Edward Akwe**. It told of a recent medical issue he had been through and is completely recovered from now, and that he has been unable to attend meetings recently because he has been working. He sends his love and blessings to all of us. Herb read another email message. This one was from LCMC member **Chuck Silsbee**, who lives in Gillette, Arkansas. Chuck made some positive comments about the newsletter and said that he especially enjoyed the front page piece entitled '*True Love*'.

Old Business: A motion was made, seconded and passed to reimburse **Sally** for the Holiday Party expenses.

New Business: There was no new business.

General Discussion: **Michel** shared that he had received Cymetra injections for leakage and it had gone well. A brief discussion was held regarding cell phone use while driving, and **Bernard** said that he uses his hands-free device regularly. We all applauded upon hearing that **Itzhak** had reached his five-year anniversary. He pointed out that although it is rare for one to have a reoccurrence after five years, it is best to be cautious and have yearly physicals. Thoughts and opinions about PET scans and CAT scans were shared and discussed. **Sally** reminded us that even though we have yearly physicals, we should contact our doctors if we're not feeling well. **Sally** and **Herb** shared memories and photos of their Florida trip to visit with **Irwin** and **Tema Title**. While there, they all had dinner with **Bob** and **Carol Kanjian**, and also attended a meeting of the New Voice Club of South Miami. **Sally** was thanked for providing the refreshments for the meeting. **Helen** volunteered to bring them in March. We all sang Happy Birthday to **Sally**. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 P.M.

---Respectfully submitted by,
Helen Kane

ENHANCES

A SUPPORT GROUP
WORKING TO SHAPE LIVES



NEXT MEETING

March 6th
2:30 PM

at the

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

Hello,

Hard to believe it's already mid-February. We had a great meeting here on February 6th. We discussed free programs provided by the American Cancer Society, enjoyed a game of trivia, and got some free laryngectomy supplies. Thank you to all who attended.

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, March 6th** at **2:30pm** in the Rehab Dining Room on the 4th floor of the hospital- same time, same place. This meeting will feature **Dr. Itzhak Brook**, a laryngectomee and a physician, who will discuss life challenges as a laryngectomee, including rescue breathing. To read more about Dr. Brook and this topic, see his blog:

<http://dribrook.blogspot.com/>

Feel free to bring guests to the meeting. As usual, snacks and refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP to let me know whether you will be attending. Thanks!
Tracy

To RSVP, or if you have any questions, contact Tracy by Phone: 202 – 715 – 4075 or Email: Tracy.Higgins@gwu-hospital.com

SOMETIMES IT PAYS TO BE STUBBORN!

By Michel Pommier

After having a total laryngectomy followed by radiation treatments in 2008, my tracheoesophageal puncture (TEP) provided satisfactory vocal functions for 2 years. It then started to enlarge in late 2010. The voice prosthesis (VP) diameter became insufficient to occlude the enlarged TEP. This resulted in leakage of ingested liquids into my lungs. This phenomenon was not only bothersome because of the repeated coughing it produced, but it could also become a real health hazard for the lungs and leave serious respiratory consequences. I was also warned that frequent leakage around the VP could possibly result in the dislodgement and aspiration of the VP itself. Something had to be done, immediately.

The first strategy employed by the speech therapist was to resize the VP. A smaller VP (decreasing the length) of equal diameter, but with larger flanges, was installed. This produced a positive result that lasted for about 3 months. However, the VP started to cut into the tissues. After the insertion of a larger VP, the leakage started again within a month. With the leaking being uncomfortable, we tried a smaller VP for the second time. The same results occurred again. Given the damage left by the radiation therapy and the smaller VP to the tissue of my throat, my ENT proposed to do a surgical closure of my existing TEP and to relocate it subsequently. This was done over Christmas and New Year 2011. The new puncture was able to offer a tight seal with the VP for about 3 more months before leakage resumed. I was disappointed but determined to find a solution. We tried placing commercially available esophageal flanges on the VP but that didn't work. By fall 2012, during a meeting of the Laryngectomee Club of Montgomery County Maryland (LCMC), I discussed my problem with the speech therapist from one of the major VP providers. She referred me to two articles of the American Laryngological and Rhinological and Otological Society. These articles presented a minimally invasive approach for the management of the TEP leaking: the injection of a substance called **Cymetra**. I passed these articles on to my ENT surgeon and a few weeks later, he told me that we could try this procedure.

Before the injection, my surgeon examined my swallowing of thin liquids to determine the precise leakage site. He also requested the speech therapist to insert a VP of smaller diameter (French 16 instead of 20) so that he would have more room to inject the Cymetra. This was done with local numbing of the tissue and was totally pain free. The entire procedure took about 7 minutes. After the injection, he examined to see if any liquid was still leaking. To his satisfaction (*and mine!*), he could not see any noticeable traces of leakage. I was discharged with the instruction to not talk for 48 hours. One week later my standard VP was reinserted. Two more weeks passed without any leaking. I was thrilled. However, the following week I noticed some bubbles forming at the periphery of my VP, when I was swallowing my saliva. I immediately called my ENT. He pointed out that about 25% of patients have to have a second injection to ensure permanent leakage resolution. I hoped that this would not be the case for me . . . but it was! A new injection was performed on February 20th. So far I cannot feel or see any leakage. One thing is for sure: I will not give up. And YES,

SOMETIMES IT PAYS TO BE STUBBORN!!!

NEW LARYNGECTOMEES VISITS

February 3rd – Herb went to Georgetown University Hospital to visit with pre-op patient **Thurman (Dickie) Dickey** and his wife, **Queen Jones**. They live in Silver Spring, MD. Dickie is a writer and poet. He has experienced several medical issues in the recent past. Dickie is a quiet person. He was seemingly down in spirits when Herb arrived, but perked up quite a bit as this visit progressed and he could see that life can be happy and good after this surgery. Dickie commented that he planned to live for a long time. Both Queen and Dickie had many questions. Herb was able to answer many of them, but suggested they ask a lot of their questions to their medical professionals. Herb left some reading material for them. Both Queen & Dickie expressed their appreciation for this visit. Dickie's surgery is scheduled to be on Feb. 5th. Thanks go to **SLP Jayme Cappa** helping to arrange this visit.

February 17th – Dickie and Queen came to Herb & Sally's home to get some supplies. Dickie looked so good that it was hard to believe it had only been 12 days since he had his surgery. He was using a loaner EL from the hospital and speaking understandably for the most part. He wrote what he was trying to say, when we had trouble understanding him. They had many questions about life following surgery that Herb was able to answer for them. They received an information packet from LCMC, and Herb went over the contents with them. Dickie hopes to join us at future LCMC meetings.

"Some people think it's holding on that makes one stronger;

Sometimes, it's letting go."

~ Sylvia Robinson

IN LOVING MEMORY



Elizabeth M. (Betty) Money

Betty passed away unexpectedly on January 22, 2013. She was 82 years old at the time of her passing. Betty was pre-deceased by her husband Bill Money and her brother John. She is survived by a son and daughter, 5 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren. Betty lived at Green Ridge House where she met LCMC member Addie Shaw. They became close friends and Betty began coming to club meetings with Addie several years ago. Betty became an active member and participant at LCMC meetings. She became loved by all of us who knew her. We will miss her smiling face and wonderful personality. Donations may be made to the American Kidney Fund, 6110 Executive Blvd. Suite 1010 Rockville, MD 20852.

WHAT I LOVED ABOUT BETTY

by Addie Shaw

We enjoyed going shopping, out to lunch and dinners, and just sitting in the Lobby running our mouths, laughing our heads off with each other and anyone else that stopped by. Betty really enjoyed living at the Green Ridge House and will be greatly missed by her many friends and residents.

Betty was on the executive committee at the American Legion Auxiliary along with me and Judy. She was committed to the Military and the welfare and care of them. She would go to the Old Soldiers Home in the District and also to Charlotte Hall in Maryland to share games, give them useful items they were in need of, and bring treats to them.

Betty loved spending time with her son Doug & his wife and her daughter Donna and her husband along with the grandkids and great grandkids. She would go over every Wednesday and have lunch with her niece Susie (as Betty called her) along with other family & friends. She cared so much about Susie's son Justin. Betty also LOVED St. Patrick's Day. She would always be out somewhere celebrating and having a good time!

Betty became an active member of the Laryngectomee Club of Montgomery County because she believed in it and all the support and help being given to the Laryngectomees. She was a strong advocate.

There are no words to say how much I will and do miss her. . . .