



FLA NEWS



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Florida Laryngectomee Association

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Member IAL

December, 2004

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This holiday season is a good time to say thanks to all the people who made our 2004 Annual Meeting such a success. Charlie and Nancy Blair top the list because of all the things they did before and during the meeting. Nancy coordinated the interface with our vendors, while Charlie coordinated our speakers, arranged the schedule, and worked with the hotel.

Our speakers, vendors, and you the attending members, made this a very successful meeting. We had 113 people at Daytona, compared to eighty-nine in 2003.

For 2005 we probably will not meet in Daytona. We are starting to look in Melbourne, Cocoa and Orlando, and will have a definite meeting place to announce in our next issue.

Thanks to the Club Contacts (not all are Presidents) for putting me on their mailing list and for sending the information about anti-tobacco talks and members of various ACS committees.

At the 2005 meeting Ed Stone, our Director of Education, will present a program to train our members in visitation procedures for pre and post-op visits to new laryngectomees. This will start about 8:00 A.M. on Friday, so it will require a Thursday night stay for those participating. For 2006, we plan to have an educational session for members who give anti-tobacco talks to students.

The slate of officers was elected unanimously and the officers appreciate your vote of confidence.

Best wishes and Happy Holidays Carl Kilmer

FLA '04 ANNUAL MEETING

Our recent AM was a huge success! This was the consensus of opinion of our 113 attendees. Our previous President, Judy Ramboldt, had commitments for most of the program speakers prior to her resignation, leaving the tasks of tweaking, assigning subjects and time and replacing speakers that canceled. Although this was the fifth consecutive year that our AM program has followed the general guidelines of our former Voice Institute, our AM program is now geared specifically to the rehabilitation needs of the laryngectomee. Our speakers included three PhDs, one MS Speech Language Pathologist, a Respiratory Therapist, a Pharmacist, and one laryngectomee who was recently fitted with a customized Barton-Mayo Button. They were all great speakers with interesting and highly beneficial topics. There were eleven requests for speech evaluations during advance registration, but an additional seven requests at the Saturday session required some fast and innovative last minute changes. We went to group sessions which worked out very well. (cont'd in right column)

(cont'd) . Groups were assigned by common needs and evaluated by Dennis Fuller, PhD; Caryn Melvin, PhD; Annette Miller, BS; Lisa Proper, MS; and Ed Stone, PhD. Nancy Blair, MS was the organizer and facilitator. Special thanks to Dr Fuller for joining the evaluators at the last minute. (if logistic and space provide, "individual" evaluations will be provided in 2005 and beyond. A new wrinkle this year that worked out very well was moving the previous Sunday morning Business Meeting to noon on Saturday. Due to the generosity of two of our vendors, a very nice complimentary luncheon was served to our attendees. The Business Meeting consisted primarily of Officer Elections and the selection of Elaine Curran and Bill Beurkins into our Hall of Fame. (see pages 2,3) Records were set at this year's AM. We had 13 total vendors present with 19 representatives. Ten of our Clubs were represented and amazingly we had 20 "first timers"! Club attendance is broken down as follows, Broward County- 14; Daytona Beach-10; Suncoast New Voices-10; No club affiliation-10; Ocala-8; Chatterbox- 6; GOLF- 6; Jax - 4; Pasco - 4; PALS- 2 ; Space-Coast - 2. Our Clubs and Vendors again came through for us with the donation of substantial raffle prizes for our Saturday evening banquet. After those raffle donations were claimed we even auctioned off the table centerpieces, very nice miniature carousels made and donated by Ellie Nail.

Jerry's Journal

The initiative for this column came from my college professor who often writes about things that trouble him. Recently he tapped my button and I couldn't help but share some of my anxieties.

From time to time frustrations or pet peeves or call them what you want creep into our daily living and bug us to the point where we throw up our hands, raise our voices (and that's tough for you and me to do) and exclaim "Why don't they...?" or "What if...?" Regardless of the way you express yourself when you hit the boiling point you must unload for peace of mind. For those who are a couple of notches above the poverty level a visit to the psychiatrist may be the way to go. Just pour out your problems to a sympathetic ear and go forth with an empty tank and an empty check book. For those of us who cannot afford the luxury of the couch we must find a friend who will patiently listen to our trivial unrest and even be willing to work out an exchange of complaints. It's embarrassing to admit that the number of my friends is narrowing and even they have raised eyebrow as I tick off my second or third pet peeve of the moment. My neighbor use to give me a silent stare similar to the man who is startled by the AFLAC duck and now I noticed a stifled yawn or two.

Writing about the "Why don't they...?" or just plan "Why...?" may help my frame of mind and possibly give you a lift. So here are a few that are momentarily on my plate:

- ? ???Highway safety is no longer an issue when the SUV ads encourage us to go off-road and drive up rocky hills or through creek beds and others beef up claims of sporty numbers when you can go from 0 to 60 in 7 seconds. With Florida lacking rocky mountains and considering the volume of cars on our roads, 0 to 60 in seconds is just a dream.
- ? ???Fat girl ads are the limit. The "before" girl is void of makeup, has stringy hair, wears a training bra which accents her slouching posture. While the "after" photo is well made up, a big smile, with well coiffured hair and poses well in her bikini.
- ? ???Why do they run TV ads back to back on the same product, or sometimes a different version of the same product back to back? Are we that dumb that they need to be told twice in one minute to buy XYZ brand of soft drink or whatever?
- ? ???With the introduction of voice recognition software to the telephone world we reluctantly learned "press or say 1" or "press or say 2." On a recent call and carefully listening to a half dozen options and waiting for a warm body, the message was "all of our service people are busy please wait or call back." On another call the recorded voice asked me to "say my name and account number and brief message" after struggling to even find my account number and using my best alaryngeal voice I was told that the system had failed to recognize my message and to repeat the information again. At that point my pet peeve grew to frustration

There, I feel much better - that should hold me for awhile.

By Jerry Hough, Suncoast New Voice Club, Clearwater, FL

2004 Hall of Fame

Deceased - Elaine Curran

Elaine had her laryngectomy in Feb. 1998, almost 1 year after her husband passed away. Her rheumatoid arthritis limited her movement and caring for her stoma. She subsequently moved into her daughter's home and Gail Pender became her primary caregiver. Together they began attending the Jacksonville Laryngectomee Association monthly meetings and later were co-Presidents for 2 years. This helped her to become more confident and outgoing. She started with the AL and later the TEP. She attended the FLA VI in the early 90's and the next 3 Annual Meetings. Much of this time was spent in a wheelchair but she loved the AMs and particularly the banquet. She always had a ready smile and loved to dance with Joe Acosta, Jim Sansing, Earl Mogk and Charlie Nail, often in her wheelchair but sometimes just supported by her dance partner.

Living - Bill Beurkins

Bill and Joyce regularly attended the FLA Annual Meetings until family health issues made it impractical to attend out-of-town overnight events. This did not preclude Bill from concentrating his efforts on local laryngectomee concerns. What a job he did on the local level! Since 1992 Bill (together with another FLA living legend, Jerry Hough) gave anti-tobacco talks to about 16,500 students in 481 classes, gave laryngectomee CPR instructional classes

(continued on page 3)

MEET OUR NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBER

President - Carl Kilmer

Carl grew up in Lansdale PA graduated from Penn State and presently lives in Plantation, FL. He has been married for 39 years to Dottie Kilmer. A veteran of the travel industry, Carl is now retired, spending the last 15 years as a travel agency co-owner with his wife. Cancer of the larynx was diagnosed in 1999 and was operated on at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL. The operation was called a near-total laryngectomy and one vocal chord was saved. This is very unusual since usually the laryngectomy operation removes the entire voice box. Carl has been active in Laryngectomee Support groups for the last four years and is President of both the local group; The New Voice Club of Broward and the state group; The Florida Laryngectomee Association.



2nd Vice President - Robert Smiley

Bob had his laryngectomy in July of 1992 at Harper hospital in Detroit, MI. His speech is through a TEP. He moved to Florida in 1996 and in August of this year celebrated his 40th wedding anniversary. Their daughter and granddaughter live in Orlando. Their son died from cancer 10 years ago at age 24. Bob reactivated the Space Coast New Voice Club in 1998 and has been the president since. He has attended 4 FLA and 2 IAL conventions. He continues to be a guest speaker for the Cancer Society speaking to schools and various other organizations.

Member at Large - Lisa Proper, MS

Lisa has a Private Practice in Switzerland, FL providing Speech Pathology services at Mayo Clinic-Jacksonville, FL. Lisa has 16 years with FLA, serving for many years as Director of our former Voice Institute. She was inducted into the FLA Hall of Fame in 1998. She is an active member of the Florida Speech Language and Hearing Association.

FLA OFFICERS

President-Carl Kilmer
114 Wimbledon Lake Drive
Plantation, FL 33324
954-472-0865
carlkilmer@bellsouth.net

Vice President -Charles E. Blair
8745 Maplewood Road
Largo, FL 33777
(727) 391-3473 (voice/fax)
cblair2@tampabay.RR.com

2nd Vice President- Robert Smiley
6405 Dallas Ave.
Port St John, FL 32927
(321) 631-3482 (voice/fax)
Rjandlm@aol.com

Treasurer-Earl C. Mogk
141 Eleuthera Drive
Dania, FL 33004
(954) 929-0136
fax 425-790-4361
Ecmogk@webtv.net

Secretary-Amy Jo Kiger
22 Trotter Ct..
Port Orange Fl. 32119
ajk531@aol.com

Co-Editors -
Charles and Nancy Blair
(constructive comments welcomed)

FLA HALL OF FAME

Bill Beurkins

Cont'd from page two) with his wife Joyce to the FLA and all 3 of the then Tampa Bay laryngectomee clubs. Bill still had the energy to be Vice President of the Chatterbox club for 1 year, the President of the Suncoast club from '93 - '97 and again in '03 - '04. He has maintained the Suncoast loan closet from '93 to the present as well as he and Jerry making pre and post-op visits to new laryngectomees. Throughout all this, his wife Joyce was lending her support and encouragement, frequently as an active participant.. Not surprisingly, Bill has received numerous awards from the ACS and the Red Cross.

CHEERLEADER FOR THE FLA ANNUAL MEETING...**WHY NOT?!**

We were once asked why we seem to shamelessly promote our annual meeting in lieu of other "more beneficial endeavors"? Well, under the circumstances we can't think of anything that would be more beneficial. Our present strength lies in our ability to plan and conduct a first class program for rehabilitation of the laryngectomee including beginning and/or improving speech. We are blessed with the finest professional speech staff anywhere, essentially the core of our former Voice Institute. Our Annual Meeting expenses are the cheapest of any of the multi-day meetings presently being conducted. Can't afford even that? Financial grants are available. As a matter of fact, we do have an active sub-committee that is currently evaluating different ways that we can improve our commitment to the rehabilitation of the laryngectomee and the education of their caregivers. We expect to emphasize programs to assist our local clubs in reaching out to the local laryngectomee residents and locally available medical providers. An outreach educational program is being considered for student SLPs. We expect more info in about 6 months.

FLA AUXILIARY Thank You!!!

Dottie Kilmer

Thanks to
tions, and the
dedicated work-
ble, the FLA



the many dona-
help of some
ers at the craft ta-
Auxiliary raised

\$721.00 for FLA. In addition to donating their own crafts, Wini Mogk and Ellie Nail coordinated the sale and volunteered many hours at the sale table. Marianne Hough and Joan Kulig also volunteered at the table. Included in the \$721.00 were the proceeds of raffle tickets sold by the Auxiliary. The two items that were raffled off were a unique jeweled purse made from a cigar box, by Laura Winthrop, and a beautiful afghan made by Libby Sansing. Also included in the \$721.00 were donations from R.& W. Buhl of the Treasure Coast Nu-Voice Club, and J & J Rice of the New Voice Club of Ocala.

The traditional Saturday night raffle raised another \$491.00 with gifts donated by the various clubs. A fun highlight of Saturday evening's banquet was the auction of the Carousel centerpieces, made by Ellie Nail. Our auctioneer was Dr. Caryn Melvin, and she did a spectacular job of auctioneering with humor, raising an additional \$106.00.

We received a separate donation of \$50.00 from the Treasure Coast Nu-Voice Club..
FLA pin sales raised \$21.00. **Total funds raised were \$1273.00**



Carl Kilmer, President
114 Wimbledon Lake Drive
Plantation, FL 33324

