



FLA NEWS



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Florida Laryngectomee Association

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Member IAL

February 2006

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As happens every year, for people in our age group, we lost a lot of members due to death. Two in particular, Amy Jo Kiger from Daytona, and Jerry Hough from Clearwater devoted many hours to Laryngectomee rehabilitation and service to various organizations for laryngectomees. Amy Jo and Jerry will be sorely missed by all of us.

Our members had a great educational opportunity in Orlando in October during our Annual Meeting. The turnout by our members was not as good as last year but was appreciated by our vendors and our Executive Committee. As you probably know, the vendor financial support is the backbone of our annual meeting and without them, our meetings could not continue. Over the years, there have been comments about the cost of the hotels that we use. Our hotels that we have used in both Daytona and Orlando were the least expensive "full service" hotels available. By providing banquet, meeting and exhibit space, hotels are sacrificing space that could be used for sleeping rooms. We could hold our meetings at an Econo Lodge or Days Inn, but then, where we meet, have our meal functions, and exhibits. It's a trade-off and we do our best to keep the costs as low as possible.

At the 2005 meeting we graduated 27 members from a four hour "Visitation Training" session. The training was conducted by Penny Fisher, RN (and a long string of other titles), from the Sylvester Cancer Clinic at University of Miami, Jackson Memorial Hospital. Penny has donated her services to the Florida Laryngectomee Association since 1989 and was chosen this year as our living member of the FLA Hall of Fame.

For our 2006 meeting, Bob Smiley, our 2nd Vice President and co-chair for the 2006 meeting will present our training program. Bob, in conjunction with Laura Corbin, Regional Tobacco Prevention Coordinator as part of the Florida Tobacco Prevention Control program will be training interested members in how to conduct Anti Tobacco speaking presentations to schools and other groups. For anyone now speaking to schools and other groups this will be "must have" training.

2005 AM REVIEW

Perhaps one of our better Annual Meetings (AM) and a shame our attendance was lower than usual. The hotel facilities may have been the best we have had recently and ideal for our needs. Attendance included a total of 67 laryngectomees/caregivers from 13 different clubs, 14 vendor representatives at 9 vendor exhibition tables, in addition to tables for IAL, FLA and ACS. States represented were Florida, Massachusetts, South Carolina and Tennessee. Financial aid was provided to a new laryngectomee from Lakeland. Individualized speech evaluations and therapy was provided to 6 laryngectomees. We continue to have 'first timers' present but hope to continue to increase these numbers.

Our attendance was down somewhat this year perhaps due to a new (to us) hotel in a different city with slightly higher lodging rates. The hotel elected not to impose the \$5 per night resort fee but we found it out too late to include it in an advance 2005 FLA NEWS publication. It will not be included in the hotel rate for the 2006 AM. Hooray! After much reflecting, we give a high score to vendor participation, professional staff, agenda, visitation training and the hotel facilities. We rate our member attendance as disappointing but anticipate a significant increase for 2006 with a super agenda, a great hotel again and the inclusion of speech students from Florida medical universities. Be there!

FLA 2006 ANNUAL MEETING— Oct. 7 & 8, 2006
SHERATON STUDIO CITY HOTEL – ORLANDO (Rate: \$89 + 11.5% Tax)

GERALD "JERRY" HOUGH

Jan. 8, 1929 - Feb. 4, 2006

Jerry Hough, a faithful servant to the well being and causes of laryngectomees, passed away recently. He will be remembered as a Past President of the IAL, Past President of the FLA and Past President of the Suncoast New Voice Club. He also served each of those clubs in other official capacities including serving on the FLA Executive Committee for many years and authoring the Suncoast New Voice Club monthly newsletter. Jerry teamed with Bill Beurkens for 11 years to present Anti-Tobacco programs in the public schools. They spoke to over 17,000 students!. Jerry was determined to see that every child learned the dangers of smoking. He was equally committed to insuring adequate services to laryngectomees and to that end he was a member of the State of Florida Board of Health for professional regulation of Speech-Language Pathology practice. Jerry will also be remembered as an avid golfer who would arrive early for the FLA Annual Meetings to join the golf outing.

Jerry had been scheduled for surgery to repair a fistula that would require the chest to be opened for a skin graft. His emphysema had been worsening and he was not able to recover enough for surgery. Mary Ann and other family members attended him through out his hospitalization and were with him as he passed. We will miss him but he has left a presence that we will always feel.

FLA NEW SECRETARY**Maggie Geehan**

Maggie has accepted the FLA Executive Committee's appointment to become our new Secretary. She is 61 years *young* and a retired Social Worker. She had her laryngectomy four and a half years ago in Ocala, Florida. With the help of Nancy Blair she went to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas and underwent further rehabilitation to be able to now talk hands free using the Barton-Mayo button. She has been President and Secretary of the Nu Voice Club of Ocala since December, 2002. Among her many Lary activities she visits new laryngectomees and caregivers. Her goal is to do everything possible to assist in rehabilitation and to educate communities in ways to best serve and rehabilitate laryngectomees. Maggie is a real asset to the FLA Executive Committee.

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(constructive comments welcomed)

2005 Hall of Fame**Deceased - Amy Jo Kiger, Daytona**

Amy Jo faithfully supported the Florida Laryngectomee Association and her local club, the Nu Voice Club of Daytona Beach. She served as secretary of the FLA for 6 years continuing as her health declined and in spite of pain and discomfort. She was the Vice President of the Nu Voice Club of Daytona Beach for 5 years. She participated in anti-tobacco presentations at schools, visited new laryngectomees and motivated all that knew her.

Living - Penny Fisher MS RN CORLN, Miami

Ms Fisher has cared for patients from the early 1960s focusing her practice, publications and research in the specialties of otolaryngology and oncology and has served as a manager, educator and clinician. She has established patient education programs including development of comprehensive laryngectomee visitation programs and presented this 4 hour course at the FLA 2005 Annual Meeting. She is active in professional nursing organizations on local and national levels.

From FTRI, distributors of the TeliTalk:

“Hello Charlie and Nancy,

Heard from Mary Lee and Cliff Griffin that the FLA conference was a success. Sorry I could not be there to share in the success.

Both Mary Lee and Cliff shared with me that some people could not hear well enough on the TeliTalk because of their hearing loss. We recognize this is a realistic situation and realized that since the TeliTalk was not designed to provide incoming amplification, we want to inform the members in the event someone does need extra incoming amplification with the TeliTalk they can obtain an in-line amplifier (ILA) that can be attached to the handset which will provide an extra 40 dB gain with incoming sound. For a picture/description of the ILA see:

<http://www.ftri.org/Equipment/index.cfm?fuseaction=EquipmentDetail&EquipmentListID=6>

The ILA will only work with the handset (receiver) and not necessarily increase the incoming volume using the speakerphone or headset (hands free). The ILA may not benefit those wishing to use the hands free option. Would it be possible to request that this information be published in the next FLA newsletter and on the FLA website? This will ensure that FLA members that receive the newsletter will be informed about the ILA option. And should they desire to obtain the ILA they can contact the FTRI office at 800-222-3448 and ask for Clare Tucker. Thanks for your assistance with this.

Regards, James Forstall

Executive Director

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.”

(Editors note; this is a good deal for those of us with hearing loss. Thanks, James.)

From Dottie Kilmer, President FLA Auxiliary

The FLA Auxiliary raised \$350.00 at the craft sale. Thanks to all who donated crafts, books, and homemade goodies. Special thanks to Wini Mogk and Ellie Nail who worked the craft table both days. At a short Auxiliary meeting it was decided that in 2006 we will have a bake sale instead of a craft sale. More details in our next issue.

Anti-Tobacco Speaker’s Training– Oct. 7, 2006

For some of our regional clubs this may be one of the more beneficial portions of the 2006 FLA Annual Meeting (AM). All of our state wide laryngectomee support groups (Clubs) deliver an astronomical number of anti-smoking presentations within the public school systems. Some attribute the reported decline in teen smoking to the initial anti-tobacco advertising campaign but just maybe the cumulative efforts from our laryngectomee volunteer presenters might have also contributed to this reported decline. Most of our clubs are actively continuing in their anti-smoking educational efforts but unfortunately at least one club, the Suncoast New Voice Club, is no longer able to do so. This club once belonged to this elite group delivering the dangers of tobacco to countless numbers of students with the team of the late **Jerry Hough and Bill Beurkins**, both members of FLA’s Hall of Fame. Health reasons began to limit their activity in this regard a few years ago so this is a golden opportunity to train some of their other members to continue in the anti-smoking educational effort. Perhaps some of the other clubs might wish to seize this opportunity to train alternate or replacement speakers. The purpose of the training will be to primarily educate the attendee sufficiently enough to allow them to enter the public schoolrooms or other groups and deliver an effective anti-tobacco talk. Don’t be shy, this training will make it easy for you and the rewards are great. You will feel good about yourself.

Laura Corbin, (Regional Tobacco Coordinator, FL Tobacco Prevention Control Program) and **Robert (Bob) Smiley** will present this program on October 7, 2006 from 8 am to noon. **Earl Mogk** and **Charlie Nail** will assist. A full AM agenda with registration details will appear in a latter newsletter issue.

ACS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Both the FLA and most of the local Clubs receive valuable support from the ACS State divisional and/or regional offices. We anticipate continuation of our strong anti-tobacco advocacy, but there are other ACS programs we could support in some areas of the state. We will be printing more detailed information on this in our next issue. In the meantime could each club give the editor a brief summary of what your present ongoing volunteer efforts are? Thank you!



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NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

CHATTERBOX - We understand their January rescheduled meeting featured Dr Eric Blom, co-creator of the Blom-Singer voice prosthesis and included a lunch sponsored by InHealth Technologies. Feedback indicates it was interesting, informative and very successful.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY - This club is now in it's second year and appears to be doing very well from accounts in their monthly newsletter submitted by their Facilitator, **Mary Spremulli SLP**. Your editor did make an ill fated attempt to attend last year's inaugural meeting yet somehow managed to arrive at the correct time but a day early! Still have plans to attend a meeting soon.

INDIAN RIVER — President **Jim Gilbert** reports; "Some members of our club were invited and spoke with 300 plus ninth grade students at the Vero Beach High Freshman Learning Center Life Management Class about the dangers of tobacco in the spring and fall. We had volunteers step up to the plate for the Out Reach Program this summer and Steve & Susan Webb left brochures for the ENT's, and hospitals in Indian River County." A great job!

JLA– The Jacksonville Club is undergoing a major reorganization with revised times, days and location of their quarterly meetings. For current information for meetings call **Kelly Hood , SLP** at 904-498-0556 pager or 904-244-1179 office. Best of luck to this club's new look! Call and go check them out.

SUNCOAST - The last few months have been a sad time due to the lost of several members, the most recent being Jerry Hough, long time member, past president and secretary/editor. Jerry was extremely talented in his ability to edit and produce one of the very best one-page club newsletters around.

Editor's Note: CLUBS, send me your newsletters and items of special interests. Particularly let me know of your anti-tobacco efforts and your ACS volunteer work. Thank You!