

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



AUGUST, 2006

MEETING MINUTES

July 12, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm by President **Herb Simon**. Others in attendance were Sally Simon, Robin Maxwell, Jim McKnight, Mary Speiden, Howard Eskildson and Ishmael Rivera. **Robin Maxwell** read the Prayer for a Laryngectomee.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

August 9th – 6:30pm

Speech Class

Beth Solomon

August 9th – 7:30pm

Business/Social Meeting



2006 Annual Meeting Report

FREE

Laryngectomee Supplies & Items of interest will be given out to those in attendance

August 23rd – 7:00pm

Speech Class

Beth Solomon

FOR LCMC INFORMATION

CONTACT: HERB SIMON

301-588-2352

H457@aol.com

Dust if You Must

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter,
Bake a cake or plant a seed.
Ponder the difference between want and need.

Dust if you must, but there's not much time
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,
Music to hear and books to read,
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the world's out there
With sun in your eyes, wind in your hair,
A flutter of snow, and a shower of rain.
This day will not come around again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,
Old age will come and it's not kind.
And when you go, and go you must,
You, yourself, will make more dust.

Remember, a house becomes a home when
you can write "I Love You" on the furniture....

---Anonymous

DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?



IT'S 2006 DUES TIME!

Make your check payable to:

The Laryngectomee Club
Of Montgomery County
or 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.

So Noted . . .



“Patients currently cannot and probably never will simply be able to ‘take a pill’ that will make them stop smoking. Smokers must want to stop smoking and must be willing to work hard to achieve that goal of smoking abstinence.”

---Robert Klesges, a professor of preventive medicine at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association on three studies of varenicline, a drug newly approved for smoking cessation.

---Reprinted from the Washington Post
July 18, 2006

PRE-OP LARYNGECTOME VISITS

JULY 1st – Herb Simon went to visit **Edward Akwe** in the Takoma Park, MD home of his sister, **Dalise**, who was present for most of the visit. Edward, a native of Cameroon, Africa, came to the US in December, 2005 for treatment of his head and neck cancer. He is now scheduled to have a total laryngectomy on July 6th at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. He has been married to Hannah for 36 years and they have 5 children and 2 grandchildren. Hannah and the rest of the family are still in Cameroon. Edward was in a good frame of mind about what is about to happen and smiled warmly and often during this visit. Herb left a new laryngectomee visitor kit from LCMC and they went over the information in it. Another visit is planned when Edward is home from the hospital. **Beth Solomon** referred Edward to LCMC.



Edward - Circa 2000

UPDATE – On July 27th Herb again visited Edward at his Takoma Park home. Edward greeted Herb at the door with a big smile. He looked terrific and fit. He was able to talk understandably for the most part with his Cooper-Rand loaner device from NIH. He mixed speaking with writing and is looking forward to working with a speech pathologist. He also is looking forward to attending the August LCMC meeting and to meeting other laryngectomees.

JULY 6th – Herb and Sally met for dinner with **Joe Hunter** and his lovely wife, **Julie**. Joe met Herb originally through a response to his WebWhispers message, and Joe was also referred to Herb by **Kathryn Banks**. Kathryn is a SLP at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, where Joe will have his surgery on July 11th. Joe and Julie have been married for 19 years and have two sons. One is 18 years old and the other is 9 years old. The Hunters live in Dumphries, VA. Joe works for the FAA. His job is to coordinate between the air technicians and the air traffic controllers at our local airports. He is looking forward to returning to work, once he is rehabilitated from his surgery. He has already been practicing with a loaner Servox from GWUH and will have a primary TEP. The Hunters were given a new laryngectomee information kit from the New Voice Club of Northern Virginia. After dinner, the two couples attended that club's monthly meeting, where Joe and Julie were able to see different ways of speech and ask questions of this happy, friendly group. Joe has a fine outlook for the future. Another visit is planned after surgery.

UPDATE - Joe was released from the Hospital on Friday, July 21st and was glad to be back home. He is doing well and feeling fine. On July 27th, Joe had his prosthesis put in and was able to speak with it right away. The next day, Herb and Joe spoke on the phone for over half an hour, and Joe sounded great. His voice with the prosthesis was excellent, and he was clear and easy to understand. During the conversation, Joe also spoke with his Servox, both with and without the oral adapter. He was better with the oral adapter for now. Primarily using his TEP voice with the Servox as a backup, Joe is planning to return to work on August 2nd. He may not work the entire day for the first week, but will play that by ear. His understanding and caring associates are looking forward to his return.

“The best sermons are lived Not preached.” ---Unknown

MEETING MINUTES

(continued from page 1)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Herb gave a semi-annual report telling us that LCMC has spent a total of \$282 more than it has brought in during the first half of 2006. Considering the money spent for the New Laryngectomee Visitation Class Program in May, he said we are having a good year financially. He reported we now have 53 dues paying members for 2006.

AUNT BEA'S SUNSHINE REPORT

Robin Maxwell shared with the group his on-going battle with Cancer. He is in the midst of a battle with his 7th cancer and remains confident that he will again be victorious. He described his present Chemotherapy treatments, stating that he has good days and bad. On the good days he rides his motorcycle and on the bad ones, he stays in and rests. He showed us his "chemo hairdo", which under the bright fluorescent lights, was almost as bright as his smile! Longtime LCMC member **Robert Cameron** passed away on Friday July 7th at 6am in NC. His wife Barb, who now lives in Greenbelt, MD called just before leaving with their children to go to NC for the Memorial service. Herb read a letter from **Courtney Larson**, whose family recently donated two Servox Electro-larynxes and some very nice stoma covers to LCMC. He also read messages that accompanied their dues from **Elizabeth Ford, Dorothy & Don Fardan**, and **Renate Bottalico**, and also mentioned recent Pre-op laryngectomee visits with **Edward Akwe** and **Joe Hunter**.

OLD (unfinished) BUSINESS

The date for the **LCMC Annual Picnic** was raised. After quite a bit of discussion it was voted to have the picnic on Saturday, September 9th, beginning at 3pm. It will once again be at the Simon's home in Silver Spring. There was no New Business.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Ish Rivera related to the group about the medical situation with his wife Alicia and told us how he has been handling it. He stated that they will probably not go to Puerto Rico this coming winter, as they usually do. He said he expects to attend club meetings more regularly. Thanks to **Jim McKnight** for furnishing the refreshments. The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

---Submitted by Herb Simon



<<<from the WEB >>>

Subject: [WebW] Longevity
Date: 07/06/2006 6:01:21 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: elizabethfinchem
To: webwhispers@mail-list.com

Hello Philip and all the Oldtimers,

On October 2nd I will celebrate my 28th anniversary as a laryngectomee. I know there are some old timers who have survived longer than that, but when I was diagnosed with Spindle Cell Sarcoma, they thought 5 yrs would be 'iffy'. I was a 42 year old mother of six children. Three sons were in college, one daughter in high school, another son in grade school, and my youngest daughter was just starting first grade. Communication other than writing was imperative, because she couldn't read yet. My husband's work had him on the road for 2-3 weeks at a time, so I was "IT" at home. With the aide of an electro-larynx I kept up with all of my commitments at the various schools, church, and Civic Theatre, as Properties Mistress. I even managed a part time job working for a haberdasher in the ladies' shop; dressing professional women.

The highlight of the summer of 1979 was my daughter's high school French class trip. They had enlisted me to travel with them as a counselor for all of July. The trip took us on tour around Madrid and all over France, where we studied French at the University of Nice for 2 weeks. We had class in the morning and went on tours every afternoon. We then returned home, after spending a few days in London. I had my doubts that I was up to it just 9 months post-op, but the kids wouldn't hear of leaving me behind. That was nice of them. So, I was one of 10 teachers and counselors in the American Leadership Study Group that studied French with 350 American teenagers, but I was the only one speaking with an electro-larynx.. I earned a "B" on my final. While in France I was observed and stopped many times, as people inquired about the electro-larynx; and their responses were always, "Madame has so much courage" in English with a heavy French accent. I was glad I decided to take the risk at the end of the month.

BTW, I had a chance to prepare for the above trip in April, when I decided to try flying from MI to CA for my uncle's funeral, all by myself. I learned a lot about flying as a laryngectomee. The dry air in the plane and the hotel, and I even got bumped off my return flight. I ended up in first class on the next flight. It was a good trial run for me.

In those early months following the surgery and radiation our dog, Penny, adapted better than some of the family. She guarded me day & night. As some of you know, dogs cannot understand an electro-larynx, and I was just beginning esophageal speech therapy, so she quickly learned to answer to hand clap signals. My oldest worked part time as an EMT at the Fire Department. He told the dispatchers about me trying to learn to use the electro-larynx and not to hang up on what might be taken as a prank call, as it had already happened to me more than once with other phone calls. It's a good thing he did because I did need to call for help. One winter day Penny took on a squirrel that fell down the chimney flue into the basement. There was quite a war that raged until animal control arrived. Judging by the tufts of squirrel fur all over the basement, it was clear that she had won the war. When my daughter got off the bus and saw all the squad cars with flashing lights in front of our house, she was scared to death that something awful had happened to me. What a story we had to tell about that day.

When the diagnosis was final I never asked, "Why me"? My question was this, "Well God, I wonder what this adventure is going to be all about"? It's been quite an unexpected learning experience. I now have a better understanding of how all the previous events in my life didn't stand alone as benchmarks, but instead they prepared my skills and talents for my rehabilitation and sharing what I learned with others. When you pray "Thy Will Be Done" you never know when or in what form the answer will show up. Yes, Philip, I will soon be able to say that for half of my life, I've been a laryngectomee. Sometimes I do wonder what's next?

---Elizabeth Finchem

LCMC Members
We are invited to attend
The New Voice Club
of Northern Virginia
ANNUAL PICNIC



Saturday
August 19th
3:00pm

At the home of
Cheryl and Peter Andrews
6706 Haycock Rd.,
Falls Church, VA 22043

RSVP
to Cheryl

703-534-1812 – Home Phone
 703-307-2757 – Cell Phone
 cheryl.h.andrews@gmail.com - Email

The burgers, dogs, fixin's and soft drinks will be provided. If you are able to, please bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert, and any "special" beverage of your choice to share. (There is always plenty, so don't worry if you can't bring something!)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Aug. 3rd	Carol Kanjian
Aug. 5th	Lausell Galloway
Aug. 19th	John Foster
Aug. 24th	Donna Dupler
Aug 26th	Helen Kane

NICOTINE CANCELS EFFECTIVENESS OF CHEMOTHERAPY

Many of us who smoked know firsthand how incredibly addictive tobacco can be and how difficult it can be to quit. Now a study reported at the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research should give patients who smoke and are being treated with chemotherapy additional motivation to quit.

The results of the study suggest that cancer patients, who continue to smoke while being treated with chemotherapy, may be canceling out the effectiveness of the drug therapy if they continue to use tobacco. Chemotherapy that is given in drugs such as cisplatin, taxol, and gemcitabine, works by killing cancer cells. But patients being treated with these drugs, who continue to smoke as little as one pack a day, inhibit the ability of the drugs to work. The study involved patients being treated for lung cancer, but the results may apply to other cancers as well.

CANCER RUNS IN FAMILIES

Research presented at the American Association for Cancer Research in April reported that ("first degree") "blood" relatives of individuals diagnosed with lung cancer, despite the fact that they never smoked, are at increased risk of developing a variety of cancers. These relatives are more likely to be diagnosed with lung cancer, particularly at early ages.

In addition to developing lung cancer, these relatives were more likely to develop melanoma, colorectal, head and neck, prostate and breast cancers. Dr. Gorlova of the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Texas stated:

"These findings suggest that there is some genetic susceptibility to cancers in families in which a person has lung cancer and has never smoked."

This study may be helpful in a number of ways including when individuals who are cancer free, have non-smoking relatives who developed lung cancer to make sure they are more carefully screened for these cancers. The information may also help those who developed larynx cancer, but had never smoked, to understand that a non-smoking relative who developed lung cancer may have passed this genetic susceptibility on.

*---Reprinted from New Voices Newsletter of Montgomery, AL.
 David Blevins - Editor*

Aspire to Inspire Before You Expire