

# 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



## FEBRUARY, 2006

### HOLIDAY PARTY NOTES

**January 21, 2005**

It was an unseasonably warm and spring-like day in the Washington area. We almost could have held the party outside.

Those who attended were Garry Moore, Herb & Sally Simon, Irv & Tema Title, Mary Speiden, Jim McKnight, Addie Shaw and her daughter, Donna Eastman, Raphael (Ray) Urciolo and his sisters Jeanne Urciolo and Constance Battle, Phil LeGrande and his sister, Caroline Gregory, Bob & Sue Griffing and their son Scott, Robin Maxwell and his wife, Theresa Cosca, Howard Eskildson, Stan Lipscomb and first time attendees at an LCMC function, Emad Hassan with his friends Ibrahim Elamin and Tarig E. Haye, and Bill & Annetta Rapp, who drove down from Emmittsburg, MD. Everyone signed in

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### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**February 8<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 pm**

**Speech Class**

**Beth Solomon**

**February 8<sup>th</sup> – 7 pm**

**Business/Social Meeting**

**February 22<sup>nd</sup> – 7:30pm**

**Speech Class**

**Beth Solomon**

**FOR LCMC INFORMATION**

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## TO TOUCH

To touch the heart of someone dear,  
though it might not sometimes cause a tear  
to fall or rest upon the cheek,  
should be something we all seek.

For often hearts not touched at all  
start hardening and shrinking small.  
And then the time it takes to grow  
a strong heart, is just too slow.

For hearts expand as those who care  
extend their love and let us share  
a moment, space or special phrase  
that eases pain on dreary days.

Or simply starts our lips to smile  
and brightens time for just a while.  
The ways, kinds and means of sharing,  
it seems to me are based on caring.

And though we're often worlds apart,  
You still can touch my very heart.  
You make me smile or shed a tear;  
And I'll remember year to year –

Just how your touching helped me grow  
and I just thought I'd tell you so.

***Love is above all, the gift of oneself.***

*--- Author unknown*

## HOLIDAY PARTY NOTES

*(Continued from page 1)*

as they arrived and received a name tag and a raffle ticket. They proceeded to meet and greet each other and nibble on some of the hors d'oeuvres as they were being placed on one of the tables. Around 2:30 we all started to fill our plates and ultimately our tummies! Everyone grazed to their heart's content on the luscious delicacies that were brought to complement the LCMC's Ham and Turkey Breast. **Phil LeGrande** was busy taking pictures throughout the afternoon, barely having time to eat. **Robin Maxwell** also took many pictures. We hope to have them for all to view at the February meeting. After **Irv Title** commended **Sally Simon** for all her hard work in preparing for the party, Sally received a well deserved ovation from all of us. Next on the agenda was the raffle. Eight Primrose Plants that decorated the tables, two Scented Candles, two boxes of Whitman's Candies, a Potpourri Burner, Body Fragrances and a Giraffe were raffled off. Before the last item, a wooden Giraffe made in Kenya, was awarded, Herb told the group about giraffes being like laryngectomees because they have no vocal cords either. **Constance Battle** won the Giraffe. She was thrilled with her prize and now has it on her desk at work. After taking group photos, folks began to leave. Thanks to the many who stayed to help clean and get the room straightened up, afterward.

## NEW LARYNGECTOME VISIT

On January 8<sup>th</sup> Herb went to visit with new laryngectomee **Mike Jacobs** at the Gambrills, MD home of his brother Nolan and sister-in-law, Carol. Also present was Mike's sister Pat, who had driven up from Hollywood, MD. Mike is doing well and greeted Herb with a big, warm smile. Mike's surgery was on December 16<sup>th</sup> at Washington Hospital Center. Thanks to the efforts of **SLP Mary Slater**, this visit was made possible. For openers Herb worked with Mike with the Servox loaner he had, but was not using effectively yet. He is fortunate to be able to speak with the Servox placed at his neck and at his cheek. Herb went over all the information in the Visitor Kit that is given to new laryngectomees by LCMC, and answered the many questions that they all had. Mike has a good sense of humor. He is planning to return his job as a salesman at the True Value Hardware store he was working at prior to his diagnosis. His surgery was unexpected and happened very soon, once he was diagnosed.

**There is no key to happiness.  
The door is always open.**

## Low-Tech Lifesavers: Medical Bracelets Are An Underused but Crucial ER Tool

By **KEVIN HELLIKER**

*Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

A number of Americans are sporting Lance Armstrong-inspired bracelets in support of various medical causes, but greater benefit might derive from placing their own medical information on their wrists.

In the flurry of calls for electronic medical records, a low-tech alternative is being overlooked: the medical warning tag. These tags, worn on a bracelet or necklace, alert emergency-room staff that the patient has a medical condition that could make routine care dangerous, such as a drug allergy, or that could explain the patient's symptoms. In a 50-year-old with chest pain, a tag that said "aortic aneurysm" could keep doctors from initiating potentially fatal heart-attack therapy. The medical-warning tag is preferable to electronic files because it gets straight to the point, physicians say.

Emergency physicians say that the decades-old medical-warning tag represents one of medicine's most underutilized tools. The number of Americans afflicted with conditions that warrant such tags -- from epilepsy to diabetes to hemophilia -- reaches deep into the tens of millions. Yet even the giant of the medical-warning tag industry, a California-based nonprofit called Medic Alert, has just four million patients participating world-wide. The number of member patients -- they get not only bracelets but also an 800-number service that provides contacts and medical records to doctors in an emergency -- is lower today than a decade ago.

Emergency physicians say this is because many doctors -- with the exception of diabetes specialists -- neglect to recommend the tags, through oversight or perhaps out of a belief that wearing a tag is a personal rather than medical decision. In any case, many patients with potentially fatal drug allergies or other dangerous conditions have never been advised to wear a warning tag. Even transplant patients are failing to get this message, says Alfred Sacchetti, chief of emergency services at Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center in Camden, N.J. In criticizing his profession for failing to recommend tags, Dr. Sacchetti doesn't spare himself: His daughter turned 12 before he thought to give her a bracelet warning about her congenital heart condition.

"She probably should have been wearing that bracelet all her life," says Dr. Sacchetti, who is a spokesman on medical warning tags for the American College of Emergency Physicians.

The American Medical Association has never issued a statement recommending the tags -- even though its own publication, the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association*, has published several research articles concluding that the tags are crucial for patients with allergies to drugs and food, or other disorders.

Diagnosing unconscious patients can be so difficult that emergency physicians say they invariably search for tags. And paramedics are specifically trained to do so, says Bryan Bledsoe, a Georgetown University emergency physician who wrote the standard textbook for paramedics. Although rare, finding a tag can change everything. "The passed-out guy that the cops thought was drunk turns out to be a diabetic," Dr. Bledsoe says.

Of course, most patients entering the ER are alert enough to issue information themselves. When they're not, they're often accompanied by a loved one who could do so. But even in these situations a medical bracelet could prove valuable because the alert, and the added medical-records service, may provide better information than the distressed patient or loved one can. Indeed, a survey of caregivers of children with medical conditions found that 53% of the caregivers -- parents mostly -- couldn't specify their child's diagnosis, according to a 1998 article published in the journal *Pediatrics*. The article concluded that such children

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## Medical Bracelets

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should wear medical tags. Medic Alert tags bear a medical insignia on the front and on the back a brief message, along with an 800-number from which emergency physicians can obtain more detailed medical information, including drug regimens, as well as phone numbers of family and primary-care physicians. Placed on tiny children, the tags offer not only medical information but a way for authorities to quickly contact parents. Medic Alert bracelets and necklaces cost about \$15, and the 24-hour information service costs \$35 the first year, \$20 after that.

Physicians aren't the only ones to blame for minimal usage of medical alert tags. The Medic Alert group, founded in 1956, hasn't always marketed itself as well as it could have, says Paul Kortschak, who became chief executive last April, following a scandal in which a top executive and her husband received jail sentences for misusing the organization's credit cards. Now Mr. Kortschak says that new products, new services and improved marketing are top priorities.

Patients have their own qualms about wearing medical bracelets, including privacy. Wearing a bracelet that indicates "medical problem" can lead to unwanted attention.

Fashion is another problem. Not everyone wants to wear the cheap medallions available on drug-store shelves or from Medic Alert (which is upgrading its offerings). But better-looking alternatives are available from jewelry makers such as Lauren's Hope, named after a diabetic teenager who wanted a fashionable medical-warning bracelet. Quote: From its offices in Kansas City, Mo., 4-year-old Lauren's Hope is selling about 900 medical-warning bracelets a month for between \$40 and \$140. Even Tiffany's offers a medical-warning bracelet, an 18-karat gold version for \$1,050.

But jewelry makers don't operate 800 numbers offering additional information, like Medic Alert does. And while the medical insignia on Lauren's Hope and Tiffany's jewelry is unmistakable, emergency physicians advise against jewelry that is so fashionable as to make the medical warning inconspicuous.---

---Reprinted from the  
South Jersey Nu-Voice Club Newsletter  
Submitted by, Ed Adleman



<<<from the WEB >>>

**Subject:** [WebW] can we make a difference?  
**Date:** 12/9/2005 8:49 AM Eastern Daylight Time  
**From:** ghc1947@msn.com  
**To:** [webwhispers@mail-list.com](mailto:webwhispers@mail-list.com)

Good morning webbies,  
The answer is yes. Why do I ask this question? As many of the older members know, talking at schools can help kids make a wise decision about tobacco use. 1 October I and my friend Bryan Ellison (also WW member) talked to two local Middle Schools 6th & 7th graders about tobacco (about 700 Students). Last night while shopping the snow storm in the local market a young boy came up, dragging his mother behind, and said "This is George he is one of the two guys I told you about". The mother said thank you and went on with this story. I am a single mother and don't get to spent as much time with my son as I would like. It's hard to keep track on him when one of my two days off is during the week and I work on Saturday. She went on, One day in October he was waiting for me when I got home from work, and told me about two speakers they had at his school. They burped to talk and breathed through a hole in the neck. They talked about tobacco mostly cigarettes and what happened to them. He said they were nice guys but he didn't want to end up like them and handed me a pack of Newports. She has also quit smoking. So for the newbies that want to get involved: Yes, we can make a difference.

George in NJ



<<<and from the TELEVISION >>>

I was watching TV last evening. As I was flipping through the channels, I came across a program on channel 47 about babies being born. I paused for a moment because the baby had not been moving and in the Doctor's hand was a *Servox*! The husband asked the doctor what it was, and the doctor said it was a stimulator. The doctor then put it on the mother's stomach and buzzed it. It sounded just like us! He did it a couple of times and the baby started moving. I thought it was very interesting.  
---Addie Shaw

### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY – PROJECT ID

Because of **Addie Shaw's** continuing efforts, we have updated information regarding the 911 Emergency Services provided to Prince George's County Residents. A copy of the application form is included with this issue of THE VOICE for LCMC members who reside in PG County. After it is filled out and sent in, if you dial 911 from your home phone and cannot speak, both Police and EMS personnel will respond to your residence. We are working on having a speaker(s) from the PG County Emergency Fire/EMS Department at a future LCMC meeting. Many **THANKS** to **ADDIE** for her work on this important matter.

**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.

**Question of the Month**



What do you most strive for in your life: accomplishment, security, love, power, excitement, knowledge, or something else?

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



<i>Feb 2nd</i>	<i>Eileen Cunningham</i>
<i>Feb 15th</i>	<i>Sally Simon</i>
<i>Feb. 17th</i>	<i>Bob Kanjian</i>
<i>Feb 20th</i>	<i>John Ray</i>
<i>Feb. 21st</i>	<i>Howard Eskildson</i>
<i>Feb. 28th</i>	<i>Mamadou Souare</i>

**IN MEMORIAM**



**Della Finley Heslen**

**March 25, 1928 – December 29, 2005**

Della Finley Heslen was born in Mobile, Alabama. Dotsy, as she was lovingly referred to by family and close friends, had always been a high spirited, take charge woman and displayed that to the very end. After graduating From Dunbar HS in 1944, she entered South Carolina State University. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and then moved to Washington, DC. She started her career by taking a job with the Federal Government in Personnel Administration, and worked her way to the top, becoming a high ranking official. She was featured in Ebony Magazine in the early 1960's. Della was married twice. She and her first husband adopted two babies. That marriage ended in divorce. She later married Thomas Heslen and her family grew to include tow two step-daughters. After an extended honeymoon, she and Tom lived 'happily ever after' in their Silver Spring home, until Tom passed away in 2004. After her retirement from the Federal Government, Della remained active for years in her seniors group. She traveled, exercised and was an avid bowler. This past year her team took on the name of "*Della's Angels*" in honor of her commitment and love of the team members as well as the game. During her two year battle with cancer and her five surgeries this past year, she remained active and independent and was still an example for many, until she was finally called home. Her memorial service was on January 20<sup>th</sup> at Arlington Cemetery.

Editors Note: I first met Della when she was a one week post-op laryngectomee at Holy Cross Hospital. I was immediately smitten by her big, warm smile. Her attitude and outlook for the future was as good as it gets. We shared thoughts, and Della told me she was looking forward to attending LCMC meetings and functions. She went from the hospital to the Fairland Rehabilitation facility in Silver Spring. I visited her there one day on my way home from the airport, having just picked up Jim Lauder. Jim accompanied me to her room and met Della. In her short time as a laryngectomee, she was able to meet Jim Lauder in person! Jim was in town to attend and be a presenter at an LCMC meeting. Della got permission from her ENT, Dr. David Bianchi to attend the meeting, however the physician in charge at Fairland would not approve of it. Della was very disappointed. I visited with Della a couple of times in her home. One time when I delivered a new loaner EL to her, I was fortunate to be able to work with her and a visiting SLP to help her learn to speak. Della attended the next speech class and meeting, her first of what she had hoped would be many. Unfortunately, she had a recurrence and became ill very shortly thereafter. Sally and I visited her earlier in the week, before she passed away. Della greeted us wearing her famous 'red robe' and gave us a great big hug. That's the Della I will always remember. She had a growth coming down the side of her neck that was huge, but during our visit, it was hardly noticeable, due to her constant smile. I only knew Della for a short while, but felt like I'd known her much longer and will miss her very much.

---Herb Simon

**VISITOR TRAINING UPDATE**

The date for the Visitor Training Certification Program will be on Saturday May, 6<sup>th</sup>. SLPs **Joy Gaziano and Vickie Lewis** of the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, FL will be presenting the course. Look for more information in future issues of THE VOICE.