



The  
New Voice News



**New Voice Club of Broward County**  
Serving the tri-county area  
of southeast Florida  
[www.newvoiceclub.org](http://www.newvoiceclub.org)

**June 2007**  
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**~Next Meeting Sunday, June 17th, Noon to 2 p.m.~**  
**~See Page Two for All Local Meetings~**

Our Members Speak

Born in Australia 83 years ago, I moved to Canada after the war, and became a Canadian citizen. Spent 28 years running my own business, manufacturing ball point pens and heat sealed vinyl items for the advertising specialty trade. I sold my business at a fairly young age and, having been raised in a warm climate, decided to move to Nassau in the Bahamas where swimming and boating were available. We purchased a ground floor condominium in 1975, right on the ocean, twenty feet from the seawall. The climate and the way of life were all that I had hoped for. We spent twenty-eight years there until returning to Canada in 1994.

Late in 1994, while still in Nassau, I developed a hoarse voice, and a small lump on the side of my neck. I was diagnosed with squamous cell cancer, and as they did not have the facilities for radiation, I was referred to an ENT Doctor in Ft. Lauderdale, who in turn referred me to the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville. After ten hours of surgery, during which a prosthesis was inserted, I started a five day a week radiation treatment for six weeks. The prosthesis was later removed as I was unable to use it, and I switched to the electrolarynx which is still my primary voice. Shortly after my radiation was completed in the summer of 1995, I heard about the New Voice Club of Broward. I have been a member ever since, even though it was difficult to attend many meetings. Nevertheless, I continued to receive their Newsletter, and attended whenever I was over from Nassau. I only wish I had been aware of their existence prior to my surgery and radiation, as it would have made the ordeal a little more tolerable.

My wife was admitted to a Long Term Care Nursing Home last November due to a fractured hip and increasing dementia. About that time, a routine physical exam and CT Scan showed a small mass in the right lower lobe of my lung. After many tests, scans and biopsies, it was felt that a wedge section could be done. This is a relatively minor invasive Video Assisted Thorascopic (VATS) surgery, with fast recovery. Surgery was March 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, but they found that it was more extensive than anticipated and proceeded with a full lobectomy which the surgeon had never before done by this process. It was a long and tedious process for the surgeon, taking five hours. I was released from the hospital five days later, and was pretty well back to normal within a week. I think all laryngectomees should keep informed of these latest developments so they can help with their input and experience when the need arises..

I have spent many winters in Florida, and enjoyed attending the New Voice Club of Broward meetings. Unfortunately now, due to circumstances, my visits will be of short duration, and more infrequent, although I will continue to maintain my small Condo, and continue my membership in the New Voice Club.. I will miss the input of the Club members, but still enjoy the occasional get together with Mike Rosenkranz.. He does a fine job, and I hope the other members will continue to help him shoulder some of the work load. *John Mitchell*

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# What's Doing Around Town

Good turnout for Pascale's meeting at HealthSouth May 2<sup>nd</sup>. We welcomed back Henry Kurainowicz, who is considering a TEP procedure, and Leon and Elinor Bainwol. Leon has been losing his esophageal voice after thirty years, and came for assistance in learning to use an electrolarynx. Several Health-South SLPs were present including two new SLP's, Stacy Eroglu and Hanna Melamed. We thanked Jana Siever for last month's presentation. Plans are pending to revitalize the Visitation Program with the assistance of Penny Fisher due to significant interest for additional members to be trained. Pascale presented the importance of nutrition for cancer patients, before, during and after treatment, and reviewed "Eating Hints" published by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Penny's May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting was quite informative as she defined the three R's of cancer therapy:

1. **Remove-** elimination of as much of the cancer mass as possible via surgery and/or radiation/chemotherapy
2. **Restitution/restore** - procedures, often during surgery, to maintain as much original function as possible and restore the "cosmesis" (*look it up*)
3. **Rehabilitate/regain** - train patient to function as much as possible with the results of above.

Mike Philpott, representing EKR Therapeutics, presented a new product for relief of symptoms caused by **mucositis** (and **xerostomia**), complications from chemo/radiation. *Gelclair* is a bio-adherent gel designed to be taken orally and coat the inflamed mucous membranes of the mouth and throat, making swallowing, and thus better nutrition, less uncomfortable. It is a prescription item, and Gary has a supply of brochures for those interested in speaking to their physicians about it.

Our "regulars" attended Lynn's meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup> and were joined by Adriana Norena, a graduate SLP student from FAU, who was a member of the student class addressed by Lenny, Mike and Kay last year. That presentation was so well received, that we have been asked to address this year's class in July. This activity means every SLP graduate from FAU will be thoroughly familiar with laryngectomees and our needs. The main discussion at Lynn's meeting revolved about the concerns that have surfaced about the future of the New Voice Club, because we have such a small core of active workers.

We had over thirty-five at our May 20<sup>th</sup> main meeting. It was a delight to see Nancy DeGregory, Doris Littlefield and Doris Shadd. Doris Shadd made a generous donation in memory of Ralph. Two Nova SLP students were tutored by our volunteer teaching staff headed by Gary Morey. We were confined to a smaller room with no p.a. system, and there was a spirited discussion of the need to search out available venues for a new meeting place. We all enjoyed a light lunch, including a cake honoring Lenny's 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday, Earl and Wini's 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Mike and Sylvia's 57<sup>th</sup> anniversary. An Executive Committee meeting is planned before the end of the month.

## Upcoming Events

### Main Meeting 3rd Sunday of each month

#### Next meeting June 17th 12 - 2 p.m.

Rap Sessions at 12 Meeting and Program at 1  
Refreshments after Meeting

#### **HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital**

4399 Nob Hill Road, Sunrise, FL 33351  
(SW corner of Nob Hill and NW 44th St)  
(between Commercial and Oakland Park Blvd)  
Look for the New Voice Club Banner

#### Free Speech Therapy

#### **HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital**

4399 Nob Hill Road, Sunrise, FL 33351  
Miriam Paul, MA, CCC-SLP  
Pascale Bourne MA, CCC-SLP

#### 1st Wednesday of each month

#### Next Meeting - June 6th

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

More information: (954) 746-1340

#### Free Speech Therapy

#### **Boca Raton Community Hospital**

#### **Davis Therapy Center**

Oaks Plaza, Glades Road at 13th Street  
Lynn Carrier MS, CCC-SLP

#### 3rd Thursday of each month

#### Next Meeting - June 21st

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

More information: (561) 955-2100 Ext 7430

#### **Veterans Medical Center**

7305 N. Military Trail

West Palm Beach, FL 33410

Loreen Blumenthal, M.S.P.A., CCC-SLP

Veterans Laryngectomee Group

(Veterans & family members only)

#### 2nd Thursday of each month

#### Next Meeting - June 14th

11a.m. - 12 noon

More information (561) 422-6237

#### **UMSylvester/Deerfield**

#### **Comprehensive Cancer Center**

1192 East Newport Center Drive, Suite 100,  
Deerfield Beach

Penny Fisher MS, RN, CORLN

Mort Silverblatt Head and Neck

Cancer Support Group

#### 2nd Tuesday of each month

#### Next Meeting - June 12th

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

More information (305) 243-4952

## **HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 2007 DUES YET?**

**If Not, Make your check payable to: The New Voice Club of Broward**

**Send it to:**

**Lenny Weinstein, Treasurer  
1427 E. Hillsboro Bv # 529  
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441**

**Annual dues are \$7.00 per person or \$10.00 per family.  
Many send additional money with their dues, to make a donation to the club.  
These donations help us to continue our helpful and charitable endeavors.**

### MAE GERSTENBLITH

September 15, 1913 - May 3, 2007

We lost a cherished member last month. Mae, who had been in hospice care for several weeks, finally found peace. We will remember Mae with great affection and admiration - always smiling, never complaining - and learning to use the Servox at the age of 90 after 35 years of esophageal speaking, with nothing but a smile on her face and a cheerful, positive attitude. Mae would have been 94 in September. Her daughter, Linda Weiss, was touched that so many New Voice Club members came to the service, and asked us to express her deep appreciation.

Linda wrote that her dad, Abe, who died in 1995 at the age of 85, was Mae's "speech partner" during her rehabilitation process. He would practice with her at night and even "test" her by sitting backwards at the table so he would not be able to read her lips, and they would converse while she learned her new way of speaking. Mae was operated on in late December of 1968 and when her granddaughter Danielle was born just five months later, she took a trip to visit her. Shortly after that she was back at work, explaining benefits and insurance options to the instructional staff at Brooklyn College. Her aunt just recently told Linda that after she was successfully speaking on her own, her Mom actively led support groups and visited new laryngectomees. She did this quietly, with no fanfare, for many years, and not even her own daughter knew about it until now.

"A lit candle is placed in the window to show the way home. It is an old image and metaphor, but it has such power that it has survived into modern times as, "we'll keep the light on for you". It is a symbol for guidance, for caring, for shelter, and for welcome. It does not take an army of people to light that candle and keep one in the window. It really only takes one. But the one who lights it must be faithful to this small chore, and must also arrange for the candle to continue to be lit as a guide and welcome when they are no longer there to light it. If the candle is to not go out, we have to arrange for continuity after we are gone since, as far as we can tell, the light will always be needed...."

### Journaling Your Journey

We encourage newly diagnosed cancer survivors to keep a journal for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that you are at a crossroads in your life journey and, whether you realize it now or not, you are growing and changing into a different person - a better person in many ways - than the person you were before your diagnosis. The day will come when you will want to look back over this experience and marvel at all you have learned from it and even the many blessings you received as a result. Keeping a journal now will help you recall circumstances, events, people and details that your memory simply will not retain.

Keeping a journal will also help you remember questions you want to ask your doctor, symptoms and treatment side effects that were here one day and gone the next that you need to discuss with him. It will also give you a visual readout of your good days and bad days so that you have a better idea when one or the other is coming and can be prepared for it.

But most of all, we encourage survivors in treatment to keep a journal because it can be a healing activity. Journaling is an opportunity to examine your experiences, to process them thoughtfully and to find greater meaning in them. An experience examined becomes richer, deeper, more powerful.

Journaling is also cathartic. You can rant in your journal, rage at the insensitivity of others to your condition, scream at the tedious and painful treatments, curse the night, spill your darkest fears, bleed through your pen onto the paper. Get the bad stuff out to make way for the good stuff. As singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell said, "The most important thing is to write in your own blood" (please don't take that literally!).

As a final step in each journal entry, record joy. You will have to look harder for joy on some days than on others, but if you look hard enough, you will find it. Write about a person you encountered who smiled or said something kind or supported you in some way and made you feel better. Write about something you did well. Write about something you like about yourself.

If today is just too sad and difficult, recall a joyful time in your past. Write about activities you enjoyed as a child, and think and write about ways you could enjoy them again when you're feeling better.

Write about your partner and the things you adore about him or her. Write about what it felt like when you fell in love. Write about times when you've felt peaceful and serene, strong and powerful, silly and downright giddy. Write about a time you laughed so hard you cried or milk came out of your nose.....Count your blessings and write them down.

*Excerpted from The Cancer Crusade May 18, 2007*



# June Birthdays

4th Robert Farin	21st Rocky Anastasia
5th Selma Kranz	22nd Ruth Henegan
10th Ruth Farin	25th Gary Beatty
16th Dana Carrier	27th Henry Kurainowicz
16th Doris Littlefield	29th Bill Romanello
20th Lynn Carrier	30th George Fiorella

## Happy Birthday to All

### A Call For Volunteers

Our support group represents so much more than a place to go to attend a meeting. We have many members you may never see at meetings, but who still need and appreciate the support we provide. Two members in particular come to mind, only because we recently had lunch with one, and corresponded with the other.

John Mitchell has been a member of our group for many years while living in the Bahamas, before moving back to Canada. John has always attended our meetings while wintering in Florida. He will no longer be able to do so, but asked that we continue to send our Newsletter so that he can maintain contact with the club and its members.

Ingrid Shapiro wrote, "I have a good friend, whose son was just diagnosed with cancer of the throat and they are considering removing voice box. She, as a mother is all upset, and thought of me. So, I in turn, am trying to help her, as you and your great organization, helped Jerry and me....I really miss you all and hope to make it up there just for a visit...There is a movie Jerry and I saw many years ago, called "Pass It On" and that is what I am doing. I hope someday I can help others with knowledge if nothing else to help them deal with cancer and hope for the caretakers. Please take care of yourself and know you are in my thoughts. Please pass on my greetings to the members and know you all are in my thoughts. It's been a tough year, but knowing you have good friends makes it bearable. Thanks again."

Some concern has been expressed about the dwindling attendance at meetings. Our 1<sup>st</sup> V.P. Al Smith is working to ensure we have an informative program at every meeting and, hopefully, this will result in an increase in the number of those attending. However, the true gauge of a vibrant support group is not in the attendance at its meetings, but rather that it is always there for those who need its support. At recent meetings, we counseled two new members prior to their surgeries,

and a member who had spoken esophageally for thirty years, but now must use an electrolarynx.

There is an ongoing need for education and support for current and future laryngectomees, but equally important, is the need to educate our health professionals. That is why we maintain an open invitation for all SLP students to attend our meetings, and why we tutor SLP classes at two of our local universities. In addition, we are working with the Marketing Department of Health-South to put our literature into the office of every ENT in the tri-county area so that no laryngectomee will ever again feel lost and on his own without knowing that friendly support is just a phone call away.

What you have just read could be called our mission statement. To fulfill it we need only one thing, and that is more active members. The bulk of the club work is done by a small core of dedicated members. We need help. One of those core workers is in his 90s; some are in their 80s. It is vital for the future of the New Voice Club that more of our members become active workers. We must pass on the knowledge of what we do so that the New Voice Club will always be there. Ingrid wrote about the movie "Pass it On". That is our goal, to pass it on, so that there will always be a New Voice Club for those who need us. Several members have expressed their concerns about the future of the New Voice Club, on how to ensure the continuation of our work, and on the vital importance of laryngectomees to continue learning about the latest developments so that we are always fully informed and ready to support the club and those who need our services.

Please contact any one of those listed below with your positive ideas, offers of free time, even if it is only occasionally, or if you have a particular talent or skill that could benefit the important work we do. Most importantly, we need volunteers to backup those who are currently involved in running our various programs. It takes time to train and commitment to learn for those who are willing to join us in our work.

"In a group of fifty laryngectomees there might only be one or two who will feel the call to become a candle lighter. But we must find them. For as long as there is someone who must become a laryngectomee, there is a need for those who would put a candle in the window to welcome and guide them to a place of warmth, understanding, acceptance, and hope. Would you like to learn to light the candle? Come with us and we will show you how..." *David Blevins*

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