

# Letting GO

The Monthly Publication of the National Stuttering Association



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## It Was Well Worth the Trip

BY ANITA BLOM

*(Anita, who comes from Sweden, is one of the NSA's many good friends from across the seas. These are her impressions of her first NSA event.)*

MANY OF YOU TOLD ME THE NSA CONVENTION WOULD BE A GREAT AND EVERLASTING EXPERIENCE. And I was prepared and willing to let it all come over me. But today, one day before I leave California, my heart is aching and my face shining with tears as nobody told me this would be the ultimate experience of unconditional love.

I was not prepared for the unconditional love and everlasting friendship of the board members who included me into their group and work. They showed me that work and friendship do go together and made me feel at home from day one. And I was definitely not prepared to have their arms around me as if they had known me for years.

I was not prepared for the unconditional love

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## Friends, Families and Fun Characterize the 19th Annual NSA Conference in Anaheim

Year's biggest get-together draws almost 600

BY VICKI SCHUTTER

FOR ME, THE 2002 NSA CONFERENCE IN ANAHEIM WAS THE "OLD FRIENDS" CONFERENCE. There were interesting workshops, the "Voices Across the Sea" session, a wonderful Thursday night reception (which ended with dancing), fascinating keynote speakers, a great choice of Friday night activities, a delicious banquet, and a record breaking auction. But the best part was the old friends.

It all started for me on Wednesday afternoon when I arrived at the hotel. I saw Russ Hicks, one of my oldest and dearest NSA friends, and we exchanged a big hug and started catch-up. Then we heard this familiar Australian accent saying, "I know you!" We turned around, and there was John Stegges, the "crazy" Aussie who had been at our second conference in 1987, but whom we had not seen since then. What joy that was! Anaheim was my 17th conference, but I still remember '87 as being one of the most fun conferences of all time, partly due to some of the crazy situations we found ourselves in. (Unfortunately, I don't have the space to tell you about nine of us in the back of a San Francisco police car!)

Thursday I was very much looking forward to the "Voices Across the Sea" session at 1p.m. It featured Anita Blom from Sweden, Martine De Vloed and Dr. Lieven Grommen from Belgium, Edwin Farr and Gina Waggott from England, Dr. Mark Irwin from Australia, and Konrad Schaefer from Germany. I knew several of these "voices" from the STUTT-L listserv, and it was so wonderful to get to finally see them and meet them face to face. Anita and Gina, especially, were even

more delightful in person than they were over email. But I digress. The session gave us fascinating reports of stuttering self-help around this incredibly small world.

Next, I attended John Harrison's Speaking Freely workshop, which was as valuable for the new friends I made there as it was for the valuable insights into performance techniques.

That night was the Opening Celebration, featuring a yummy pasta bar. (We smart ones had skipped dinner!) We heard a short speech from long-time NSA member John Wade, an inspiring poem from Jim Abbott, a speech by Alfred Herzing (President of Toastmasters International), and a talk by Adrian Peterson (a top running back from Georgia). A special award was also presented by Ira Zimmerman to co-writers of an episode of the TV show M\*A\*S\*H, which dealt intelligently and sensitively with a character's stuttering. And then, after the speeches, a live band broke into dance music! There were many happy, writhing stutterers on the dance floor.

Friday began with a general session open mic,

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# From the Executive Director:

*Many people collaborated to make this a success*

I JUST RETURNED FROM OUR 19TH CONFERENCE, CELEBRATING HOPE, EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT. It was a coming together of spirit and soul, a wonderful four days with so many activities — stimulating workshops, exciting keynotes, a family program for the young and their parents and siblings., and loads of recreational activities.

The backbone of an NSA annual conference is the local NSA support groups in the surrounding areas. This year this support stretched from San Diego to Sacramento. Leading the effort was the Orange County chapter of the NSA and conference co-leaders **Randy Hoover** and **Cari Caldwell**.

The conference committee was a joy to work with and everyone felt their enthusiasm and warmth. Until you organize a conference, you will never truly understand the amount of dedication and commitment it takes to put together this kind of event. Thank you **Megan Fujiwara, Isha Cook, Ryan Bassett, Jim & Kathy Lippitt, Shannon Skupien, Sherri Wolff, Mandi Bradberry**, and the amazing **Nicolai family of Debbie, Martin, Amanda and Stephani**.

Many many thanks to all of you who presented a workshop. The workshops are the foundation of the convention, offering those who attend a wide range of topics to help them understand and deal with their stuttering.

It would take pages and pages for me to thank all who volunteered on site. However, special thanks go to **Paul Bittorf** and **Joseph Diaz** who also doubled as Master of Ceremonies of our awards luncheon.

## HUZZAS FOR THE OFFICE STAFF

During the conference I always get to introduce **Tammy Flores**, NSA's Director of Operations. Tammy works behind the scene, so if you don't attend an annual conference, you may never have the pleasure of meeting her in person. Tammy's vitality, love of life and that explosive laugh of hers is contagious. Tammy has become an important part of my life, a part of my family and yours. Thank you Tammy for all you do for all of us.

Those in attendance also got to meet the newest addition to our staff, **Krisjan Hoover**. Krisjan is working part-time for us and brings an expertise that will help us expand our operation and vision. Krisjan is the wife of NSA member Randy Hoover.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION

We were particularly grateful this year for a special general session coordinated by **Judy Kuster**, "Voices Across the Sea." This session featured short reports from seven guests from around the world as well as the first U.S. screening of *To Speak*, a 15 minute, autobiographical

documentary from the award-winning Belgian producer, **Eric Lamens**.

Speakers included: **Anita Scharis Blom**, Sweden, **Martine De Vloed**, Belgium, **Edwin J. Farr**, U.K., **Dr. Lieven Grommen**, Belgium, **Dr. Mark Irwin**, Australia, **Konrad Schaefer**, Germany, and **Gina Waggott**, England.

## CLOSER TIES TO THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

I am very excited to report that this year we have become an American Speech-Language and Hearing approved Continuing Education provider, and during the conference we hosted two CE programs facilitated by **Walter Manning**, Ph.D., and **Bill Murphy**, M.A.

We continue to help the school-based clinician become more effective within the constraints of their employment settings through this new Continuing Education Program. We are committed to providing those in private practice, school based clinicians, and educators with opportunities to learn about stuttering.

Preceding our annual conference we hosted a unique symposium. "Pioneering Stuttering Research in the 21st Century: The First Joint Symposium for Scientists and Consumers" was coordinated by NSA's Research Committee led by **Scott Yaruss**, Ph.D. This was the first time consumers (ie: people who stutter) and researchers could meet in a formal manner to jointly discuss the current status and future of stuttering research. The symposium was designed to give consumers an opportunity to influence the direction of research in the coming years.

Participants were divided into small working groups depending on their interest (e.g.: language and motor interactions in stuttering, genetic aspects of stuttering, outcomes of stuttering treatment, etc.) A noted researcher facilitated each small group discussion. Such issues as the current status of research, future needs, and methods of implementation were discussed.

At the conclusion of the small groups sessions, participants convened to a general session in which group discussions were summarized.

A publication is currently being prepared that will contain the results of this historic meeting. Special thanks go to this committee for its vision and commitment to the future of the stuttering community. Committee members were **Scott Yaruss, Larry Molt, Bob Quesal, Tony Caruso, Luc De Nil, Ken St. Louis** and **Lee Reeves**.

## THIS YEAR WE CELEBRATED OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY!

I remember my first encounter with the NSA over 22 years ago. I suspect that many of you remember your first encounter, too. We all began this journey thinking that we were alone. Today we are a part of a circle of strength and each year our circle expands and grows. Each



year as I stand before everyone at the general session, I look around the room and am touched, energized and empowered.

In attendance this year and making our 25th anniversary even more special was co-founder **Michael Sugarman**. Without his vision and that of co-founder **Bob Goldman**, none of this would be happening. Today Michael continues to work hard for a worldwide stuttering self-help community that comprises over 30 different national organizations. Bob and his family have also continued to support the stuttering committee through scholarships for the young.

## LOOK AHEAD TO 2003

Next year, our 20th Annual Conference is going to be held in Nashville, Tennessee. So start planning now to attend. A little bit saved each month can help make this dream a reality. You will be able to find information about the conference on our website early this fall.

The possibilities for the stuttering community and what we can achieve together continue to grow and amaze me.

I am proud to be on this journey with all of you.

... Annie Bradberry  
Executive Director



## NEW NSA BOOKLETS ON THE WORKPLACE

Thanks to the efforts of NSA members **Bill Parry, Esq.** and **Rachael Resk**, we are proud to bring you two new booklets that deal with the employment setting.

*Mastering the Job Interview for People Who Stutter* offers practical advice to help you make the best impression when you're looking for a job.

*Stuttering: What Employees Should Know* provides information for business owners, managers, human resource professionals, supervisors, recruiters and interviewers. The booklet informs readers on the nature of stuttering and appropriate ways to relate to people who stutter in the workplace.

Visit our website at [www.nsastutter.org](http://www.nsastutter.org) or call us at 1-800-364-1677 for more information.

## We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the NSA Board of Directors:

### PAUL BITTORF

Paul is Global Services Program Manager of CompTIA in Lombard, IL. He was the founder and first leader of the Madison NSA chapter and has been National Chapter Coordinator for NSA chapters west of the Mississippi. As a board member, Paul will be assisting us with chapter development.

### BARRY LIBEN

Barry is the father of Michael who is a high school senior in New York. Barry brings to the Board his many years of expertise in business, marketing and fund raising. Barry's wife, Cindy, has been an active NSA mom and currently runs the NSA's New York office.

### EDWARD WEISS

Ed is an attorney practicing in St. Louis, Missouri. He has been an NSA member for almost four years, and this was his fourth convention. Ed is the St. Louis NSA chapter leader and as a board member will be focusing especially on advocacy issues.

# Thank You

## Live Auction Donors

OUR THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE who made generous donations to the NSA through their successful bids at the live auction: Gary Aufer, Ellen Bennett, Tim Bryant, Carol Buckingham, Mark DeBiasio, Robin Deschamps, Nalani Flores, Steve Fogarty, Jerry Higgins, Bryan Holt, Mark Irwin, Kari Kelso, Ken Libre, Joel Lurie, Wayne Mackin, Jim McClure, Bonnie McKenzie, Philip Mirabelli, Ron Mitchell, Kevin Murphy, Debbie Nicolai, Bill Nimelman, Luis Patino, David Perrier, Bob Quesal, Nan Ratner, Nina Reardon, Gail Redmond, Lee Reeves, Robby Robbins, Bill Smith, Kimberly Stauss, Craig Stephenson, John Unflat, Bernie Weiner, Ed Weiss, Dawn Young.



• ISHA COOK AND TAMMY FLORES.

# My First Stump Speech

**This was hard to believe**

BY MARTY JEZER

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE CONVENTION I GOT AN E-MAIL FROM MY CONGRESSMAN'S OFFICE ASKING ME TO SPEAK (yeah, that's what I said, speak) at his kick-off re-election campaign press conference in the Brattleboro Town Hall. (Brattleboro is the main town in Southeastern VT). Bernie Sanders (the only independent in the House of Representatives) is an old political friend from 20 years back, and he knows I stutter.

My new policy is to never turn down a public speaking request, so I said I'd do it. I wasn't scared so much as I was bemused. Why me? I was also worried about how I'd come over. Being at the NSA convention was a great inspiration and confidence builder for this particular speaking gig. Dennis Barsema, the Saturday keynote, helped keep me in focus. This was truly an extraordinary occasion.

The speech went very well. Great actually. Alas, there was a double murder the day before so there was no television coverage. They were all covering the arraignment in the county court house next door to the press conference. But the local radio and newspaper was there.

I didn't know what other speakers would say or what Bernie would say so I went with a few ideas in my head but nothing written down. Bernie spoke first and covered everything I wanted to say, so I panicked a little. The other speaker was Ron Pickering, the head of the state AFL-CIO, who I've met before. He also stutters! Very mildly but openly. I told him that Bernie must be going after the stuttering vote. I wanted to use that line in my speech but was afraid the radio and newspaper would use it as a soundbite, without context, so I refrained. I wish I hadn't.

I did begin by saying how surprised I was

that Bernie asked me, someone who stutters, to be a speaker. That launched me into a riff about character, how he was a man without pretense, etc. And I was off. I did get a soundbite on the radio and a mention in the press.

People liked it. I could see that they were listening and enjoying what I said as I was speaking. When I first started public speaking I was so frightened that I couldn't see the audience through my fear. Now I'm able to take courage from their attentiveness.

Hey, I've always loved politics, but never figured I'd ever get to make a stump speech of my own. I'm always a little leery when people say stutters can do anything. (I say to myself, "but they can't make stump speeches!"). But I did, and if there's a speech that you guys want to make, you can!

Thanks friends, thanks NSA, for being role models and helping me to overcome my fears. This was a dream come true.



... MARTY JEZER IS A NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST IN BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT AND AUTHOR OF SEVERAL BOOKS, INCLUDING *ABBIE HOFFMAN: AMERICAN REBEL*, AND *STUTTERING: A LIFE BOUND UP IN WORDS*.



## Thoughts From a New Board Member

BY ED WEISS

ANOTHER CONVENTION HERE AND GONE, AND THEY SEEM TO GO BY FASTER AND FASTER. And every year I think they cannot get any better, and every year they get better and better. We owe a round of applause to the Co-chairs for the Anaheim convention...Cari Caldwell and Randy Hoover.

This year, I became an official Board member and my perspective is now a little different as far as involvement in the NSA. I must admit, I never knew the Board members very well, and, like most of us, did not make a determined effort to build on the wonderful things we all hear about them.

But let me tell you, this it truly a wonderful group of people with their hearts in the right place. If you make an effort to know them better, your own lives will only be for the better and they (now myself included) would love to hear any concerns or comments you may have.

To say that hours and hours of work go on basically unnoticed throughout the year would be an understatement. As I am beginning to see, it certainly is not considered "work," and for myself, will give me an opportunity to grow and hopefully help kids and adults alike in this great organization.

So don't wait for the next convention to keep in touch. In addition to the lifelong friends we have met at all the conventions we attend, don't forget "NSA's 11," the Board members.

As for Annie and Tammy...well, no words can do justice. It is hard to imagine the NSA, or my own life, without them.

# Awards... Awards...

BY JOSEPH DIAZ

“Where Disney Magic Meets California Fun” was this year’s theme of the 19th Annual Conference of the National Stuttering Association in Anaheim, California. What a wonderful event it was! And what a magnificent job Cari Caldwell and Randy Hoover did as co-chairs. In fact, we thank and recognize all the members of the Orange County and L.A. chapters who pitched in and helped to make this such a memorable experience.



*Hall of Fame Award: GENE COOPER, PH.D.*

Friday morning the General Session opened with the presentation of the 2002 Hall of Fame award. This year, the honoree was Gene Cooper, Ph.D., long time friend to the stuttering community, supporter of the NSA, and mentor and advisor to many. Gene’s influence has been monumental in the field of stuttering, and we are honored to have had him on our membership roles for so many years.



*Conference Dedication: WALTER MANNING, PH.D.*

The NSA dedicated this conference to another long time supporter. Walter Manning, Ph.D., from the University of Memphis, is a professor and Associate Dean in the School of Audiology and an SLP at the university. Walt teaches courses in fluency disorders and research methods, has published more than 60 articles, and has been a keynoter at past NSA conferences.

## THE AWARDS LUNCHEON

We opened the awards luncheon by acknowledging past recipients of the NSA Hall of Fame award – Fred Murray, Mel Hoffman, Rich Wells, John Ahlback, Dorvan Breitenfeldt, John (Scatman) Larkin, John Harrison, and Vivian Sheehan. Some of these members have been with the NSA since the very beginning, and their guidance is partly responsible for our being able to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the NSA!

Here are this year’s award winners:



*Chapter Leader of the Year: NORA O'CONNOR*

This year’s recipient is the lady with the “why not” attitude who projects so much energy and fun. Thanks to Nora, the San Francisco chapter is undergoing a renaissance with more activities than we’ve seen in years. And it’s all due to Nora’s energy and vision.



*Regional Coordinator of the Year: ELAINE SAITTA*

Elaine, who has just graduated as a speech-language pathologist, helps her Seattle chapter put on yearly workshops for kids and adults. Elaine is the Northwest Regional Coordinator where she oversees multiple chapter needs in four states. Elaine’s son, Eric, who’s cut from the same mold, did a great job helping with the NSA store in Anaheim. This is a mother and son team to watch.



*Chapter of the Year: ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN*

This is the quintessential can-do chapter. Last year, Royal Oak had 12 members at the NSA conference in Boston, and this year they had nine in Anaheim. Royal Oak members hosted two workshops over the past year and regularly travel to others. (You also hear everything they do on NSACHAP; their enthusiasm is irrepresible.) When it came time to accept the award, all nine members attending went up to the stage to accept the plaque. (And for the first time in Royal Oak history, no one knew what to say!)



*Parent of the Year: SINDY LIBEN*

Sindy is not only the mother of a son who stutters (Michael), she also runs the NSA’s New York office and responds to all email addressed to <nsaparent@aol.com>. Sindy believes in connection, advocacy, resources and education for parents of children who stutter, and she backs up her talk with action. It’s because of people like Sindy that we are making a difference in the lives of so many children and parents.



*Speech-Language Pathologist of the Year: GARY RENTSCHLER, PH.D.*

Gary is the Clinic Director at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, where he also directs the

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# and more Awards...

adult and adolescent stuttering program. And if you've ever seen a copy of *Stutter Buddies*, the NSA's publication for young children, that's Gary's brainchild. Gary is also a member of the NSA's Professional Advisory Board.



**Special Youth Recognition award winner:**  
**JAY JAMES DOYLE**

The award was presented by last year's winner, Kevin Murphy, who mentioned Jay's confidence and charisma. Jay, who is 19 and hails from Montreal, received a standing ovation.



**Member of the Year: BONNIE WEISS.**

What has Bonnie not done for the NSA? Chair of the 1997 NSA conference in Buffalo. Chair of yearly workshops in Buffalo. National Coordinator of the Regional Coordinators. Editor of Chapter News for *Letting Go*. Six year NSA Board Member. Chapter Leader for Buffalo. That's Member of the Year material if we've ever heard it.

## OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

We also offer our sincere appreciation to outgoing board members Randy Hoover (1999 - 2002) and Bill Parry (1996 - 2002) for their years of dedicated and loving service.

RANDY HOOVER



BILL PARRY

Congratulations to all the award winners. They truly embrace the spirit of "Be the best you can be."

Now it's over. Our four days of camaraderie, discovery, and yes, even Disney magic, is but a memory. (Where did I leave my Mickey Mouse ears?) But there's a promise of more to come, and it'll happen next year when we get together and make our own special brand of music in Nashville.

We'll see you there.



• JOSEPH DIAZ IS  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
DALLAS CHAPTER.

## A Hat Like No Other

In the early 90's, Australian John Steggles attended his first NSA conference and brought with him a handsome bushman's hat which he donated to the auction. It went for a hefty price. But that wasn't the end of the hat. Not by a long shot.

At the next conference, the original buyer donated the hat back to the NSA where it was once again auctioned, bringing in another good piece of change. And so began a hallowed NSA tradition.

Through the years the Steggles hat has raised more money for the NSA than any single auction item. This year the original hat was finally auctioned off for good. Tim Bryant, C.J., and their family are now the proud and permanent owners.

But that's not the end of the tradition.

This year John Steggles attended the 2002 conference and brought with him a new, flashier Crocodile Dundee hat decorated with croc teeth and a nifty hat band. Walt Manning, for whom the conference was dedicated, was the first wearer.

Many thanks to John Steggles who keeps epitomizing the generosity of the folks Down Under. And as for the hat — the tradition lives! Who'll be the winner next year? Stay tuned.



• THE BRYANT FAMILY, FINAL OWNERS OF THE FIRST BUSHMAN'S HAT. (from l to r) TIM, DEBBIE, MATT AND C.J. (WEARING THE HAT).



• JOHN STEGGLES FITS WALT MANNING WITH THE NEW "CROCODILE DUNDEE" HAT.



# speaking out

comments and letters

*As always, an NSA conference elicits many responses from those who participated. Here's a sampling of the letters, which are still coming in.*

As the father of a person who stutters, and as someone who just left Anaheim after the 2002 Annual NSA Conference, I felt I should share my thoughts and feelings with all you fantastic people

This is my seventh conference, and it's amazing how each year in June I become more alive and just get a super charge, spending a few days with all you wonderful people. I come as a parent and leave with a glow because of the love and comraderie that takes place at your conference.

It's amazing as I observe you all going and coming to the workshops, talking together, sharing your lives, creating an energy of love that bounces throughout the rooms of the conference. As a non-stutterer, there are times I feel cheated because I do not stutter.

However, I have much to be thankful for, as, among other things, I am the proud father of Annie Bradberry.

... Robby Robbins



• ROBBY ROBBINS (AT RIGHT) AND NEW BOARD MEMBER BARRY LIEBEN AT THE SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET.

I would like to commend you for another outstanding convention. I had a fabulous time, and Anaheim was a perfect location especially because the hotel was in walking distance of Disneyland. Seattle 1999 was my first convention and I have returned every year since that time.

The NSA has become a second family to me and I feel proud to be part of such a dedicated organization. I now have the opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones, and I am already looking forward to Nashville in 2003. Take care, and I will stay in touch.

... Kerry (kerdown@aol.com)

Thank you to all those involved in making my induction into the National Stuttering Association's Hall of Fame at its 19th Annual Conference this past weekend in Anaheim a most memorable and moving one. Crystal and I shall always remember the occasion as a highlight in our professional careers.

It is a great joy to see how the National Stuttering Association has become such a significant and positive force in so many lives. As with all previous NSA conferences, the 19th Annual Conference was a reaffirmation of the Association's power to support, inspire, and enlighten. I am deeply grateful for having the privilege of being a part of the NSA family.

Again, many, many thanks.

... Eugene B. Cooper, Ph.D.



• CRYSTAL AND EUGENE COOPER

I would just like to say that I had a wonderful time at the convention. All the workshops that I attended were well put together. I saw some of my old friends, and I made a lot of new ones. I had a great time in California. Everything at the convention was good. I hope to see you all next year in Nashville.

... Nathan Pressley

It was a great pleasure to be invited to the NSA's 25th year dinner dance and auction.

My husband, Wayne, and I enjoyed meeting some of the members and their spouses. We had a lot of fun meeting Lee Reeves, Annie, and some of the guests.

The tables were beautifully set and the food tasted great.

We were very proud of our son, Randy Hoover. Everyone seemed to like him a lot. They spoke kindly about him. The hotel staff liked him, too.

I am sending you a check for \$70 for two people to be sponsored for a year. I know the

NSA helps a lot of people, and I would like to see others involved with NSA. Keep up the good job in helping people.

... Wayne and Emma Hoover

I'm back in Israel after a wonderful trip to the USA. Unfortunately still fighting the jet lag.

The NSA conference was for me not only a great time, it was an important milestone in my "stuttering career." In fact it was the biggest stuttering event I ever participated in, and I learned a lot from it.

Last Wednesday (July 7) we had an event in AMBI. It was an introduction of a new stuttering treatment which is an outcome of a cooperative effort between a big Israeli SLP institute, "Machon Hedim," and STS company that develops "Dr. Fluency" software. Before the lecture started, I told the more than 30 participants about the NSA convention, and people were fascinated.

Thanks a lot for the giving me the opportunity to participate in the NSA convention, and again, thanks for the outstanding job you did in organizing such an event.



... Benny Ravid  
Chairman of AMBI - Israel Stuttering Association

I just wanted to let you know that I had a wonderful time at the convention it was very well organized and you and your team did a wonderful job. The safe caring environment you and your team provided allowed extraordinary people to come out of their shells.

I especially would like to thank, Tammy, Isha, Luis and Randy Hoover who were very friendly and courteous.

Thank you for the great weekend, and I am looking forward to Nashville next year.

... Junior Tereva



• JUNIOR AND FRIEND.

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**SPEAKING OUT continued**

As my second NSA conference, the gathering in Anaheim was even more informative and enjoyable than the first. The togetherness that was felt is indescribable and the bonds that were made are unbreakable. I was able to gain insight in my covert stuttering and that I need to be more open about my speech.

The highlight for me was seeing the young people speak and the standing ovations that followed.

The NSA and the annual conference is truly a gift for people who stutter, like myself, and has provided me with strength and inspiration to achieve my goals in life. I look forward to attending and increasing my involvement in future conferences.

... Dan Koblitz

First timer, that's what they called me. My response to that was—be gentle it's my first time! Next year in Nashville I'll will be a two timer. That's right, I didn't get scared off, I got addicted.

As I look around the classy interior of the LAX terminals, I think of all the people I met and the scores of others I wish I could have. Stutterers are in a class of their own. I mean that in a good way. For the first time in my life, I had the experience of being like everyone else. All three days were amazing, from the opening ceremony to the parties, cruise, and closing ceremony. It was a time I will not soon forget.

Two things will forever stay with me. The first was when Jackson got up at the podium. Before he even spoke, I had tears welling in my eyes. He is a bigger man than I am at age 26. Last time I got up in front of a group of peers or strangers was back in the eighth grade. Even at my chapter meetings I shy away from open mic, although Bernie Weiner gets me up there to say something, even if its only "hi."

I don't know if I left an impression on anyone there but the conference has surely left one on me.

One person who has really touched my heart is Lindsay Campbell. She has the talent, drive, and courage that 90 percent of fluent people wish they had. I just wanted to thank her for inspiring me.

I tell people I'm a member of the NSA, but now after the conference I will tell them I belong to the NSA. The conference has made me feel like a part of the organization not just a paying customer.

Thank you Lindsay, Jackson, NSA, and the Royal Oak Chapter.

... Jared Cantin

In the beginning - we gathered for a research meeting. One question was how to measure the outcome of a therapeutic experience. I asked myself if attending the NSA convention was a therapeutic ("healing") experience worth the time, money and effort.

Looking inside (instead of examining other "subjects"), I realized that I felt elevated and

uplifted even before my plane left the ground. There was a sense of energetic inner peace and connectedness. My body, mind and soul felt unified as I sought to know and speak my deepest truth in each encounter. This felt easy because of the massive doses of sincere listening and caring which surrounded me with words and hugs of support. This mutual caring society felt like a force, acting to heal the world. I could feel the dull ache of aloneness shrink as people came together.

To feel the oneness within and between felt well worth it. So now for the statistical analysis of my raw data. After adding and dividing lifeless numbers (obtained with highly biased methods) it became clear that no single number could define or delineate any of our most central tendencies. It was also clear that we are all part of the normal range of beautifully unique human variations.

I want to send a warm thank-you hug to my entire NSA family for showing how we can heal the world. I arrived home with my old baggage of self doubts still packed up with my old autobiography. But I feel energized to work on my autobiography of the future. Thanks!!

... Phil Schneider



• PHIL SCHNEIDER

My husband Barry and I have recently returned from the NSA convention in Anaheim, California and as usual had the most amazing experience.

I would like to share with you however that our son, Michael, who is the reason that we joined the NSA, did not attend as he had another school related committment.

So many people asked us: why would you come without your son? Although I could not think of an immediate answer, I realized when I returned home to New Jersey the answer was many faceted.

First of all the NSA was the organization that enabled us to see light at the end of the tunnel almost 10 years ago when we joined. We were sad and somewhat panicked by our then eight-year-old son's apparent inability to "overcome" his very bumpy speech.

We can tell you that now at the age of 17, Michael is an extremely successful young man with numerous accomplishments, and he still stutters very well. The info and support we received helped us help him to be the best human being that he can be. Barry and I feel that we

will always give back to the NSA for this most important reason.

Secondly we want to share this experience with other families who are starting out on this journey. Very often speaking with other parents can be very helpful.

Most importantly, seeing so many people who stutter, some with other issues, who are happy, productive well adjusted people is really the best part of the convention. It has been inspirational to meet these amazing people both young and old and this feeling is uplifting and stays with me all year long.

Next year I hope that Michael can come with us to the convention in Nashville. But even if he can't, you will still see Barry and me there, selfishly being strenghtened by the amazing people that we meet.

I look forward to seeing many of you there. Please feel free to email me at nsaparent@aol.com if you need to speak to another parent about your child.

...Sindy Liben



• UMBERTO BELLINI AND JOHN HARRISON FIRST MET 49 YEARS AGO AT THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL FOR SPEECH DISORDERS IN NEW YORK CITY WHERE JOHN, WHO HAD JUST GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL, WAS ATTENDING A SUMMER PROGRAM. UMBERTO HAD RECENTLY ARRIVED AT THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL FROM ITALY. AT THE TIME HE HAD A TERRIBLE STUTTER AND NO MONEY, AND WAS WORKING THERE TO EARN HIS KEEP AND TUITION. THE TWO RENEWED THEIR ACQUAINTANCE IN 1986 AT THE NSA—33 YEARS LATER—AND ENJOYED SEEING EACH OTHER AGAIN AT THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION.



• THE SUNDAY AFTER THE CONVENTION, SOME OF THE ATTENDEES WENT OFF TO HUNTINGTON BEACH FOR A LITTLE MORE R & R. NOTE THE "NSA 2002" ETCHED IN THE SAND. (Back row l to r): CARI CALDWELL, MIKE CAGGIANO, CATHY OLISH, LUIS PATINO, RYAN BASSETT, EVELYN, MARK DE BIASIO, DAWN, SCOTT YEAGER. (Front row l to r): KEN KOROLL, PAUL ENGLEMAN, BRYAN HOLT, MIKE HOLT

# NSA IXX!



# 25 YEARS!







**WOW!**



# NSA Pioneers First Joint Research Symposium

**A landmark collaboration**

BY SCOTT YARUSS, PH.D.

ON JUNE 26-27, THE NSA HOSTED "PIONEERING RESEARCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE FIRST JOINT SYMPOSIUM FOR RESEARCHERS AND CONSUMERS." The meeting was two years in the planning and is believed to be the first such gathering in the history of stuttering research.

The event was designed to facilitate interactions between and among researchers and consumers regarding fluency disorders. For a day and a half, fifty scientists and clinicians, along with fifteen consumer advocates, met to discuss the current and future state of stuttering research.

Discussion topics included "Treatment Outcomes," "Brain and Behavior," "Language and Motor Interactions," "Attitudes Toward Stuttering and People Who Stutter," and "Risk Factors/Early Intervention."

Participants organized themselves into small working groups to explore various research issues. The topics included current knowledge on specific subjects, important questions that need to be answered, roadblocks in meeting research needs, and the role that consumer organizations might play in meeting the challenges of investigating all aspects of stuttering.

The symposium was the latest in a series of NSA initiatives to strengthen the partnership between the NSA and professionals working in the area of stuttering.

Other ways the NSA is working with the professional community include the presentation of continuing education programs in stuttering for practicing speech-language pathologists (SLPs), assisting in university training programs, developing numerous booklets, books, and brochures to assist SLPs in their work, and promoting specialization in stuttering therapy.

Comments following the meeting were very positive. We are already talking about plans for the next symposium.

Another positive outcome was that many of the professional participants who had not previously attended an annual NSA conference con-

tinued to stay on when our main conference began on the 27th.

It was wonderful to observe the interaction between those who search for causes and improved treatments of stuttering and those who live with it everyday. All in all, this was a historic symposium as well as a wonderful gathering of people who are challenged by unlocking the mystery of stuttering.

... SCOTT YARUSS SERVES AS A CLINICAL RESEARCH CONSULTANT AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PITTSBURGH, AND IS CO-DIRECTOR, STUTTERING CENTER OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, WHERE HE ACTIVELY ENGAGES IN FLUENCY THERAPY WITH CHILDREN WHO STUTTER.



• ONE OF THE MANY DISCUSSION GROUPS EXPLORES A RESEARCH ISSUE AT THE JOINT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM. (L TO R) BILL PARRY, DORVAN BREITENFELDT, SLP, JUDITH ECKARDT, SLP, TRUDY STEWART (FROM THE U.K.), JUDITH KUSTER, SLP AND VIVIAN SHEEHAN, SLP.



• A FEW SLPs ATTENDING THE SYMPOSIUM ENJOY A LITTLE TIME BY THE POOL: (L TO R) LARRY MOLT, DOUG WING, JUDITH ECKARDT, BOB QUESAL AND WALT MANNING.

## M\*A\*S\*H Writer Received Award

**NSA recognizes a 20-year-old show**

BY IRA ZIMMERMAN

WITH MY HEART SKIPPING SLIGHTLY, I STEPPED TO THE MICROPHONE TO PRESENT AN AWARD for the best TV sitcom teleplay portrayal of stuttering in the past 25 years. It was for the M\*A\*S\*H episode "Run for the Money" written in 1982 by the Elias Davis and David Pollock.

Although I had heard about this episode and looked for it for many years, I could never seem to find it. The minor plot line of the episode was about a soldier who stutters and thinks that he is stupid because he can't talk. But the main plot line listed in the TV Guide always referred to a foot race, not an episode about the stuttering soldier.

Then one Sunday morning, during a commercial break while I was watching my favorite Sunday morning newsmagazine, I switched to the M\*A\*S\*H episode running on another station.

And there it was.

I checked the plot line in my TV Guide and watched for that episode to be repeated so I could record it. I brought that episode to last

winter's NSA Board meeting and suggested that its writers be recognized for their eight minute portrayal of stuttering which did everything the right way.

When the Board agreed, I wrote the writers' agents, not knowing even if they were still alive. To my pleasant surprise, I heard from both writers that they were honored by NSA giving them an award for a program that was broadcast nearly 20 years ago.

Mr. Pollock came to the convention to represent the writing team. (Mr. Davis had a family conflict.) I was somewhat surprised that before Mr. Pollock came up to receive his award, he was quite nervous. He had prepared an acceptance speech and appeared worried about how it would be received by us. I always have to be reminded that public speaking is still a feared situation for most people.

Mr. Pollock's speech was sincere and funny. He even told a funny story about me. I had sent him an email telling him what time he would receive the award. I meant to write "At 8:35 p.m. you get the plaque." Instead I wrote, "At

8:35 p.m. you get the plague." That got a big laugh.

Many people told me later that the M\*A\*S\*H Award Presentation was a "home run." One of the children attending the Youth Program even mentioned it as one of the highlights of the conference.

I also appreciated that a first draft of the "M\*A\*S\*H-Run for the Money" script autographed by both writers was later auctioned off for \$2,000.

... IRA ZIMMERMAN IS A FORMER BOARD MEMBER OF THE NSA AND A LONG-TIME ADVOCATE FOR THE STUTTERING COMMUNITY.



• M\*A\*S\*H WRITER DAVID POLLACK (left) AND IRA ZIMMERMAN FOLLOWING IRA'S PRESENTATION OF THE NSA'S AWARD FOR BEST SITCOM TELEPLAY PORTRAYAL OF STUTTERING.

# OUR VOICE

NSA young people and parents speak out



## NSA IXX Was Non-Stop Fun for Kids

Family programs a big part of the festivities

BY NINA REARDON

**THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL NSA NATIONAL CONFERENCE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!** The Family Programs portion of this year's Anaheim conference was, once again, a record breaker. Over 150 of the attendees were parents, siblings and children who stutter. The Family Programs group was a great mixture of first-timers and seasoned "veterans."

The most amazing committee was ready to receive them; spear-headed by the ever-wonderful Debbie Nicolai. As always, Gail Wilson-Lew brought her expertise, and this year, also brought many of her students as volunteers. Sherri Wolff and Mandi Bradberry wrangled and worked with the kids. Bob Spradley handled A/V and workshop troubleshooting, and Kevin Eldridge, Miike Retzinger, and Joe Donaher expertly handled the popular Friday night "teaming" event.

Children, sibling, parent, and teen workshops were scheduled concurrently throughout the three action packed days in California. Never a down or dull moment, as everyone kept busy while they enjoyed the wonderful array of seminar topics. Workshop presenters included SLPs from across the country, adult and teen members of the NSA, and parents of children who stutter. As usual, there were not many silent moments, as the families talked with each other in the halls, at lunch, and during the evening "respite."

A remarkable 38 teenagers came to Anaheim, more than we have ever seen; and sometimes, more than we knew what to do with! It was, however, a remarkable group of young adults who joined together during the Anaheim "adventures."

The surprising amount of teens necessitated a change in the status quo of the job of Teen Liaisons. Instead of two, we needed three. And, three of the most amazing young adults acted as role models for teens, parents, and youth

alike. Andy Walenga, Megan Fujiwara, and Nic Waitt were fabulous, and demonstrated what strong leadership the NSA has to look forward to in its future!

Of course, the children loved the pool party and the scavenger hunt, along with drawing their stuttering, and getting to talk to it on camera! The ice cream social was also a huge success. The teenagers enjoyed being together and getting to know such a large group of other adolescents who stutter. Parents enjoyed watching their children interact as never before and also finding out that they, as parents were not alone, either.

Together, we all went through tears, fears, hugs, laughter and joy. We had experiences that will not soon be forgotten, and some that will last a lifetime (who could forget Jackson Montelbano at the closing ceremony).

The NSA Family Programs grows each and every year. This happens because of tireless hours of volunteer spirit, chapter leaders who want to make a difference for kids, and the NSA's overall commitment for providing support for all people who stutter; young and old(er) alike. After all the dust settled, one theme rang true for everyone: "Last one to leave for Nashville, turn out the lights!"

I cannot express enough my heart-felt appreciation to all those who volunteer and come out of the woodwork to make regional Family Days and the annual National Conference a success. It is the volunteer spirit and unbelievable selfless teamwork, both in front of and behind the scenes that make a difference in the lives of others who stutter.

You all know who you are, and there are too many to mention; so I wish to offer my gratitude and love to everyone who has been there through the years of planting the Family Programs "seed" and helping it to grow.

... NINA REARDON IS A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST, NSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS SECRETARY AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE NSA FAMILY PROGRAMS. SHE IS THE "OUR VOICE" COORDINATOR FOR LETTING GO.





# Advertising Pays Off

*It feels good to be in charge*

BY ELANA YUDMAN

ANAHEIM WAS MY SECOND CONVENTION, and what again struck me the most about the whole convention experience was the high that I left with; I wanted it to stay with me forever. It is a feeling that can be hard to describe to people who have not experienced a NSA convention, but it is simply amazing. That feeling of safety when you are constantly surrounded by people who stutter, where you do not feel weird or uneasy walking up to someone you do not know to introduce yourself. Meeting new people has always been tough for me.

While I was flying home to New York, I spent some of that five-hour flight thinking about how I could sustain this feeling. I eventually came to the realization that it is all in my head. All I would need is some positive self talk to keep the feeling going. And, of course, the idea that if I do stutter, it is not the end of the world. It is important to remember the good times when those inevitable bad times come along.

Well, the day after I got back from Anaheim, I started a new job at a day camp working as the head rocketry specialist. I knew no one else in the camp, except for my brother, and I felt a little nervous about that. It turned out, though, it was not bad at all. Luckily, I still had that convention high going (being it was the day after), and I felt relatively comfortable introducing myself to other people. I ended up meeting some cool people.

When I was introducing myself to the groups that came to me, I had some trouble saying my name a couple of times, but it was okay. There is always next time. I had more important worries than my speech, like how to teach these kids to build and launch a rocket without getting hurt.

I kept this good experience in mind when I went to my college orientation a couple of weeks later at Binghamton University. I wanted to bring that convention high with me. I was still carrying it with me in the back of my head, and I wanted to have that free feeling to just go and talk to anyone. The people I had just graduated high school with I had gone to school with since kindergarten, and the idea that I would be meeting totally new people scared me a little. I realized, though, that most college freshman have this worry. I just have the extra worry with stuttering, but it is all in my head.

My stuttering is very mild now, but I still stutter. So, I thought it would be great if I advertised to people that I stutter. That way, when I do stutter, they will know what is happening. I figured the easiest place for me to advertise initially would be during an icebreaker after they broke us into smaller groups of around fifteen.

The Orientation Adviser had us all go around to say our names and where we are from, and then say three things about ourselves, one of them not being true. Everyone else has to pick out the one that is not true. When it was my turn, I said, "My name is Elana from Pomona, New York. My favorite color is blue, I stutter, and I like the Mets." (Liking the Mets being the false statement) However, I conveniently did not stutter while saying this, and had to then say, "Yes, I do stutter. I know I didn't then, but I just like to get it out there." It looked like I got some weird looks from people, like maybe they did not get what I meant, but I just felt good that I did it, for me.

Maybe that method of advertising did not work best for that particular situation, but I was just happy I did it to a group of people I had never met before. I did not fixate on the bad part of it, just the part that I was so happy I did that. It was another one of those natural highs. I ended up having a great time at orientation, and even got all but one of the classes I wanted.

I am really looking forward to college now, and I know I can do whatever I want if I keep a positive outlook.

... ELANA YUDMAN HAS BEEN AN NSA MEMBER FOR TWO YEARS AND WILL BE A FRESHMAN AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY IN UPSTATE NEW YORK WHERE SHE WANTS TO MAJOR IN BIOLOGY, WITH PREMED. SHE LIKES MUSIC, ESPECIALLY THE DAVE MATTHEWS BAND AND JOHN MAYER, PUBLIC SPEAKING, AND SHOPPING.

## A Teen's Eye View

*It was a memorable experience*

BY MEGAN FUJIWARA

THE ANAHEIM CONVENTION WAS A WHOLE NEW EXPERIENCE FOR MANY DIFFERENT REASONS. The convention was a part of my life since early September when the planning committee had our first meeting. We met a few times during the year, but the bulk of the work began during the spring months.

As the convention grew closer, the Orange County chapter's excitement grew. Our final meeting was held at the hotel on Tuesday night before the convention started the following day. It was so great just to sit and eat with the amazing planning team before the chaos started.

My information table officially opened up on Wednesday morning. Many thanks to Randy and Luis for being there at 7 a.m. to open up the table for me. Seeing new and old faces walk into the hotel was so great. If I had a quarter for every time someone asked me where registration was, I would be rich! I loved my job as "Information Lady." I was also a Teen Liaison during the Anaheim convention. Being part of the family programs was an amazing experience, and I would love to do it again.

Seeing all the new faces at family orientation when I introduced myself was inspiring. Those kids are so lucky to have the NSA at such a young age. Nina Reardon informed us that this was the largest number of teens we have ever had. It is so great to see the teen group grow!

There were many highlights at this year's convention. Speaking at the opening ceremony was definitely a memorable experience. I have never before spoken to such a large crowd!

My convention duties officially ended on Sunday morning when Annie and I cleaned off my information table. But Sunday was one of the best days of the convention. A bunch of the teens went to Huntington Beach. What a relaxing day! We returned to the hotel in early evening and went to the pool to socialize with a group that was already at the pool.

Sunday night was one of the most memorable nights ever! A group of 25 teens and adults went to dinner at Bucca Di Beppo. Who knew a group of stutterers could be so loud! We took up an entire room and even had our own little version of an open mike.

During this convention, I gained an enormous amount of respect for a number of people. Randy Hoover was amazing! I never once saw him sit down and relax. He was always on the go, solving every problem that arose.

Debbie Nicolai was involved in many aspects of the convention. I am in awe of how she juggled the baskets and the family programs.

Isha, the registration queen, handled her huge job beautifully. She became one of my closest friends and a supporter during the convention.

I finally left the hotel on Monday afternoon, but not before gaining a new friend, Sebastian Scala. He is such an inspiration to me!

Annie, Tammy, and Nina: I have no idea how you do this year after year. It was an exhausting, but rewarding experience. I can't wait to see everyone in Nashville!

... MEGAN FUJIWARA IS A SOPHOMORE AT CHAFFEY COLLEGE IN RANCHO CUCAMONGA AND A MEMBER OF THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER.



• MEGAN FUJIWARA AND SAMANTHA GENUZZO.

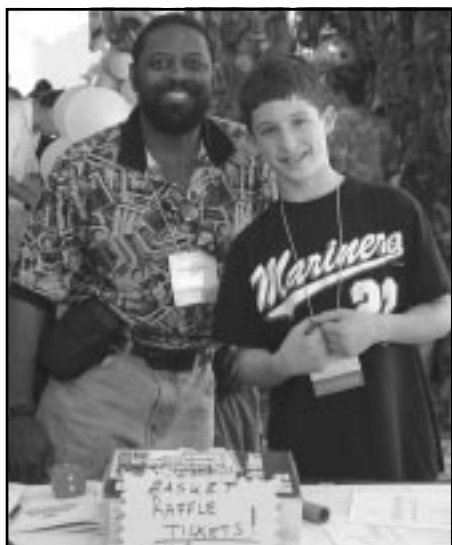


# What's Happening ?

the latest news • hot items • who's doing what • who went where • upcoming events • etc.

COMPILED BY CATHY OLISH

If you were at this year's convention in Anaheim then you were sure to have met **Ryan Saitta**, from Seattle. Anyone who bought shirts, raffle tickets, or a license plate frame met Ryan at the NSA store. He worked very hard throughout this year's convention. He was downstairs before 8:00 AM everyday to help set up (this is an accomplishment considering he usually sleeps until noon on days off from school!) He helped set up, clean up and run the NSA store every day of the convention. He also worked tirelessly during the auction on Saturday night, as Annie's and Lee Reeve's right hand man. Annie and Tammy say he has to come to Nashville to continue his efforts. Ryan gave his time at this year's convention as part of his Mitzvah project for his Bar Mitzvah in October. Ryan came to Anaheim with his mom, Elaine, an SLP who stutters. Ryan states that he had a great time helping, but he especially liked watching the Angels play the Dodgers! We want to thank Ryan for his work and join his mom in saying how proud we are of him.



• RYAN SAITTA (right) AND ROBIN DESCHAMPS DOING A GREAT JOB SELLING THOSE RAFFLE TICKETS.

On July 12-14, the NSA participated in School 2002 American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Annual Conference for Speech-Language Pathologists in Schools in Nashville, Tennessee. This annual event is one of the most anticipated conferences for school based clinicians. The NSA staff of **Annie Bradberry**, Executive Director and **Tammy Flores**, Director of Operations, were there to run the booth. Assisting was local NSA member **Julie Lammel**. Since this is the location of

next year's NSA annual conference, NSA staff were able to begin working on entertainment, tours and start conference planning.

**Ira Zimmerman** was invited to appear on a KUCI Radio program (88.9 FM) during the week of NSAW to speak about stuttering. The topic was "A Look Inside Stuttering: Its Place In the Media." It was broadcast live to an audience around the UCI campus and the interview was placed on the University's website: <www.kuci.org> and is available to view worldwide. They asked Ira to come up with enough material for a 50-60 minute program. Ira was easily able to provide enough stories to fill up the time.

The United Kingdom's Jubilee Birthday Honours conferred by the Queen were announced on Saturday, June 15. **Edwin J. Farr**, Chairperson of ELSA, has received the award of Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E) for services to the British Stammering Association and the European League of Stuttering Associations. Edwin has been a member of the British Stammering Association for 20 years and a Trustee for 12. Edwin is also a member of the National Stuttering Association and attended our Annual Conference in Anaheim this year.

**Elaine Saitta** taught the stuttering section of the undergraduate communication disorders class at the University of Washington in Seattle on July 19th. This is the second time she has done this, and she took some time at the end to talk about her experiences as a person who stutters. Elaine thinks it is valuable for these students to hear first hand about stuttering rather than from a book. The students asked great questions, which meant they were listening and thinking about it. One of the best parts of the morning was when one of the students came up to her afterwards and said that Elaine had given her the courage to do something about her stuttering. Wow! You never know when you are going to touch someone.

On July 15, **Chris Roach**, **Jeff Lukash** and **Ken Melnick** (of the Plano-Dallas group) had an opportunity to talk to a group of over 20 parents whose children have been attending **Tasha Anderson's** and **Jan Lougeay's** third year of the summer "Tricks for Talking" university camp at the University of Texas at Dallas—a wonderful intense therapy program for children and numerous SLP students who participate as instructors. We had a fun discussion about what worked for us as children, the things we felt our parents did well, and general advice as to what we've learned on our stuttering journey.

Also on July 15, **Alan Badmington** (who

came to the convention from Wales) gave a live interview with BBC Radio Wales (in the UK) to discuss general matters relating to stuttering, including his recent attendance at the NSA Conference in Anaheim. This was his sixth interview on stuttering in the past 12 months. Then on July 18, Alan addressed a large gathering of professional and business people to discuss "My lifetime of stuttering."



• ALAN BADMINGTON HAMS IT UP AT THE BANQUET WITH GINA WAGGOTT (FROM THE U.K.) AND OUR OWN VICKI SCHUTTER.

On July 17, St. Louis, Missouri chapter leader **Ed Weiss** participated in a meeting with the Stuttering Across America project on their way to Denver from New York. This is a project of Friends, an organization that supports young kids and teenagers who stutter. The Stuttering Across America project consisted of **Elizabeth Mendez** and a group of young stutters on a two-week journey that began in New York and traveled to Denver, Colorado to attend a Friends convention. During their stops in cities along the way, activities were planned for the age groups who were present.



• DIANE LANGRIDGE, AN SLP FROM UPLAND, CA HIGH SCHOOL, BROUGHT FIVE OF HER STUDENTS TO THE CONVENTION. (l to r) MELVIN MAUNG-U, SEAN KEATING, DIANE LANGRIDGE, LATISHA WILLIAMS. (in front) SARA SNIDER AND FRESHTA SADIQ.

**FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND FUN continued**

and then we had the first general session. This was another "old friends" time for me, because Dr. Walt Manning inducted into the Stuttering Hall of Fame Dr. Eugene Cooper, whom I have known since 1972 and dearly love. I genuinely treasured seeing his induction and hearing his speech, and it was made even more delightful by Dr. Cooper's presentation of the conference dedicatee, who was a very surprised Walt Manning. This was an NSA conference moment to treasure for years to come!

Friday's keynote address was presented by Rabbi Mark Glickman, who is no stranger to NSA conference attendees. We have heard him twice before at the Thursday night opening receptions, but this time we got to hear him talk a bit longer. As always, he was warm, wise, and humorous, tickling our funny bones as he touched our hearts.

Joseph Diaz again did a wonderful job of emceeing the NSA Awards Luncheon. I won't go into all the winners here, but some of the acceptance speeches will never be forgotten.

The afternoon was filled with so many good workshops that it was difficult to choose between them. Conference attendees had already had to make another difficult choice when they registered for the conference, because that was when they had to sign up for a Friday night activity. Would it be Disneyland? California Adventure? The Tikiboat Dance Cruise? The baseball game? If only we could have done them all! I chose the Tikiboat Cruise (I'm sure those of you who know me are really surprised to hear that), and I can assure you that everyone on that boat had a blast!

Saturday morning began with another open mic session. Then came the general session and the Saturday keynote address by Dennis Barsema, Chairman of the Board for Onetta. Dennis' speech was a personal and moving story of his fight to achieve his own personal best despite his stuttering and other hardships. We all were with him every step of the way as he told of his journey, and when he stepped down from the podium, we felt that we had found a new friend.

There were more difficult workshop choices after lunch that day, and then came the closing ceremony. We could hardly believe the end had already arrived. We gathered together, and the first order of business was to draw the names of the winners of the Chapter Gift Baskets raffle. I

got Minnesota, which I had wanted to give to my husband who went to college there. He was very impressed with it, as I'm sure all the other winners were with their baskets. Then the real ceremony began, featuring the performance of a beautiful original song written by Lindsay Campbell and another poem by Jim Abbott.

That night was the banquet, auction, and dancing. I got a real treat because I found myself sitting with my new friends from the U.K., Gina Waggott and Alan Badmington, with old friend John Harrison on my other side. The auction featured many wonderful items, including the famous Australian hat which was auctioned off for a final time that night. The reason it was final was because John Steggle - who had donated the original hat to his first NSA conference auction - had brought a new one, a knockoff of the hat worn by Crocodile Dundee! We were treated to a delightful tall tale (which included crocodiles, Steve Irwin, and several undoubtedly truthful adventures) about how John had obtained this hat, and it was auctioned off for one year. As with hat number one, it will be boomeranged back to the NSA next year in Nashville for re-auction to another lucky wearer.

Sunday is always the wind-down day for conference attendees. Some of us go on pre-scheduled tours, some of us go off on our own excursions, and some of us just hang around the hotel to rest, swim, and say good-bye. I went with "tour guides" Bernie and Harriet Weiner and three others to Universal Studios, and we had a great time, in spite of what the Jurassic Park River Ride did to my hair. That night Mike Smith and Sebastian Scala organized a dinner trip to a nearby Italian restaurant for 22 of us. It was a lovely evening of good food and lots of laughs.

And then it was Monday, the day to return to the "real world." But even then the conference was not yet over for me. At the airport I ran into Bob Koste from the New Jersey chapter. I had just met him that morning at breakfast, so we didn't know each other very well, but we began to talk about the conference. Bob's heartfelt words about his NSA family really touched me and brought the conference around full circle to what it's all about: the "family" of NSA friends old and new, who are always there for you, as you are for them.

See y'all in Nashville.

... VICKI SCHUTTER HAS ATTENDED NSA CONFERENCES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME. SHE'S ALSO FROM HOUSTON WHICH SAYS A LOT.

**IT WAS WELL WORTH THE TRIP continued**

that parents like Tim and Debbie shower over their son Chris, carrying him, pushing him, coaching him. Giving their time, money and efforts to the NSA. Growing up with such parents is the wish of every child. And I was definitely not prepared to become a small part of their love and support myself.

I was not prepared for the unconditional love of Nina to her kids. She got them to talk on stage in front of the whole group. I watched them grow during the convention. I saw their work. And I saw Nina's proud tears doing this. They were HER kids those days. And I was definitely not prepared for the love these kids directly gave me during and after the scavenger hunt. I was grateful to be a part of it.

I was not prepared for the unconditional love of my friends from Stutt-L, who were even more wonderful in person. They made me feel important and loved, and introduced me to their friends.

And I was definitely not prepared to be loved by people who had never met me before.

I was not prepared for the unconditional love from Annie who made me one of her close friends. She took me into her heart and we shared our deepest emotions. She made me a part of her world, her family and her friends, by showing me the people and places she loves the most during a whole week.

And I was definitely not prepared for the love her lovely parents, her beautiful daughter and her great brother gave me, together with her friends and yes, even her pets.

I have never felt such unconditional and ultimate love. So now you guys, tell me - how do I move on? How can I ever live my life without your hugs, your loving and supportive words, your poems, your expertise.

Today is the 4th of July and people are happy and celebrating. But how can I? How can I put this ultimate body and mind experience behind me when I enter my plane and be thousand of miles away from you? Will I ever return? Will I ever see you all again? Will I ever find my own peace again? Will we stay in touch or will I be replaced by other people who come into your lives?

My dearest friends, why didn't you tell me that ultimate and unconditional love really exists.

Anita Blom, Sweden



• KEYNOTE SPEAKER RABBI MARK GLICKMAN



• KEYNOTE SPEAKER DENNIS BARSEMA



• KEYNOTE SPEAKER ADRIAN PETERSON



• ALFRED HERZING, PRESIDENT OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

# 19th Annual Conference Dedicated to Walt Manning

BY EUGENE COOPER, PH.D.

*(Dr. Gene Cooper had the pleasure of announcing that this year's NSA conference was dedicated to his long-time friend and associate, Walt Manning, Ph.D. These were Gene's comments.)*

IT IS THE TRADITION OF THE ASSOCIATION EACH YEAR TO DEDICATE ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO AN INDIVIDUAL who has made and continues to make significant contributions in meeting the association's goals.

I have been asked this year to announce the individual for whom the 19th Annual Conference of the National Stuttering Association is to be dedicated.

I am delighted to do so. As you will later hear, it is all together fitting and proper that I should have this honor.

This year, the Conference is being dedicated to an individual whose work as a clinician, scholar, author, academician, administrator, and volunteer have made his name a "household word" (to use the vernacular) for those of us concerned with the world of stuttering.

Having known our honoree for many years, I can attest to the fact that he is unique in at least one major and telling manner. While having become a major force in the world of stuttering, our dedicatee appears to have made no enemies along the way. I've never heard an unkind word of a word of criticism spoken about our dedicatee. Now, that just isn't nearly natural. I've always believed that one who has made no enemies probably hasn't done anything. Well, here is the exception. As I've observed our dedicatee in action lo these many years, I've alternately envied and cursed this trait that I so lack in abundance.

But enough of my petty jealousies. Here is an individual who, with humor, creativity and compassion, has made and continues to make significant contributions to our professional literature, to our understanding of the clinical process, and to the development of processes and procedures for enhancing the education of specialists to assist those experiencing fluency disorders.

When I first met our dedicatee some 40 years ago, I knew I had met someone special. Little did I know that our friendship would grow and sustain itself for such a long period of time. What a joy it has been.

So, you can understand why it is such a delight for me to announce that the National Stuttering Association's 19th Annual Conference is officially hereby dedicated to Walter H. Manning.



WALT  
MANNING

## Reflections of the 2002 Conference

BY JIM ABBOTT



This is for any and all who were at the NSA conference in Anaheim, or to those who have experienced the magic of our annual gatherings in days gone past but were unable to make the trip to California this year.

*Don't know when our paths shall once more cross  
Maybe a year  
Perhaps several  
Or could be they never again will  
Can't tell  
Can't say  
For who knows from fate  
There was a song a few years back  
Called "I'm Going To Disneyland"  
Found myself singing the chorus over and over  
this past week  
It has taken on meaning to me  
I'm sure that it's author  
Never could have dreamed  
It has acquired a permanent place of residence  
in my heart and in my mind  
And shall stay with me  
For the rest of time  
And when my thoughts  
Those words they run across  
Comforted I shall be  
For I know that I will forever always  
Carry a part of each of you with me  
But words can never express truly  
What to my life you people really mean  
Far more than mere friends  
In some ways our bond goes deeper than even  
that of family  
Bless you  
And thank you  
Just for being  
Peace*

• JIM ABBOTT IS CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE ROYAL OAK BEAUMONT CHAPTER, MICHIGAN.



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Check here if you have elected to make an additional contribution and would like to prorate the amount over the coming year. We will send a monthly reminder pledge card and return envelope right to your home or office. This is a great way to support the NSA, and it is easier on your wallet. Give a little each month, and help the NSA continue to reach out to the many who stutter.



# Chapter News

from Bonnie Weiss

## BOSTON, MA

At a recent meeting of the Boston chapter, those present read and talked about the eye contact exercises from Malcolm Fraser's book. Discussion questions included – "Why do people who stutter fear eye contact?" and "Where are we in the spectrum from never looking someone in the eye to always having good eye contact?" Also, congrats to Bob Rochefort who is now the chapter leader for the Boston group.

## CLEVELAND-EAST, OH

Glenn Schafer reports that in May they discussed the nature of stuttering, it's connotations and associated feelings, what the NSA is all about, and what the NSA has done for members in the group. During their June meetings, phone techniques were discussed. Members talked about ways they could help themselves when using the phone. In July, their discussion centered on how to make sure listeners understood them when they talked.

## DALLAS, TX

Back in May, Russ Hicks facilitated a meeting—something he hadn't done in quite a while. Russ said that the stuttering topic was "Reach Out and Teach a Stranger." Members of the group had very mixed reactions to the topic and came up with many questions on what to say to strangers. They talked in both the large group and small breakout groups, and Russ passed out NSA "Notes to Listeners" pamphlets which contained viable answers to the questions under discussion.

## GREENVILLE, SC

The Greenville group currently has about 12 members. They meet the first Tuesday of each month at the Center for Developmental Services. SLP Jodi Kirchner writes that they are attempting different methods to increase interest in chapter attendance and would love to hear any ideas from other chapters on the topic.

## LOS ANGELES, CA

Gail Wilson Lew writes that the L.A. chapter had a good discussion at their June meeting. Some of those present talked about how they have suffered from depression and shared various things that helped them get out of their depression, including medication, faith, and the healing powers of time. At the end of the meeting, they watched a video of Carl Dell, the 1990 convention keynote speaker, sharing funny stories as well as some of his difficult issues related to stuttering.

## MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Judy Johnson writes that in June their chapter went to dinner at Famous Dave's Restaurant. Twelve people showed up, and they had a blast. The chapter doesn't have meetings during the summer but does hold a party at the Johnson cabin.

## PLANO, TX

Jeff Lukash, Ken Melnick, and Chris Roach, all members of the "new" Plano Chapter, had an opportunity to talk to a group of more than 20 parents. These parents had children attending Tasha Anderson's and Jan Lougeay's "Tricks for Talking" camp at the University of Texas at Dallas. The camp is an intense therapy program for children, with SLP students participating as instructors. Various speakers discussed what worked for them as children, the things that they felt their families did well, and shared what they've learned along their stuttering journey. The parents appeared highly receptive.

## SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Nora O'Connor writes that one of the things she loves about the San Francisco chapter is their ethnic diversity. At a recent meeting, four Asians were in attendance, two of whom were attending their first chapter meeting. A portion of the meeting was centered around a discussion of the challenges of speaking English as a second language and how stuttering fits into the overall picture.

## ST. LOUIS, MO

Chapter leader Ed Weiss writes that 15 people attended their July 15th meeting, four of whom stuttered and one of whom was a recent SLP graduate. Ed says that they even had a member of the Royal Oak, Michigan chapter who was in town visiting family. After introductions, the group used Russ Hicks's handout on the "jailer" for some interesting discussion. One member is a new father and another two were married earlier in the summer.

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