

Community health depends on community voices

LOVN CHAT Meeting Summary **April 9th 8:30 am**

Present: Pat Maurer, Edward Ogiba, Angie Zongker, Mary King, Hilary Woodcum, Tom Gosler, Cheri Chambers, Marcy Sarkozy, Richard Rogers, Michael Gleason, Jackie Orton, Diane Ramseyer

Welcome and Introductions – Paula Carney, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were provided.

Update on LOVN CHAT Nutrition Month Activities – Completed DVD's were distributed, with additional copies available to any CHAT member interested in helping distribute throughout the community.

Updates from the March Activities for Nutrition Month and the DVD Launch were provided by Pat, Mary, Richard and Diane. About 30 people attended the Nutrition Bingo, and it received very positive responses. About 60 persons attended the Healthy Eating Fair, with many staying for the entire morning's events, which included a popular cooking demonstration by Richard Rogers. The Panel Discussion on had about 6 community members, but they were very attentive and interactive throughout. Susan Rachles, Englewood Community Hospital, and Diane Cogburn, Tidewell, presented information on healthy eating on a budget.

Diane shared a comment she received from someone who came from Sarasota for the Saturday event. She indicated she thought it was a wonderful event and "wished they would do this type of thing in Sarasota".

Special Guest – Ed Ogiba - The Hearing Loss Association of Sarasota and the Ear Research Foundation

Hearing Loss Association of Sarasota is a group which provides information and support to community members with a hearing loss. Their monthly meetings provide guest speakers and information on relevant topics. They were founded in 1989 as Self Help for Hard of Hearing People. They have 125 members now, and meet at the Selby Library. 36 million Americans have a hearing loss, with 110,000 in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. People often wait an average of 7 years before seeking assistance. Only 1 in 5 people who need hearing help actually get it. Their next meeting is April 14th at 1:30 – Dr. Edie Gibson, Advanced Bionics Physician and Drs. Victoria Moore and Autumn Riley will share information on how to get the most out of hearing aids and implants. May 19th at 1:30, they will have a panel of audiologists discussing "how to work with your audiologist".

The group also provides advocacy for the issue. They are working with theaters on captioning, including Rear Window Captioning – which is a personal captioning program. AMC utilizes this. The AMC theater in Sarasota will hold a demonstration on May 5th. Summer meetings do not provide a guest speaker, and focus on member support. Wednesday June 16th, July 21st and August 18th. They also do outreach through Health

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Expo and community presentation. They can provide information and resources, as well as free hearing tests.

www.HLAS.org - can sign up for monthly E-News (one for professionals and one for individuals and members) – or call Ed at 966-8999 for additional information.

Ed also provided information on the Ear Research Foundation. This non-profit is devoted to restoring hearing loss through International and National Research in hearing restoration. He shared information on some of the breakthroughs they have helped bring forward, both in new procedures as well as improvement in others. They also work to provide Medical Education – through symposiums and fellowship programs – and public education on hearing conditions. Their third area of work is in the area of community service – this focuses on Southwest Florida – providing services to uninsured and indigent. While this assistance is for all ages, it does have a focus on children. They do screening and follow-up, and can also provide cochlear implants for children. The physician and surgery time is donated through the Silverstein Institute. The Foundation raises the fund to cover the implants – 55% of cost of entire procedure and implant is covered by Silverstein Institute, the remainder through the Foundation. The Foundation is able to raise funding through royalties on the products developed through their research, fees for training from Physicians, and they work with Sertoma to raise funds for adult assistance.

Responding to a question, Ed indicated that children's ears are extremely sensitive to noise, and we have a culture with a lot of noise pollution. Additionally, medications can have side effects for children, and adults, which can include hearing loss. Tom Gosler shared that the VA has a strong hearing loss program. Ed was asked about a guide which might be available to help decide on hearing aids. There is a guide which can be provided as part of their membership to the Association (\$20/year).

Announcements and Catching Up with Member Activities

Jackie Orton from the Health Department shared information on KidCare – the Florida insurance program for children. 15th Annual Children's Week April 11-16th. There are events going on throughout the week, including displaying of the "hands" in the community, including at the libraries. For information on the activities, or on KidCare – call Jackie at 861-2813.

Next week is also National Library Week

April 27th – Veterans Benefit Seminar at Bella Vita – call 485-1196 – Paula will send out a flyer. Last's month's seminar was highly attended, so additional one scheduled.

Next CHAT meeting – May 14th – 8:30 pm Venice Library
Special Guest: Hedda Matza-Haughton
"Laugh for the Health of It"
www.laughforthehealthofit.net