

NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE...

- Ann Landers Focuses on Stuttering
New Brochures Available in Spanish

A Non-Profit Organization Since 1947... Helping Those Who Stutter

Volume IV, Number 3

A few excerpts from letters received from Ann Landers' readers asking for help.

"Ann Landers printed something that was right on the mark. Up until now I did not realize that so many other people stuttered or even that there was an organization that could help."

"I am a friend of a person who stutters. She is having difficulty dealing with the general public's misconceptions regarding this disorder. I would like to reassure her that she is not alone in dealing with this sort of criticism."

"I have a little three-year-old granddaughter who is developing quite a stuttering problem. I have been unable to find any helpful information at local libraries or book stores..."

"My nephew is 50 years old and still stutters. People look at him funny, and he is afraid to talk. If you can help him in any way, it would be a godsend..."

"I recently read an Ann Landers column in which a woman wrote about her embarrassment due to her disability—stuttering! I too look normal, but I also suffer with the same disability."

"I have a great grandson three years old. Please help me to help him."

"This problem seems to be getting worse with age. I alternate between stammering and mixing up words in sentences. People tease me at home and at work, but it's a great deal of embarrassment to me."

"I have a five-year-old grandson who stutters. Some days he is fine, other days he cannot speak without stuttering."

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Ann Landers' Article Jams SFA Phones!

By Jean Gruss

A letter from a 46-year-old wife and mother from Wichita Falls, Texas, in Ann Landers' syndicated column recently prompted thousands of telephone calls and letters to the Stuttering Foundation of America.

The letter in which the writer describes the embarrassment and anxiety she feels every day because of her stuttering struck a chord in the hearts of thousands of readers.

Ann Landers published SFA's toll-free telephone number and address when responding to this letter in her column on July 18th.

The column was published in most U.S. newspapers, reaching millions of readers. The letter regarding stuttering was at the top of Landers' column and that generated numerous headlines.

"In a one-week period, we received more than 13,000 calls," said SFA President Jane Fraser.

The SFA, warned in advance of Landers' column, had three telephone lines to handle the crush of inquiries in the days following the column's publication.

SFA employees in Memphis, Tennessee, worked around the clock to fill telephone and mail requests for more information. More than 10,000 pieces of mail, including books and brochures, were mailed out in the two weeks following Landers' column.

Fraser credited SFA employees in Memphis with turning around inquiries and orders within two days despite the heavy volume. Sally Archer, Anne Edwards, Pat Hamm, and Donna White worked long hours and continue to help SFA's operations run smoothly.

The Landers' column is still generating hundreds of calls and letters more than two months after its publication.

SFA-University of Maryland Conference in Baltimore Is Success

The program, the participants, and the weather were all a big success on June 3-4, 1994, in Baltimore, Maryland, for the *Stuttering Therapy: Practical Ideas for the School Clinician* SFA seminar!

Co-sponsored by the Stuttering Foundation of America and the University of Maryland, College Park, this year, the annual seminar, designed expressly for speech language pathologists in the schools, was held at the Holiday Inn overlooking Camden Yards in Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

Over a hundred school-based professionals heard and interacted with fluency experts and clinicians—Peter Ramig, Barry Guitar, Ed Conture, Pearl Gordon, Ellen Bennett, Bill Murphy, Rich Forcucci, Charles Healey, Ann McKeehan, and Barbara Moore-Brown. Nan B. Ratner was conference coordinator, assisted by Joan McCarthy.

The unique format of presentation followed by discussion groups received rave reviews, and networks of clinicians quick-

ly formed. Participants also responded enthusiastically to the Saturday morning case presentations which highlighted successful fluency programs actually operating in schools in several states.

The videotapes of students in pre- and post-intervention sequences were dramatic and reinforced the important role of school speech language pathologists for children and adolescents who stutter.

Said Dr. Robert Scherr of Salisbury, Maryland, "The competency, enthusiasm, sensitivity, friendliness, and collegiality of the presenters were commendable." Carolyn Frankhouser, a speech therapist in the public schools in West Virginia added, "It was the most informative conference I have ever attended, as well as the most enjoyable."

Next year's conference will take place in Tampa, Florida, on June 13th and 14th and will be cosponsored by the University of South Florida.

For Combined Federal Campaign donors, please note that our number has changed! The code number for the 1995-96 CFC campaign is **CFC #2539.**



Attendees continue discussions during the two luncheons.



Bill Murphy answers a question during the Q & A session on Saturday.



Barbara Moore-Brown leads discussion group.



Speakers and discussion group leaders included: (front row) Ellen Bennett, Charles Healey, Barry Guitar, Jane Fraser, Nan B. Ratner, Barbara Moore-Brown; (back row) Bill Murphy, Richard Forcucci, Ed Conture, Pearl Gordon, Ann McKeehan, Peter Ramig. □

Stuttering Foundation Announces 1995 Journalism Awards Winners

The Stuttering Foundation of America announced its 1994-1995 Awards for excellence in reporting that furthers the public's understanding of this complex disorder during National Stuttering Awareness Week in May.

"We are very pleased by the increased attention that print and electronic journalists are giving to the causes and treatment of stuttering," said Jane Fraser, president of the non-profit foundation. "The numerous entries again this year clearly reflect that stuttering is receiving much more professional attention from the news media."

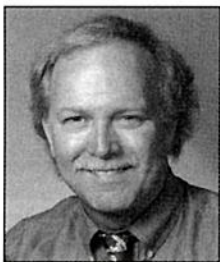
Six journalists in distinct categories are equally honored this year for their outstanding contributions. They are:

■ Danyne Romine Powell of *The Charlotte Observer* in North Carolina for her column "Personal Ad With A Mission."



Co-winner in our large print publication category, this piece movingly describes the experiences of a young man who tries classified advertising in a successful effort to form a support group for those who, like him, stutter.

■ Dennis McLellan of *The Los Angeles Times* in California for "Stutterers' Crusader Wants the Last Word."



Co-winner in the large print category, this profile chronicles the tireless efforts of local resident, Ira Zimmerman, to reduce the use of stereotypes involving stuttering nationwide.

■ Phyllis Walters of *The Daily Advertiser* in Lafayette, Louisiana, for "Stuttering...It Disrupts More Than Just Your Speech."

Recipient in the smaller print publication category, this excellent article details the activities of a speech-language pathologist who works in cooperation with local pediatricians to help young children. Her efforts are focused on helping youngsters before the problem becomes a chronic one.

■ Karen Engberg of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* for "Early Detection and Intervention Are Key To Coping With Stuttering."

Winner in the syndicated columnist category, the author of the "Healthy Kids" column performs a wonderful service in explaining to parents the differences they can detect between normal disfluent speech in a child and true stuttering. The latter problem can often be successfully treated if the parent seeks the help of a certified speech pathologist at an early age.

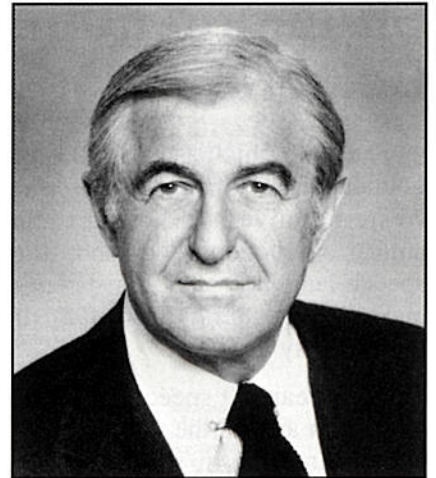
■ Sarah Wernick of *Working Mother* for her August 1994 "Straight Talk On Speech Problems."

Recipient in the magazine category, Ms. Wernick's article provides extensive advice to parents on the signs one can detect that may mean a young child is stuttering and needs prompt help from a qualified speech-language pathologist. She also provides good common sense counsel to parents on how they can help.

■ Co-winner in the foundation's electronic media category is WGNT-TV Channel 27 in Portsmouth, Virginia, for its outstanding *Spectrum* program on May 8, 1994, that spotlighted the work of two local speech-language pathologists in an informative forum.

■ Co-winner is a "Newsday" segment that aired January 19, 1995, on the Canadian Broadcasting Company in Ottawa. News reporter Dian Duthie interviewed participants in an intensive program for those who stutter. As the Canadian speech pathologist in the segment cautioned, however, maintaining fluency after participation in intensive therapy "is the difficult part."

Each of the Stuttering Foundation of America 1994-1995 winners received a cash award of \$250. □



OBITUARY

SFA Board Member Henry C. Rogers, Co-Founder of Major PR Firm

SFA board member Henry C. Rogers, co-founder of the world's largest entertainment public relations agency, died April 28, 1995, at his home in Los Angeles. He was 82.

Rogers, who always described himself as merely "a Hollywood press agent" although he represented Fortune 500 companies as well as such superstars as Rita Hayworth, Audrey Hepburn and Gary Cooper, teamed up with Warren Cowan in 1950 to create Rogers & Cowan.

Often called the dean of entertainment publicists, Rogers chronicled his long tenure in the business in a 1980 autobiography titled *Walking the Tightrope*. His work, he explained, was a careful stretch between the desire to promote his clients and the need to maintain credibility with the news media.

Rogers followed that book with another, *Rogers' Rules for Success*, which detailed how his mid-life crisis prompted him to widen his firm's reach to corporate clients as well as celebrities, and prodded him to become a fund-raiser for the arts in Los Angeles.

Rogers, who stuttered himself, joined the Board of the Stuttering Foundation in 1993. He provided SFA with valuable advice concerning its public information campaign. His wise counsel will be sorely missed. □

Stuttering Foundation and Northwestern University Celebrate Workshop's Tenth Anniversary

The Memphis-based Stuttering Foundation of America and Northwestern University hosted their annual instructional workshop for speech-language pathologists specializing in stuttering from July 10 through July 21, 1994.

Each year, 20 speech pathologists from around the world with a special interest in stuttering are accepted to participate in the workshop. Under the leadership of Dr. Hugo Gregory, the workshop is organized to focus on therapeutic skills and techniques for intervention with children and adults.

"The amount of information I've learned is tremendous," said Verena Degiovani of Brazil. She notes that in Brazil, with far fewer speech pathologists, getting new ideas is difficult.

This year's workshop participants come from the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Brazil, and Malta.

"We're getting new perspectives and are excited to return home with them," added Tim Mackesey of Atlanta, Georgia.

This unique workshop has gained international recognition for its excellence in the postgraduate study of stuttering.

Special Donation from Class of 1995

This year's class of 1995 made a generous donation to the Stuttering Foundation of America in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the workshop. "This gift is particularly meaningful to us," said Jane Fraser, president of SFA, "as it acknowledges the confidence the workshop participants place in the work we are doing on behalf of those who stutter."



Celebrating the 10th anniversary are: Diane Hill, Indershini Pillay, Sheran Samuels, Elizabeth Edwards, Jane Fraser, Vianne Bjornberg, and June Campbell.



"Speak no evil, see no evil, hear no evil," enacted by Elizabeth Edwards, Sheran Samuels, and Vianne Bjornberg.



Left to right: Judy Bowen, Christina Reppetti, Diane Parris, and Maria Marta Gebara.



Left to right: Joseph Agius, Laura Enz, Nicole Armstrong, and Tim Mackesey.



Back row: Vianne Bjornberg, Elizabeth Edwards, Sheran Samuels, Indershini Pillay, Pamela Hinrichs, Joseph Agius; Middle row: Diane Parris, Laura Enz, Verena Maierino Degiovani, Tim Mackesey, Kay Stricklan, Maria McCarthy, Nicole Armstrong; Front row standing: Christina Reppetti, Maria Marta Gebara, Judy Bowen, Rhonda Rubin, Brain Heskin, Stacey Brudner; Front row seated: Joe Fulcher, Carolyn Gregory, Jane Fraser, Hugo Gregory, June Campbell, Diane Hill. □



The Stuttering Foundation of America is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is classified as a private operating foundation as defined in section 4942(j)(3). Charitable contributions and bequests to the Foundation are tax-deductible, subject to limitations under the Code.

The Iceberg of Stuttering

By Joseph G. Sheehan

If your experience as a stutterer is anything like mine, you've spent a good part of your life listening to suggestions, such as "relax, think what you have to say, have confidence, take a deep breath," or even to "talk with pebbles in your mouth." And by now, you've found that these things don't help; if anything, they make you worse.

There's a good reason why these legendary remedies fail, because they all mean suppressing your stuttering, covering up, doing something artificial. And the more you cover up and try to avoid stuttering, the more you will stutter.

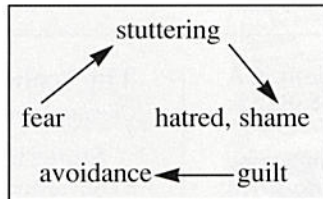
Your stuttering is like an iceberg. The part above the surface, what people see and hear, is really the smaller part. By far the larger part is the part underneath—the shame, the fear, the guilt, all those other feelings that come to us when we try to speak a simple sentence and can't.

Like me, you've probably tried to keep as much of that iceberg under the surface as possible. You've tried to cover up, to keep up a pretense as a fluent speaker, despite long blocks and pauses too painful for either you or your listener to ignore. You get tired of this phony role. Even when your crutches work, you don't feel very good about them. And when your tricks fail, you feel even worse. Even so, you probably don't realize how much your coverup and avoidance keep you in the vicious circle of stuttering.

In psychological and speech laboratories, we've uncovered evidence that stuttering is a conflict, a special kind of conflict between going forward and holding back—an "approach-avoidance" conflict. You want to express yourself, but are torn by a competing urge to hold back, because of fear. For you as for other stutterers, this fear has many sources and levels. The most immediate and pressing fear is of stuttering itself and is probably secondary to whatever

caused you to stutter in the first place.

Your fear of stuttering is based largely on your shame and hatred of it. The fear is also based on playing the phony role, pretending your stuttering doesn't exist. You can do something about this fear, if you have the courage. You can be open about your stuttering, above the surface. You can learn to go ahead and speak anyway, to go forward in the face of fear. In short, you can be yourself. Then you'll lose the insecurity that always comes from posing. You'll reduce that part of the iceberg beneath the surface. And this is the part that has to go first. Just being yourself, being open about your stuttering, will give you a lot of relief from tension.



Here are two principles which you can use to your advantage, once you understand them: they are (1) your stuttering doesn't hurt you; (2) your fluency doesn't do you any good. There's

nothing to be ashamed of when you stutter and there's nothing to be proud of when you are fluent.

Most stutterers wince with each block, experiencing it as a failure, a defect. For this reason they struggle hard not to stutter and therefore stutter all the more. They get themselves into a vicious circle which can be diagrammed as shown above.

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Excerpts from Letters to Ann Landers

Continued from page 1

"Feel free to give my name and address to any other stutterers who would like to write to someone who can definitely empathize with their situations."

(Ed. Paul G. Blanchet, 2747 Holloway Road #1107, Pineville, LA 71360)

"I am now fluent much of the time, but I still have a lot of trouble on the telephone and always when saying my name..."

"I teach second grade and would appreciate anything that would help me with the occasional student with a stuttering problem." □

Brochures Available in Spanish



Two excellent translations of *If You Think Your Child Is Stuttering* and *The Child Who Stutters At School: Notes to the Teacher* were made by Martha Tarasco, M.D., of Mexico.

Dr. Tarasco took time out of a busy medical practice to translate the brochures so that they would be available to Spanish-speaking people throughout Central and South America as well as the United States.

Dr. Tarasco attended the SFA-Northwestern Workshop for Specialists in 1993.

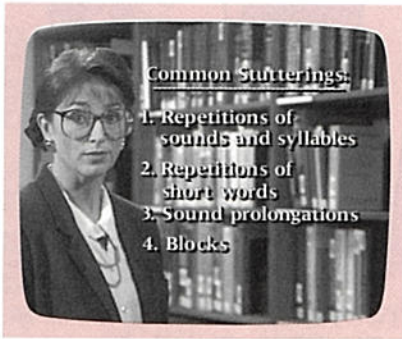
For more information concerning these new brochures, call SFA toll-free at 1-800-992-9392. □



Una guía para padres de chicos que tartamudean. This translation of parts of *Stuttering and Your Child: Questions & Answers* and *If Your Child Stutters: A Guide for Parents* by Beatriz de Touzet was published in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in May 1995. Dr. de Touzet attended the SFA-Northwestern Workshop for Specialists in 1991. □

Free Videotape Available to Public Libraries

In 1994 and again throughout 1995, the Stuttering Foundation shipped a free copy of *Stuttering and Your Child: A Videotape for Parents*



to over 3,000 public libraries across the country.

Because of the tremendous success of this project, SFA has continued to make these tapes available to public libraries. Wrote Betty Tiska of the Syosset Public Library in Syosset, New York, "The tape had been requested by a patron who receives your SFA Newsletter and thought it would be a valuable addition to the collection—and it certainly is!"

If your local library would like a free copy of *Stuttering and Your Child: A Videotape for Parents* and also a free copy of the eighth edition of *Self-Therapy for the Stutterer*, have



them call the Foundation at 1-800-992-9392 or write to SFA at the address listed below.

A press release will then be sent to the newspapers where each library is located to apprise local residents of the availability of the videotape. □

NEWSBRIEFS

■ Next year's SFA conference on the school-age child who stutters will be held in Tampa, Florida, on June 13th and 14th, 1996. For more information, contact SFA at 1-800-992-9392. More details about last year's exciting conference are found on page 2.

■ The tenth annual "Stuttering Therapy: Workshop for Specialists" cosponsored by the Stuttering Foundation and Northwestern University will be held at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, from July 8 through July 19, 1996. For more information about the workshop, contact the Stuttering Foundation at 1-800-992-9392, or Dr. Hugo Gregory, Stuttering Programs, Northwestern University, 2299 Campus Drive North, Evanston, IL 60208. This unique workshop brings together speech-language pathologists from all over the world.

■ Benson Bobrick's new book, *Knotted Tongues, Stuttering in History and the Quest for a Cure*, is available in bookstores across the country. This fascinating book is published by Simon & Schuster. Says Edward Hoagland, "Benson Bobrick is an independent scholar of special initiative and acuity. And in this new book...he is humane, witty, personable, and rather gracefully definitive and balanced."

■ For those interested in joining Toastmasters International as a way to improve fluency, communication or public speaking skills, their address is: Toastmasters International, Inc., Attention: Membership Department,

P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, Telephone 714 858-8255; Fax 714 858-1207.

■ For those wishing to obtain a copy of *Self-Therapy for the Stutterer* in French, write to Mr. Richard Parent, 175 Desnoyers, St. Hilaire (Quebec), Canada, J3H 4E2. Please enclose \$15.00 Canadian to cover printing, postage, and handling costs.

■ *Living and Learning With a Child Who Stutters*, by Lise Cloutier-Steele of Ottawa, Canada, is also available at bookstores. Or call toll free 1-800-565-9523 for information on how to order this inspiring book.

■ Special offer: *Elements of Stuttering* by Courtney Stromsta, Ph.D. This book, described by Dr. Charles Van Riper as "something new and exciting," is available from Atsmorts Publishing Company, P.O. Box 533, Oshtemo, MI 49077. Please send \$19.50 plus \$3.00 handling charge for this 256-page book which is fully indexed and includes 33 figures and tables.

■ Dr. Daniel Weiss is looking for adults who stutter in the greater Cleveland area interested in participating in a clinical trial. The study is a placebo controlled double blind 32-week trial of fluoxetine. Medication and participation will be provided free of charge. Interested persons contact Daniel Weiss, M.D., at 216-292-6150 or SFA at 1-800-992-9392.

The Iceberg of Stuttering

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Stuttering is a lonesome kind of experience. Possibly, you haven't seen too many stutterers and those you have seen you have avoided like the plague. Just as there may be people who know you or have seen you or even heard you, who don't realize that there's anything wrong with your speech, so those who have a speech handicap similar to yours keep it concealed. For this reason few realize that almost one percent of the population stutters, that there are more than three and a half million stutterers in the United States today, that many famous people from history have had essentially the same problem including Winston Churchill, Lewis Carroll, and King George VI, and that Marilyn Monroe, Robert Merrill, Carly Simon, James Earl Jones, Ken Venturi, Bob Love, and John Updike have been stutterers at some time in their lives. In your speech problem you may not be as unique or as much alone as you had thought! □

This article is an excerpt from "Message to a Stutterer" by the late Joseph G. Sheehan in To the Stutterer, SFA Publication No. 9. For information on how to order, call 1-800-992-9392.



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