

NSA: A Family Function

BECCA LIBEN



“So you don’t stutter? What are you doing here?” This question is one that I often hear when I arrive at an NSA conference, and a question that comes up even more so when I tell people that I am the unofficial NSA intern. This question is fair, and yet there are so many reasons why I am a part of the NSA. When my brother Michael and my dad first went to a conference, I was young, and to be honest I did not know that my brother’s stutter was something that other people didn’t do. It was just a part of who he is, nothing more and nothing less. As I got older and realized this was not the norm for everyone, I began to explore the NSA in my own way, as a sister of someone who stutters, and as a person with a desire to understand people better. The NSA was more to my family than just a conference; it became a part of our day-to-day lives, and something that we all in our own way have invested ourselves in.

As I attended more and more conferences I realized I wanted to give more, to do something for this organization that did such amazing things for my family. As my interest in the NSA grew, it confirmed for me that my passion in life would be helping people. My experiences with the NSA ultimately helped me to decide to pursue social work as a career. I wish my schedule allowed me more time to work with the NSA, but I am grateful that every year I get to share my

experiences as a sibling with other siblings as well as volunteer in a number of ways. I have been given the opportunity to share the advice that I have gained over the years through the NSA with other people. I always look forward to meeting new people, seeing old friends, and getting that feeling that only comes from an NSA conference. I can say with complete confidence that the people of the National Stuttering Association have taught me and given me more than anything I could ever give back to them, and for that I am forever grateful.

So when asked, “What are you doing here?” I answer people in many different ways, but always end with the same idea: I came to the NSA and became involved because of what the NSA has done for me, for my family, and what it continues to do for the stuttering population and their families everyday. I challenge all members, especially new members - regardless of if you stutter or not - to open yourself up to this amazing experience and let the NSA do for you what it has done for me. I look forward to seeing everyone this summer. Miss you all and see you soon! 

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Rebecca Liben is in her first year of a dual-degree master’s program at Columbia University and Jewish Theological Seminary. She will graduate with a master’s in Social Work and a master’s in Jewish Studies. Her brother Michael stutters and her family has been involved in the NSA for many years. She currently resides in Manhattan.

100stutterProject

CAMERON FRANCEK



I am a person who stutters, and I recently embarked on a personal mission to advertise my stuttering to a different person every day for 100 days. This project, what I call 100stutterProject, is an effort to spread awareness about stuttering, educate and engage with a diverse group of people, and to hopefully show how powerful advertising can be.

My hope is that at the end of these 100 days, I will have transformed into more of the communicator I’d like to be, while helping to make my community and beyond more educated, accepting, and compassionate toward people and their challenges.

I began my project on February 1, 2013, and during this time I have advertised to classmates, coworkers, hiring managers, and the cast of MTV’s “The Buried Life”, just to name a few. It has been an extremely positive experience thus far and has evolved into a very eye-opening, honest opportunity to evaluate where I am as a person and communicator. I have enjoyed educating my community about stuttering and strive to spread awareness to a much broader audience.

Moving forward, I look to use my project as an anchor in an effort to accomplish all kinds of personal goals, tackle feared speaking situations, and hopefully help to inspire others who stutter to advertise.

I would not have the level of acceptance and motivation to do something positive in regards to stuttering if it were not for the

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Be sure to check out ‘WeStutter’ on Facebook and Twitter today!

www.WeStutter.org

Conference 2013!

Could it get any better?

This year we are at the beautiful Westin Kierland Resort & Spa in Scottsdale, Arizona celebrating 30 Years of Annual Conferences July 3–7. The NSA staff and I are hard at work planning workshops and activities that kids, tweens, teens, adults, SLPs, and their families are sure to enjoy. Here is just a sample of what's to come in Scottsdale (complete workshop list available mid-June):

Tours & Excursions

You have spoken, and we have listened! You asked for more events at the Annual Conference that keep us all together, so this year in honor of our 30th Anniversary, our events are all about spending time with family and friends.

Start things off right by joining us Wednesday night for bingo, comedy, and karaoke. On Thursday, we'll be offering once-in-a-lifetime chance to rise above the beautiful desert sunset in a hot air balloon – a don't-miss opportunity! On Friday, we'll be heading to the ballpark to check out the Arizona Diamondbacks take on the Colorado Rockies, and then the fun continues Friday night with one group hitting the Brunswick Lanes for bowling, another group heading to the AZ Air Time Jump Center, and still a third group taking part in the interactive Mystery Mansion Dinner Theater.

Tours are available on a first come - first served basis, and there will be no onsite tour sales, so be sure to book yours early. All tours must be booked no later than May 31, 2013, and pre-payment is required for all tours.



Family & Youth Program

Our NSA Families are sure to enjoy the sun, beautiful desert scenery, and lavish accommodations! We offer workshops for every age, and each member of the family will have the opportunity to learn, network, and share experiences with some of the best people in this field. These specialists work with children and adolescents who stutter as well as with their families. Parents, children who stutter (ages 6 and older), and their siblings can participate in activities, workshops, and outings that will enrich the entire family.

Children and teens who stutter may be reluctant to attend a conference for the first time but chances are they won't want to leave, and will be looking forward to the next conference before this one has even ended. The simple act of meeting other people who stutter can be liberating, and many teens and kids report that they develop special bonds and lifelong friendships with other attendees.

Join us this July in sunny Scottsdale and you will never feel alone in your speech journey again! These four days of activities will take place in an environment where people who stutter and their families can feel completely at ease. The conference officially begins on Wednesday with a Meet 'n Greet and orientation, then it's off we go!

Twenty-Somethings

The transition from teen to adult can bring all sorts of new challenges. Last year we brought a special focus to the needs of our 'Twenty-Somethings' members by enlisting a dedicated committee who focus on making our members in their 20's feel welcome, included, and enlightened. Our Twenty-Somethings serve by both mentoring the younger generation and learning from those who have managed their stuttering for a longer period of time.

We understand that these members are past the "teen scene", yet may not quite feel like they fit in with the adult crowd just yet; we had this in mind as we planned our conference program. Workshops deal with the issues that challenge most Twenty-Somethings, such as dating/relationships,

job interviews, career choices, advertising your stuttering, and much more.

Stuttering Research Update

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about cutting edge research in stuttering over two days of sessions with top researchers from all over the world. Professionals can earn 1.4 ASHA-approved Continuing Education credits as well as network informally with the presenters at the NSA sponsored cocktail reception, and stay a few days longer to enjoy the Annual NSA Conference. We offer a discount to those who register for both the symposium and the conference, with even more opportunities to earn CEUs. We hope that you will join us for this leading national research symposium.

Presentations include:

- Janet Beilby, Ph.D. (Curtin University, Western Australia) – **The experiences of living with a stuttering disorder across the lifespan**
- Soo-Eun Chang, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (Michigan State University) – **Examining brain anatomy and functional differences in stuttering children**
- Edward G. Conture, Ph.D. (Vanderbilt University) Robin Jones, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (The Ohio State University) Dahye Choi, M.S. (Vanderbilt University) – **Temperament, stuttering and their possible association**
- Marie-Christine Franken, Ph.D. (Sophia Children's Hospital, The Netherlands) – **Comparing a Demands and Capacities Model approach and the Lidcombe Program for pre-school stuttering children: the RESTART randomized trial**

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- Shelly Jo Kraft, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (Wayne State University) – **Severity: Contributing factors in adults and children**
- Jayanthi Sasisekaran, Ph.D. (University of Minnesota) – **Language planning in children and adults who stutter: Evidence from phoneme monitoring and nonword repetition tasks**
- Pascal van Lieshout, Ph.D. (University of Toronto, Canada) – **Speech motor skills in people who stutter: Theory and data**
- J. Scott Yaruss, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (University of Pittsburgh) – **We can't 'just ignore it.' An update on bullying and stuttering**
- **Panels and Q&A's with the Speakers**

Going...going...GONE!

Those simple words can mean only one thing – it's time to talk about the NSA auctions. Our live auction, taking place during the Saturday Night Banquet, is one of our largest fundraisers as well as a returning conference favorite, and this year we expect it to be bigger and better than ever. Even better, we're pleased to tell you that our Silent Auction, for smaller items, will return once again. It's another chance to bid on exciting treasures and help the NSA at the same time. Talk about a win-win situation!

Want to help? We thought so. The NSA is now collecting items for both auctions. Items of interest include: sports memorabilia, electronics, art, jewelry and more. If you have any questions about the auction or items to donate, feel free to call us at 800-937-8888. 📞



NSA Board Expands

The National Stuttering Association Board of Directors welcomes five new directors: Bob Wellington (Treasurer); Samantha Gennuso (20-Somethings); Kathy Scaler-Scott and Laura Plexico (Research Chairs), *not pictured*; Lynne Hebert-Remson (Professional Relations); and Sarah Onofri (Family Programs Co-Chair).

Bob Wellington * Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee, elected 2013. Bob has been an active member of the NSA Jacksonville Florida Chapter since 2005. He is currently the interim chapter leader. Bob is active in three Toastmasters clubs and is recognized as a Toastmaster Advanced Communicator. Bob has been a Florida Licensed Certified Public Accountant for 25 years. After leaving a career of 20 years as an auditor for the State of Florida, Bob continues his accounting life by owning and operating Beaches Accounting & Auditing for the past eight years.



Samantha Gennuso * 20-Somethings, elected 2013. Sam lives and works in New York City as a digital media specialist in music advertising. She holds a BA in Journalism as well as an

MS in Mass Communication and is passionate about distance running, yoga, food, music, and stuttering advocacy. An avid traveler, she has lived in Boston, Los Angeles, NYC, and London. She has been to ten consecutive NSA conferences, conducted the popular "Fearless Stuttering" workshop several times, and has co-led other teen and adult workshops. She assisted in the creation of the 20-Somethings Program and has served on that program's committee for two years.

Kathleen Scaler Scott, PhD, CCC-SLP, BRS/M-FD * Co-Chair of Research Committee, elected February 2013. Kathy lives in Flemington, NJ, and has



been a member of the NSA since 2002. She is a speech-language pathologist and Board Recognized Fluency Specialist. A practicing SLP for 20 years, Kathy received her PhD in stuttering from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2008. She was vice president of the Lafayette,

LA chapter of the NSA from 2005 to 2008. Kathy is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology at Misericordia University and maintains an active caseload of stuttering and cluttering clients. She has written articles, book chapters, and books, and presented nationally and internationally on the topic of fluency disorders. Her research interests include cluttering and dysfluency in autism spectrum disorders.

Lynne Hebert-Remson, Ph.D. CCC-SLP, BRS/FD

*** Professional Relations.** SLP in Scottsdale, Arizona, specializing in stuttering and language disorders. She obtained her doctorate at Arizona State University and was a Clinical Associate Professor at ASU for 10 years. She has been an Assistant Professor at California State University in Los Angeles and is currently an adjunct professor at Northern Arizona University. She teaches graduate courses in fluency disorders and in language development and disorders. Dr. Remson is a member of the initial cadre of Board Recognized Specialists in Fluency Disorders (2001). She is a founder and co-leader of the Metro Phoenix NSAKids and TWST support groups for children and adolescents who stutter. She has given numerous presentations and seminars on stuttering in preschool and school-aged children.



Sarah Onofri * Family Programs Co-Chair. Sarah

lives in Boston, and has been attending NSA conferences since 2006. In 2010, Sarah served on the Teen Advisory Council and since 2011; she has been a part of the Family Programs Committee. In 2012, she was named the NSA Volunteer of the Year. She is thankful she's been able to meet so many other people who stutter through the NSA. Sarah loves working with the NSA kids at the Annual Conference and feels lucky to get to know so many of the amazing NSA families. Sarah is an elementary school teacher in the Boston Public Schools. She also leads a Daisy Girl Scout troop and works part time at Boomerangs, a thrift store run by the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts, where she combines her love of great deals with helping others. 📞



CHAPTER NEWS

DAVID BLAZINA

Dallas, TX

The Dallas Adult Chapter had another jam-packed meeting with 38 people in attendance. Of those, there were 2 PWS that were first timers along with 12 other PWS. In addition, the group welcomed 3 loved ones supporting a person who stutters and 21 SLP graduate students from UTD and UNT.

The meeting began with a few announcements. First and foremost, **Shawn Poloche** was introduced as a co-chapter leader. This was followed by a brief discussion of the upcoming Annual Conference now that registration is open. To begin the initiative to grow the chapter, the leaders presented flyers containing information on the NSA Adult Chapter and contact information. Every person was given a flyer and asked to post it somewhere public. After this everyone took turns introducing themselves, and the graduate students were asked to voluntarily stutter.

For the “meat” of the meeting the group briefly discussed covert stuttering. Afterwards, breaking up into small groups and rotating the PWS every 20 minutes so the graduate students would get to hear different stories and perspectives on stuttering. During the time, chapter leaders monitored the two first timers, concerned they may feel uncomfortable being thrust into such a public situation, and were glad to see that they were always talking and even “leading” the group discussions!

The group wrapped up the meeting by all coming together with people volunteering various tidbits of information they learned over the course of the evening.

Central NJ

The Central NJ Chapter had eight people in attendance including 6 PWS and 2 SLP Students, one of whom is married to a PWS and has a child who stutters.

The main topic for the evening was job interviewing since several members are back in the job search or will be soon. The group discussed the publication “Mastering the Job Interview....for People Who Stutter” by **Bill Parry** and **Rachael Resk**, and the latest trend in first round phone interviews which make it challenging for PWS to get a foot in the door. Afterwards, they discussed when/if it

is advantageous to disclose stuttering and where on the resume it is appropriate to list involvement in the stuttering community. In general, everyone said that it is almost always advantageous to disclose it because it will likely be apparent anyway, and involvement in the stuttering community can be listed in the civic duties/activities part of the resume. If the applicant can show how they’ve taken responsibility for dealing with their stuttering and that they’ve turned challenges into strengths, this can help them stand-out as good job candidates.

The discussion then morphed into what it means to “overcome” stuttering. Many said that it means to communicate when/how they want and not allowing stuttering to keep them quiet. The group also discussed how much they really think society has learned about stuttering, generally feeling that the stuttering community still takes two steps forward and one back as far as successfully reaching the non-stuttering population, but that we’ve come a long way.

Brooklyn, NY

The March meeting of the Oliver Bloodstein-Brooklyn Chapter of the NSA was a celebration of their 5-year anniversary as a chapter. The group had a great turn out –

26 people, with more than half of them attending for their first time. After some pizza, everyone came together to discuss the theme of “Why Self Help?” Breaking off into small groups to discuss what keeps them coming back to the support group, members shared their experiences of empowerment and growth. Many of the “first timers” courageously shared why they decided to stand up and reach out to the group.

The turnout was a testament to the chapter’s membership. Here’s to another 5 years of group support and self-help in the NYC stuttering community!

Austin, TX

The Austin group hosted a group of 8 including 5 PWS, 1 student SLP, 1 parent, and 1 significant other, meeting at the University of Texas. At this meeting the group had a special screening of *Still Bill* (2009). The subject of the film is American soul musician **Bill Withers**, best known for 1970s classics like “Lean on Me” and “Ain’t No Sunshine”, and also a person who stutters, a fact which figures prominently in his life story. In one scene of the documentary, Withers visits Our Time, a theater company for youth who stutter in the performing arts and he wells up in tears as he addresses a group of teens who stutter.



CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT:

CINCINNATI

TOM SCHARSTEIN

Throughout the film, Withers addresses what it took to for him to rise above the label of being “less than” someone because of his stutter, the importance of believing in those people in our lives who value us and our gifts, and how each child’s talents must be nurtured by positive adults in their lives. I think this is an inspiring tale for people who stutter as well as parents and clinicians for so many reasons, and it should resonate with not just those who stutter but anybody who has ever felt misunderstood in life.

Visalia, CA

The Visalia, CA chapter had their third meeting with 5 attendees: 3 PWS, 1 mother, and 1 SLP. The group talked about a number of things, one of which was presentation tips. One PWS is still struggling with talking in front of groups. He was given some tips and the group has promised to research more on this. The young PWS that came talked about accepting his stuttering and how trying to find a job is hard. He told the group that he doesn’t stutter when he talks to new people, but stutters when he talks to family or friends. He did feel like he may never be able to change his stuttering, but was told that since he doesn’t stutter when he meets new people and stutters with familiar people there is definitely a psychological connection there, and fluency may get better with proper techniques. He is going to meet with the group’s SLP.

Columbia, SC

There were 40 people in attendance at the latest meeting in which the chapter visited a graduate class on stuttering, providing a unique synergy of sharing, learning, and growth. The group included 6 PWS, 2 SLPs, 1 PWSS (person who stutters’ spouse), 1 PWSB (person who stutters’ boyfriend), and 32 graduate students. If you do the math you might be confused, until you learn that there is one GSWS (graduate student who stutters), and 1 SLPWS (speech-language pathologist who stutters)! Each PWS had an opportunity to speak with the students, who asked GREAT questions.

Philip talked about his experiences as a college student in a fraternity and returning
continued on page 8

Our chapter is involved in Diane Games’ “Fluency Fridays Plus” each fall, and one of our functions this year was to transport inner-city kids to the event. One of our members has a 15-person van, so off we went.

From the moment we picked up each kid, we were besieged with, “Can we go to McDonalds? Can we get snacks? Can we get *whatever*?” My wife grew up in this environment, and informed me we are looked at as “rich.” These kids have been exposed to people “swooping” in with benevolent gift-giving. I did, however, use my parenting skill of bribery, saying, “If you’re quiet and well-behaved all day, we’ll get ice cream on the way home.”

And then we picked up Rachel, a sweet 12-year old that stutters, from the absolute worst and most deprived part of town. We could tell from her outfit her family was very low income, yet she was quiet and smiling. During the entire time she requested not one treat, and was sure to thank us at the end of each day. From our interactions with her an idea emerged. We thought, why not raise enough money to give her the best Christmas she has ever had and make her feel extremely special? We didn’t have much discussion about it, because we KNEW we could do it from the onset. Thus “Rachel’s Christmas” became the buzz of our chapter.

We contacted Rachel’s mom to get her approval, and mom broke down and started weeping. It was obvious where Rachel received her appreciative attitude and spirit. Her mom then informed us she stutters as well, and we knew at that point that we were *absolutely* going to make this happen! After setting monetary goals for Rachel – enough to allow her gifts for the rest of the family – we began our month-long campaign. Through the generosity of our chapter and acquaintances, we exceeded our goal by 30%!

It was amazing how the money was there within two days of our targeted special day. Miranda Smith, Britni Bucknaver (our new chapter leader as of January), and I picked up our special girl one afternoon, and what a day this turned out to be. Stopping for lunch, it was our turn to order, and Rachel

told me what she wanted. Miranda and I exchanged a wink, and I explained how she would have to order for herself, because we all had to order for *ourselves*. She observed us all stutter when we ordered and, newly-empowered, she placed her order while smiling ear to ear.

After lunch, the girls hit the shops. The GAP factory is here in town with an outlet store attached. Shopping cart in tow, the girls began filling it. After we dropped Rachel off, we really felt the magnitude of what our chapter, in a loving Christmas spirit, had just made happen. With some ingenuity and time, we bought her an entire four-season wardrobe.

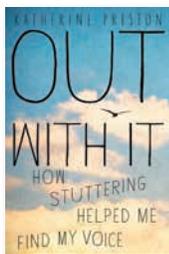
I have been privileged to experience first hand the power of a what a dedicated group of individuals can achieve on a local level as well as nationally. Over and over again I hear comments such as, “I have never felt accepted....special... ‘cool’...until the NSA.” Many times this extends beyond a chapter meeting, and further than sharing ideas and feelings about stuttering. Sometimes, you may feel as I do, that unless you can contribute time and money in a “big” way, the effort won’t make a difference, or, in some way, doesn’t “count.” However, you *can* “amp” up even the smallest effort as a group or chapter. A tiny stone can make huge ripples. This was a huge bonding event for our chapter, and we hope that you will all get to meet Rachel at a national conference at some point! 🎉



Book Review

Katherine Preston's 'Out With It'

Katherine Preston developed a profound stutter at the age of 7. As a young girl living in England, trapped inside her head for years, she relied on tricks in her speech to mask her affliction and denied that there was anything wrong. But hiding her stutter wasn't always easy, and all of her attempts to overcome it eventually failed. When a humiliating experience at age 24 left Katherine sobbing alone in the ladies' room, she made an impulsive and life-changing decision: to leave her home in London and



spend a year traveling around America meeting hundreds of stutters, speech therapists, and researchers in an attempt to understand the cause of stuttering. Shedding light on an ancient condition that affects approximately 4 million people in the U.S. and 60 million people worldwide, she interviewed celebrities like Emily Blunt, Michael Palin, and Jack Welch, as well as writers, musicians, social workers, psychologists and financiers – men and women from all walks of life who have also battled difficulties with speech. What began as a vague search for a cure became a journey that in the end debunked the misconceptions shrouding the condition, and a love story that transformed her conception of what it means to be normal. **Out With It: How Stuttering Helped Me Find My Voice** (Atria Books; April 16, 2013) is the culmination of this research combined with Katherine Preston's deeply moving and empowering personal story.

Out With It is the story of Katherine's journey to find her voice, as well as a comprehensive profile of a curious condition, going far beyond the mostly false perceptions that movies and television have provided. A heart-warming memoir and a journalistic feat, **Out With It** is more than a chronicle of one of the most prevalent speech problems in the world; it's a story about understanding yourself, and learning to embrace the voice within.

About the Author: *Katherine Preston lives in Brooklyn as a writer and public speaker. She is the Creative Director of ExchangeMyPhone. Find out more at www.KatherinePreston.com*

ODDS&ENDS

MANDY FINSTAD



The NSA sends their deepest sympathies to the family of **Gene J. Brutton, Ph.D.**, an influential theoretician, researcher, and scholar in the field of speech-language pathology, who passed away on March 4th, at Florida Hospital in Orlando as a result of heart failure at the age of 84.

Dr. Brutton was born in New York and grew up in Brooklyn. He received his Bachelor's degree from Kent State University in 1951, his Master's Degree from Brooklyn College in 1952 and his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1957, and devoted his professional life to experimental and clinical research related to the nature, assessment, and treatment of stuttering. His research led to a better understanding of what stuttering is, and to the development of an influential theory which he outlined in the seminal book entitled "The Modification of Stuttering," co-authored with Dr. Donald J. Shoemaker. Together with his wife, Dr. Martine Vanryckeghem, Dr. Brutton published a series of standardized assessment protocols and clinical handbooks, known as the Behavior Assessment Battery, which are currently used in more than 20 countries world-wide. In addition, he produced 20 book chapters, over 70 peer-reviewed research articles, and gave over 200 presentations worldwide.

Dr. Brutton enjoyed traveling and spending time with family and friends in the United States, Belgium and the Netherlands. Dr. Brutton is survived by his wife, Dr. Martine Vanryckeghem, a professor at the University of Central Florida, and his two children: Lori Brutton of Washington DC and Mark Brutton of San Francisco. Memorial donations can be made to the American Heart Association.



On March 16th while on spring break. United States Military Academy Cadet **Garrett Langer** met up with Army Veteran **Dustin Linkins** in Fort Lauderdale Florida while Garrett and his dad Alan Langer waited for their flights back home.

National Stuttering Awareness Week –

May 13th through 19th – is the time to think about how YOU want to celebrate, educate, and spread the word about stuttering! Check out our website for fun facts as well as a link to our informative brochures and online store to help you get the message out year-round. The NSA and its members raise awareness of stuttering 52 weeks a year. National Stuttering Awareness Week gives us one more opportunity to educate and one more reason to hold our heads high. Join us and let us know how YOU celebrated NSAW 2013!

Congratulations to **Samantha Temme** and **CJ Raberding** on their recent engagement! On March 23, after dinner at Rose and Thistle restaurant in downtown Perrysburg, OH, the couple took a walk along river, recreating one of their first dates. CJ got down on one knee and proposed with the gorgeous sunset over the river as a backdrop. Congrats, Samantha and CJ!

Thank you to **Nina Zito**, who initially created our sea foam green awareness bracelets last year for NSAW. Nina has graciously allowed us to sell them from NSA. Get yours today and be ready for NSAW at WeStutter.org!

Thank you to those who volunteered their time and efforts at the NSA booth during the following recent state conferences: Texas Speech Language Hearing Association: **Joseph Diaz, Pamela Scypion, Nina and Lee Reeves, Laura Overton, and Jamie Putman.** California Speech Language Hearing Association: **Karen Spohn and Jenifer Avina.** Kentucky Speech Language Hearing Association: **Tom Scharstein, Miranda Smith, and Gary Spitzmiller.** South Carolina State Conference: **Charley Adams, Caroline Pittard, and Jody Fulton.** New York Health Exposition: **Michael Daigler.** Thank you again, volunteers!

Our sincere apologies go out to **Richard Jennings** and **Anne Pittard** for not being included with the other 2012 donors in our last issue of LETTING GO. Our apologies!



Message from 20-Somethings Chair



“I watched myself stutter for the first time in June 2001. On the TV monitor, my face contorted as my voice staggered and stumbled, struggling to push words out, my eyes desperate for anything but the lens. I was ashamed. I was a teenage girl embarking on boys and college applications, and I was horrified that this thing I’d tried to stifle for so long not only was an actual disorder – it had no specific cure.”

That paragraph was my introduction to a recent article I submitted to xoJane.com, a website reaching over a million people a month. It describes a time, over ten years ago, when I was scared, ashamed, and confused. I was about to embark on a journey that included both intensive therapy and later, an undying network of support. Since my first NSA conference in the summer of 2001, I’ve made it my mission, my job, and my journey to become as accepting as I can of my own stuttering, while helping others deal with those same challenges along the way.

This year will be my 11th consecutive conference. I didn’t intend of going to every single one, it just happened that way. Each year I felt it was more and more imperative that I go, and last year, I was voted onto the Board of Directors as the liaison for the 20-Something contingent of the NSA. The thing that saved me, when I was brand new to the stuttering community, the conference atmosphere, and even my own stuttering, was hearing the stories of people who had walked the path before me. It is not only the least I can do, but my *duty* to return this favor to those who may not be able to see around the bend yet.

When I walked into my first conference, everyone was stuttering – almost *joyfully* so! Time stopped for them. I had become OK with talking about stuttering with strangers as a way to allow myself more time to use my fluency techniques, but at the conference, it was finally okay just to stutter. Period. It felt like coming home.

Eleven years later, the National Stuttering Association has seen me through college, grad school, and most recently into a career in advertising. It will follow me wherever I go, as I continue to learn more about myself and impart that wisdom onto those who are facing the same challenges. My *Fearless Stuttering* workshop has opened up many doors for those who may not have known that being truly open about who we are is always an option. I’m not fearless – I just know how to fearlessly stutter. I’ve learned to feel the fear, and do it anyway. I hope to see many new faces at this year’s conference and I hope they find me and introduce themselves, because the road is rocky on the path to acceptance. But I have a flashlight. I have several actually, and I got them from lifelong friends; I have the NSA to thank for that. 📡

100STUTTERPROJECT *continued*

National Stuttering Association. Offering an incredible amount of support, the NSA has helped me to accept my stuttering, improve my confidence, and become the person that I am today.

Visit www.100stutterproject.blogspot.com to follow my journey as I complete my 100stutterProject. 📡

Changing the Words

BY ALAN BADMINGTON

I couldn’t say muffin, I couldn’t say butter
If I ordered a burger, I’d stumble and stutter
So, instead of me saying the words
that I should
I’d swap them for others, I hoped that I could

But you can’t always leave out the words
that you dread
There are times when a certain thing
has to be said
My sister’s called Sarah, my best friend is Ben
They just wouldn’t answer to Lucy and Len

Whenever I spotted a difficult sound
I’d hastily juggle my sentence around
I spent so much energy word rearranging
Whenever I spoke, I was chopping
and changing

My efforts to search for an easier word
Resulted in sentences, sometimes absurd
At times, my selections just didn’t make sense
Which made me more anxious,
frustrated and tense

Each time I avoided a troublesome sound
I felt rather guilty, and very soon found
That my fear of speaking increased
even more
The number of ‘problem words’ started
to soar

In time, I discovered that word substitution
Was simply avoidance, and not a solution
Although I was fluent, or so it appeared
The words I avoided became much
more feared

One day, I decided enough was enough
I made myself promise, although it was tough
To say what I wanted, whatever the letter
At times I still struggled, but I felt
so much better

Today, I will say any letter or sound
Confronting my fears is the best way –
I’ve found
Should I ever be tempted to waver sometime
I’ll remember the message contained in
this rhyme

Support the NSA at your workplace!

You, your family members, and friends can contribute to the NSA at your workplace. The NSA participates annually in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Federal employees can designate #10853 on their CFC form to support the NSA. However, you don’t have to be a federal employee to contribute. Each year many employees make donations to the NSA through matching gifts, stocks and many other ways. For more information call us at 888-937-8888 (WeStutter). You can also email us at tflores@WeStutter.org.

30th Anniversary Commemorative Coin

LOTT HUGHES, DUSTIN LINKINS, JODY FULLER

To many of us, the NSA is like a second family. I (Lott Hughes) joined the NSA 3 years ago, and the experience was remarkable and continues to be to this day.

The NSA does an exemplary job with helping those who stutter; however, it can only function with proper funding from private donors who love the NSA as much as I do.

I was adamant in my attempts to make a significant contribution but wasn't sure how to do so. I invited fellow NSA members **Dustin Linkins** and **Jody Fuller** to join me. Besides stuttering, the three of us share a unique bond. We are all veterans with combat experience, which quickly drew us together at our first conference in 2011.

We discussed ways to help those who wish to attend NSA conferences but don't have the financial means to do so. As we so often do, we resorted to our military roots. The end result was the creation of a National Stuttering Association challenge coin.

Here is a brief history of the challenge coin: A challenge coin is a small coin bearing an organization's insignia or emblem and carried by the organization's members. Originally, they were given to prove membership when challenged and to enhance morale; however, today, challenge coins are normally presented by a unit commander or senior non-commissioned officer in recognition of commitment to excellence or special achievement by a member of the unit. Challenge coins can be traced as far back as WWI with the US military and back to the early 1970's with the Canadian Forces.

Challenge coins are becoming extremely popular outside of the military, as well. Organizations such as NASCAR, the NFL, the NCAA, Eagle Scouts and the World Series of Poker all have their own challenge coins. They are also becoming popular with police departments, fire departments, and fraternal organizations.

In his audio commentary for the DVD release of *Iron Man 2*, film director Jon Favreau notes that he had *Iron Man 2* challenge coins made to distribute to United States Air Force personnel as a gesture of thanks for their



cooperation while the production (and its predecessor, *Iron Man*) filmed on location at Edwards Air Force Base.

Having an NSA coin on hand or on display will lead to many opportunities:

- It will help give back to the NSA.
- It will be a great ice breaker to talk about stuttering.
- It will increase awareness about stuttering.
- It will increase awareness about the NSA.
- It will help create a sense of belonging.
- It will serve as a reminder of your commitment to excellence.
- It will look great on display and once again be a conversation starter.
- It will evoke wonderful memories.
- If nothing else, it will be a great paper weight.

We are so happy to give back to the NSA. Our only regret is that we can't do more. Every hour that went into designing and creating this coin was worthwhile, because it's for such a worthy organization that does so much to help so many. This is our way of giving back. This project was fully funded by Dustin, Jody and me, and 100% of the sales will be given back to the NSA.

We encourage anyone who enjoys the NSA and supports its mission to help out in any way possible. We understand that money is tight these days, so if it's not by purchasing a challenge coin or donation, then let it be your time. There are many opportunities throughout the year to volunteer your time.

We look forward to seeing old friends and making new friends this year in Scottsdale. We hope to see you there.

*Sincerely,
Lott Hughes*

CHAPTER NEWS *continued*

to therapy with a renewed sense of dedication. **David**, attending his first NSA meeting, talked about how stuttering has held him back occupationally and what he has learned in 3 therapy sessions. **Caitlyn** spoke about her unique "discovery" of her stuttering during last year's lecture on covert stuttering, realizing that what was being described was everything she'd been doing for years. **Felicia** talked about being empowered to confront a college professor who graded her presentation down because she "took too long." Through her persistence, the grade was eventually changed! **Peng** talked about growing up in China, his long journey to America, graduate school, therapy, and his very first classroom lecture earlier in the week. Finally, **Maryann** told the students how she found the NSA, which began a chain of events leading her to 3 conferences, a career as an SLP, and her co-leadership of the Spartanburg, SC NSA chapter. Caitlyn and Maryann did their best to convey the magical experience of a full NSA conference, which hopefully many will get to experience. Several members went out for a bite and could have talked and laughed into the night. What a grand evening!

Roseville/Sacramento Chapter

The Sacramento/Roseville Chapter has supported Sac. States NSSLHA Conferences over the years, educating and empowering students and clinicians about stuttering.



Left-Right: **Courtney Yoakum-Bowers** (Speech Path. Student), **Michael Molino** (Long time NSA member, Speech Path. Student, Co-Chapter Leader and former Chapter Leader in Seattle) and **Nancy Barcal, M.A., CCC-SLP** (Long time NSA member, Co-Chapter Leader, Director/Owner Granite Bay Speech)

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