

HAPPY TALK

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GREATER ATLANTA
VOICE MASTERS

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WILL YOU BE MINE?

Come join us February 9, 2006. February is our "Heart to Heart" meeting.

We will have information about heart health, loads of goodies and outstanding companionship. (The goodies may not be all that "heart healthy" but no one will notice.)

Come prepared to share anecdotes, poems, and smiles.

If you have extra supplies you would like to share, bring those items with you, and don't forget to **BRING YOUR VALENTINE.**



JANUARY MEETING

MELISSA THOMPSON

Janice talked to 180 7th graders at Cartersville middle school. Tina & Janice visited 3 people at Emory, and Boris visited 3 people.

Tina & Janice went to the Yul Brynner meeting on Wednesday. The committee is gearing up to do head and neck screening at some malls and other large public venues. The Yul Brynner Head & Neck Cancer Survivor's dinner will be in April, we will keep everyone posted.

Our guest speaker was Beth Burgess, friend and neighbor of Melissa Thompson. Beth has been a Paramedic for 25 years. She currently works with DeKalb County fire & Rescue and has recently been promoted to Captain.

Beth told us about a program that FEMA started after 9/11, called CERT-Community Emergency Response Team. Adults are trained for 8 weeks (one day a week) to be "First Responders." First Responders are trained to take action during an emergency in their area. The First Responders are trained to administer CPR, and coordinate Search and Rescue. These qualified adults help the injured and try to get the situation under control, while waiting for the Paramedics and Fire and Rescue to arrive.

Beth talked to us about the "File of Life." This is a document that has all your medical history, Doctor's phone number, and lists the prescriptions you are taking. The file is attached to your refrigerator. A sticker to put out side by your front door is provided, which will alert an EMT or Fire Rescue Unit that there is a "File of Life" on the refrigerator.

Beth also talked about the Beacon of Life, which you put on your porch light, when you flip the switch 2 times your light will flash, leading the emergency personnel right to your door.

Beth is an EMT instructor at DeKalb Tech. An EMT or Paramedic is trained to react and provide care in any emergency. The EMT's primary concern is the patient first. Beth stressed that if some one in your home is in a crisis, the EMT will do what ever is needed to get that person stabilized, and transported to a hospital. They may not say too much to any one else because they are working as quickly as possible to get that person taken care of.

There are 3 levels of EMT (emergency medical technician). An EMT Basic goes to school for 2 quarters or 6 months and is trained on basic CPR and life saving techniques.

An EMT Intermediate goes to school for 3 quarters or 8 months and can start IV's, give medications and establish an airway.

A Paramedic goes to school for 2 years and is trained to read EKG's, use and deliberator, and give all medications. The term Paramedic came from Vietnam and the field doctors that worked in that war. Beth started as an EMT as an 18 year old. She said that your training becomes second nature in an emergency. Beth has to be state licensed, take CPR every 2 years and advanced cardiac training to maintain her Paramedic status.

Beth said AED's or Auto External Deliberators are the best invention and easy to use. They are designed to help lay people assist a patient while waiting for a Para Medics

Beth suggests that everyone learn CPR and go every 2 years for a refresher course. Red Cross or The American Heart Association provides free training.

BUY A MEDICAL ALERT BRACELET! Wearing one is the best thing we, as laryngectomees, can do for our own safety! A necklace or card in your wallet may not be seen immediately

Beth was gracious and answered all our questions. She strongly encourages all of us to visit our neighborhood fire station. We can get acquainted with them and they can learn about our special needs. Cookies, cakes and other edible delights are always welcome at firehouses.

*Middle age is when you have stopped growing at
both ends and have begun to grow in the middle*

unknown

A Fishy Story

by

Sunil Kapahi

I wonder if you have met this chap called Harry Mishkin? He is putting up in the apartment across mine in North East Gardens. A young guy, wears glasses and wears his hair long- he says his girlfriend likes it that way. Nice guy and all; writes software for IBM. He told me this story about a fish he weaned out of water and *domesticated*.

Don't believe it? I didn't, at first; but if you knew Mishki you would. He is not the kind of guy who would go around making up stuff like that. I know him, really, I mean he is funny but he doesn't have the *imagination* to make up stuff like this. He is too direct, if you know what I mean.

I will tell you about this fish exactly like he told me. No heavy stuff, but believe me, it touches you in a way like you feel all mushy inside for the poor chap. Besides, it is darn interesting! You wouldn't believe things like this could've happened in our age.

It all started a couple of months ago. One Sunday morning, Mishki went fishing in Lake Lanier. Slightly odd, no? I mean, who goes fishing nowadays? I have seen a fishing rod, a line and all in his room. Besides, Mishki has got some more queer habits. He trims his eyebrows like his moustache. Well, you know, the world is made up all sorts and all that stuff... So what happened, he went and caught a fish. So far, so good. I mean there is nothing very mushy about going and catching a fish. Even in *our* age! But it gets a little spooky hereafter. Mishki says he forgot about the fish and kinda let it lie on the riverbank while he reloaded- or whatever you are supposed to do after catching a fish. He forgot, that is, until it was time to go home.

Now comes the odd bit. When he looked at the fish, it was still alive. You know fish have this way of opening and closing their mouths and deflating their scaly bodies and doing weirdo things like that to let you know they are alive and all. And when Mishki saw the fish doing this, it surprised the heck out of him. He first thought of chucking it back into the water. I mean, wouldn't you, too? A fish is a fish after all and supposed to be dead out of water. Even Shakespeare says so. But then he thought he would take it home for it was the only fish he had caught that day. And, suddenly, he got this crazy idea to experiment with the fish. He filled a big can with water and put his magic fish in it- whereupon the fish recovered quickly and. So Mishki collected his fishing rod and things and walked back, looking fondly at the fish all the way. When he got to his room, he put the fish in a clean bucket of water. The fish was very active, he says. Then he

emptied the bucket of all water daily for about four hours and let the fish lie there -all panting and blowing out and blowing in its body. And he would watch the fish all the time. After four hours he would put water back into the bucket and the fish would be alive and active and all. A very playful fish it was, he says. Then come what he calls 'The Second Phase of the Experiment'. He started increasing this four-hour interval to six hours, eight hours and so on until in twenty-three days he had succeeded in doing what until now has been considered impossible: he had weaned a fish out of water.

I do not know, if you have been believing all that I have been telling you, but you should hear Mishki tell it. Even a guy who has never seen a fish in his whole life would believe him. Mishki is so darn sincere and all that when he tells it you don't know what else to do. And you can feel how badly he misses his fish now. I have doubts about the whole thing sometimes, but when I look at Mishki, I pull myself up for suspecting a guy like him. I mean, he never brags, is never pretentious. He is very honest. He really is.

To continue the story, Mishki by now had become very fond of the fish. He called it Toyota. Don't ask me why, but Mishki says he likes the name. A strange guy indeed. I mean imagine calling somebody, "Hey Toyota!" and a fish at that! Maybe the fish liked it. So Mishki and Toyota, the fish, got pretty thick and all. They had a jolly good time together. In the evenings they would go out for walks. And when Mishki would lie down to read, Toyota would hop out of its shoe-box and sit down by Mishki's side and wag its tail and flap its fins and do funny things like that. Mishki says he loved it.

Well, this went on for about a month and I bet, it must have been the strangest friendship of all times. I mean. Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea" had something about it but this *wonderfish* beat anything between Man and Fish that I have ever known. I am sure Ripley's ("The Believe it or not" chap) or the Guinness Book fellows (the record keepers) would've heard about it had not this accident happened one day. Mishki and Toyota were walking down Lanier Drive one evening and Mishki decided to sit down and look at the sea. You know, there is this broad rampart running all around Lanier Drive on one side and there is the river down there on the other. You can sit there with your legs dangling down and look at the bouncing waves come and go, come and go. Several young couples and old folks crowd the place in the evenings. The view of the river is just romantic and peaceful - all at once. Serene is the word that comes to mind. Mishki went and sat there and rested the fish by his side. It was a pleasant evening and the beautiful sunset was admirable. And Mishki, the kind of guy he is, got so absorbed in the golden sun sinking leisurely into the vast sea and all, that he completely forgot about Toyota, next to him. He sat there with his hands cupped in his palms looking at the sun as if he was seeing it for the first time. When suddenly this old man came and spread his newspaper, beside Mishki to sit on and in a careless brush of his hand, swept the fish into the water. Plop, it fell- straight down the river water. He didn't mean it; even Mishki says he didn't and was very sorry and apologized later.

But Toyota, poor fish, fell into the river waters and drowned.

Yes, drowned.



*Only good girls keep diaries.
Bad girls never have time.*

Tallulah Bankhead