

# THE EVOLUTION OF THE SALEM AREA SPEECH AND HEARING CLINIC

By Ann Smith, Clinic Director and Salem Quota Historian

## INTRODUCTION

As a speech/language pathologist, I have been involved with the Salem Quota Club and the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic since 1995 in various capacities, as a substitute therapist, therapist and as Clinic Director.

When I was asked to report on the clinic, I thought about what I knew firsthand, but there were many unanswered questions. So I decided to search for the answers. WOW! What an adventure!

Although Quota is an international women's service organization with many, many clubs worldwide, I had always heard of the Salem Quota Club as the only club to sponsor and operate a speech and hearing clinic. Imagine my surprise when I opened the 1959-72 scrapbook and on the second page, saw an article entitled "Speech and Hearing Clinic Report." Actually, the article mentioned that the clinic started in 1952. WHAT! I had thought that the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic began in the 1970s. WHAT'S GOING ON? Well, the scrapbook contained articles about both Salem Quota Club and the East Liverpool Quota Club, all were labeled and dated.

It seems that in 1952, the East Liverpool Quota Club sponsored a speech and hearing clinic which served the Tri State area. It was affiliated with Kent State University under the direction of William Weidner of the university teaching program who brought therapists from Kent each week. The clinic operated each Saturday during the school year at Westgate School. Mr. Weidner was also aided by Dr. Edith Gilmore and Phyllis Crook. Miss Justine Miller was the East Liverpool president at the time. Quotarians arranged appointments and made speech workbooks for the clients. As time went on the number of clients increased with 8 grad students from KSU providing therapy each Saturday.

In 1965 Mr. Weidner left the clinic to continue working on his doctorate. Subsequent articles indicated that the clinic was still operating in East Liverpool in 1967. Nothing is noted after that. So that's an assignment for the East Liverpool Quotarians – What happened?

## SALEM AREA SPEECH AND HEARING CLINIC

Meanwhile, Salem Quotarians were busily working on their own various community and speech and hearing projects when they were approached by medical, educational and religious leaders in the area to sponsor a much needed speech and hearing clinic. There was no speech therapy available in the schools at the time. On December 8, 1970, a meeting was held involving these leaders: Dr. William Weidner (yes the same William Weidner) from the Kent State University Hearing and Speech Department, Lillian

Schroeder, a Salem Quotarian and Executive Director of the Columbiana Public Health League and Mrs. Lamont Ickes, Quota Club chairman. Speaking of the need for the clinic, Dr. Weidner stated that in a school system 5% of the total population, or 200 children in Salem Schools alone would need help. Salem Quota accepted the challenge to sponsor the clinic.

The Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic began operation at the Emmanuel Lutheran Education Building in Salem from 8:30-12:30 in January 1971 offering affordable diagnostic examinations and speech language therapy services to children and adults of all ages. Therapy cost \$5 while evaluations were \$10.00. William Weidner, PhD of the Kent State University Speech and Hearing Department, accepted the post of consultant. Walter Moore, doctoral candidate at KSU would be the director. The clinic would be affiliated with the university and would be staffed by therapists who are master degree candidates who need supervised clinic hours to comply with degree requirements. Salem Quotarian Esther Chamberlain was president when the clinic came into Salem. Caroline Ickes was the first coordinator who was responsible for administration and securing receptionists from the club. By 1974 the therapists were seeing 38 children per week and the clinic was thriving.

Over the years, directors and clinic coordinators changed. Director Walter Moore moved on and John Johnson became the director. In 1975, John Johnson took a position at Bowling Green State University and Patrick Kavulla of the Summit County Board of Education, supervisor of speech hearing services and on the teaching staff at KSU, became the director. The clinic continued to do well, meeting the communication needs of area children and adults and the clinical requirements of KSU grad students majoring in Speech Pathology. Ann Smith, director of the clinic currently, earned clinical hours at the clinic during the 1981 school year. Many local speech/language pathologists earned clinical hours toward their master's degree at the clinic.

As we have seen happen before, directors are offered other positions, or want to continue their educations and move on. Mr. Kavulla resigned his position after serving as the director for 14 years in May 1989. The clinic, which had operated for 18 years (from 1971-1989), closed due to staff problems. Salem Quotarians tried to console themselves because children could now get speech in the public schools. The need was met in the county. Salem Quotarians could be proud for helping make it happen. Equipment and supplies purchased through the years were dispersed to school districts and the Columbiana County Board of Health.

Salem Quota, of course, continued with other projects, but as early as July 1991, Barb Stamp reported on the progress of a local speech clinic. Due to stringent qualifying criteria for speech services in the schools, only those children with the most severe, some moderate speech/language disorders were receiving therapy. Others with milder communication issues who would benefit from therapy were not being served.

So...In July 1995, after a six-year break, the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic reopened in the same location with Marilee Mansfield, local speech pathologist serving as the director and Toni Hussar, then Pat Saltsman as clinic coordinator. Once again, therapy was provided by grad students from KSU. The reopening was made possible by an April Grant of \$2,000 from the Salem Community Foundation, as well as fund raisers including a Celebrity Roast honoring the owner and operator of Timberlanes, Roy Paparodis. In the first meetings with clients 58 speech and 75 hearing cases were screened. Thirty clients were scheduled for therapy with 17 on a waiting list.

In 2002, Director Marilee Mansfield retired from the Salem City School District and began to work at the Youngstown Hearing and Speech Clinic. Working at our clinic was viewed as a conflict of interest so Mrs. Mansfield resigned as director of the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic. At the same time, KSU graduate students were not available to provide therapy. Mrs. Ann Smith was hired as the director. Mrs. Smith, Stacey Arnfield and Amanda Sanor, local speech/language pathologists provided therapy. From 2003-2008, many, many local school-based speech/language pathologists provided a full week at school and then came to work at the clinic on Saturday because they felt that clinic was a valuable service to the community.

In 2008, Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic once again partnered with Kent State University to provide grad student clinicians, usually three students per semester for a total of nine grad students per year, to provide therapy services at the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic.

In the summer, the clinic population usually swells because some school-based speech/language pathologists refer some of their students for summer therapy so that they don't lose what they've learned over the summer. Some summers we have used 6 therapists to serve as many as 36 clients. Our usual clinic staff consists of 2 licensed speech/language pathologists, one serves as the director, the other and three grad students provide therapy.

Here we are in 2017, after providing therapy for almost 40 years, still going strong. The clinic is doing well. We continue to get referrals from pediatricians, school-based speech/language pathologists, Help Me Grow, County Health Department, area hospitals and by word of mouth. The clinic has served children as young as 2 1/2 and as old as 17. Communication disorders treated include articulation, all types of language, (grammar, vocabulary, social skills), auditory processing and memory, stuttering, voice and hearing impairment. Several adult clients have been treated at the clinic over the years and have been primarily post stroke patients or individuals involved with the community theatre who have voice disorders. Between May 2016 and May 2017, the clinic has provided therapy to 29 different clients and 9 grad students have earned clinical hours. Seeing the improvements and success of the clients is extremely rewarding.

We've had some changes in directors and clinic coordinators over the years. The clinic has had six directors and six coordinators. Pat Saltsman served 22 years as clinic coordinator and yes, our prices have changed some. Since 1975, we have changed our prices a little. The most anyone pays now for 45 minutes of therapy is \$20.00 and evaluations are \$40.00, but we continue to offer our sliding payment scale based on need and income. We currently have a client whose family is paying \$4.00 per session. Recently, through a grant written by Barbara Plummer, the clinic received a \$7,000 grant for purchasing an audiometer and therapy materials from the Salem Community Foundation.

The clinic is kept running by grants and fundraisers. Most recently, we have had the Civil War Ladies Tea, Make over Mania, Luncheon and tour of the Sebring Mansion, Signature Dishes, style shows, garage sales and nut sales,

Salem Quotarians are committed to keeping the Salem Area Speech and Hearing Clinic operating forever as a non-profit clinic designed to provide speech/language/hearing therapy to anyone who needs it. It is our passion!