

ASU Speech Therapy Helped Florida Man Restore Voice

One year ago, Joe S. Gilbert could barely speak. He whispered or wrote out most of what he wished to say. After undergoing two throat operations, he was facing yet a third.

Today, Gilbert has a new voice, a gentler voice, that he uses readily to talk about the help he has received from Dr. Charles Palmer of Appalachian State University's Speech Department.

In September of 1967, Gilbert became aware that there was something wrong with his throat. "It was like a pin-point sensation," he explained, "and later it was uncomfortable to swallow." The 73-year-old retired insurance man from Ocala, Fla., consulted several physicians. On Jan. 10 of this year, he was operated upon to remove a growth from his vocal cord.

The condition recurred six weeks later. Again, he had an operation, but about three months later, the growth recurred. His doctor recommended a third operation. "I was naturally quite disturbed," said Gilbert. "I decided to consult another physician."

As Gilbert was coming to North Carolina to spend the summer in his home in Newland, he was advised to go to Bowman Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem. He did so and was told that he was suffering from a contact ulcer at the base of his left vocal cord. The doctor told him that the condition could be cured by rest and speech therapy. He recommended that Gilbert consult a therapist at Appalachian.



JOE S. GILBERT

He is an intelligent person who quickly grasped what we were trying to do. He practiced hours on his own to make these new speech patterns habitual.

Although he will continue to practice the recommended patterns, Gilbert has now made enough progress so that he will soon return to Florida. "Without changing his vocal habits," said Dr. Palmer, "the condition would have recurred and might possibly have become malignant. But the only thing he will need now will be occasional checkups to see that he has not regressed to his old speech patterns."

"I think that you have a wonderful setup here at Appalachian," said Gilbert warmly, "and I think that it's an asset to have such a good speech therapist here. The center will certainly be fine for the community."

The facilities of Appalachian's Speech Department are

somewhat limited at the moment, but Dr. Palmer is enthusiastic about expansions which are now under construction.

"Our clientele is definitely limited at the present," he said, "and university students are given preference, of course. But for the benefit of our speech therapy students, we want to give experience with a wide range of ages and a variety of problems. With expansion of facilities we hope to provide therapy for a larger number of people."

Speech therapy cannot work miracles, but sometimes it comes remarkably close, as Joe S. Gilbert, a man who loves to talk, will be happy to say.



LIONS CLUB MEMBERS and their wives here enjoy their annual picnic dinner for the blind, which was held in the Fellowship Hall of the First Baptist Church Tuesday, Oct. 1. The picture shows part of the 60 men and women who attended. Dr. Ben Strickland is president of the organization. Maj. John Thomas, treasurer, was in charge of arrangements.

Sen. Byrd To Speak At Whitener's Rally

Gastonia—The 10th Congressional District Democratic Rally in Gastonia on October 15 will feature United States Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia. Byrd is serving his second term in the Senate and is Secretary of the Democratic Conference.

The West Virginian will be the principal speaker at a rally designed to boost the reelection efforts of Congressman Basil L. Whitener of Gastonia. The Senator is a long-time friend of Whitener and a former colleague in the House of Representatives.

Byrd was born in North Wilkesboro, N.C., and was an orphan by the time he was ten months old. At the age of three

years his foster parents moved to West Virginia, where his stepfather worked in the coal mines.

Commenting upon his visit to Gastonia, the West Virginian stated: "I always enjoy returning to my native state. It is particularly pleasant for me to participate in a major campaign meeting in behalf of my dear friend, Congressman Basil L. Whitener, whom I regard as one of the most able members of the United States Congress."

The 10th District meeting will be held at the National Guard Armory in Gastonia. Food will be served at 6:00 P.M., and the program will commence at 7:00 P.M.

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In the latter part of June, Gilbert contacted Dr. Charles Palmer, speech pathologist at Appalachian and began a series of consultations with him. Three months later, on Sept. 25, Gilbert's doctor pronounced him 80 per cent cured.

The therapy which Dr. Palmer provided involved teaching him, in Palmer's words, to initiate tones in an easier manner, avoiding the glottal attack. We also taught him to raise the pitch of his voice, because usually by trying to force the voice into a lower region we cause tension and tension causes inflammation of the vocal folds. A chronic inflammation leads to pathological conditions. Mr. Gilbert sounds now," Palmer said, "like a very relaxed man,

Muskie To Visit State Oct. 12

Vice Presidential Candidate Edmund Muskie will visit North Carolina October 12 and make an appearance at the Vance-Aycock fund raising dinner in Asheville.

Principal speaker for the Vance-Aycock Dinner will be 6th District Congressman Horace Kornegay of Greensboro, who is not seeking reelection this year. Muskie will share the platform with Kornegay as "honored guest".

France shuns NATO meeting on Czechoslovakia.

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