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## AT RANDOM: GRANTS AND GIVING

# ALA's Chicago group breaking off on its own

By Charles Storch

Tribune staff reporter

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The American Lung Association of Metropolitan Chicago said it plans to leave its national association rather than be subsumed in a seven-state regional organization.

The Chicago chapter will join five in California and one in New Hampshire that since 2006 have disaffiliated, or plan to, from the ALA, all in opposition to the national body's reorganization of its local affiliates into regional groups.

The Chicago chapter would have been folded into the ALA of the Upper Midwest, which covers Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the two Dakotas and has one governing board, said Dr. Joan Boomsma, chairwoman-elect of the chapter here.

"We, as a board, believe such a consolidation to be not in the best interest of our lung mission and might undermine our local effectiveness," said Boomsma, who is vice president of medical affairs and a pulmonary specialist at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Blue Island.

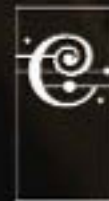
She said the chapter was concerned that it might not be able to continue certain neighborhood programs and that the money raised here for research and educational programs might not be locally reinvested.

"We have so many local problems," said Joel Africk, the chapter's president, citing the high incidence of asthma in this area and the continuing campaign to ban smoking in public places. "We think these are local problems we are best suited to address locally."

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The chapter has informed the national that it will not renew its affiliation agreement, which expires June 30. On July 1, the chapter is to assume a new name, the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago. (The other disaffiliated chapters call themselves, respectively, Breathe California and Breathe New Hampshire.)

Reached at ALA national headquarters in New York, CEO John Kirkwood explained that his group decided two years ago that it needed to streamline by 2010 "into larger, more efficient, robust organizations around the country," each with a single board of directors and budget. He noted that other national health organizations have undergone similar reorganizations.

He played down the loss of the seven chapters (out of an original 78), even though the defections are in major cities that are rich veins of revenue. Kirkwood, 68, who is to retire in June, said the ALA will continue to have offices or some other presence in those cities through its regional bodies.

Grants: Grand Victoria Foundation is giving \$5 million each to create endowments for Delta Institute and Women Employed, both of Chicago. The endowments will be set up at the Chicago Community Trust.

Dr. Allan Graham, a retired surgeon, and his wife, Mary, have given \$1 million to the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Medicine for its Clinical Performance Center. The center uses actors in simulated clinical situations for student training, assessment and research. The Grahams also contributed \$500,000 for an imaging program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's College of Veterinary Medicine. Graham went to both schools.

The James S. Kemper Foundation of Chicago gave \$500,000 to Lake Forest College for an endowed chair in liberal arts and business.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York gave the Art Institute of Chicago nearly \$500,000 for a cultural exchange program between American museums and Chinese museum professionals. The institute will manage and is one of three hosts of the program, along with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Freer and Sackler Galleries in Washington, D.C.

The Chicago Botanic Garden received a state grant of \$55,000 for its Plants of Concern program, which

A vertical promotional poster for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The top section features the text "SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA" in white, bold, sans-serif font against a dark background. Below this, the phrase "EXCITING THINGS HAPPENING" is written in a similar font, with "EXCITING" and "HAPPENING" on one line and "THINGS" on the line below. The central part of the poster shows a close-up photograph of a musician's hands playing a clarinet. Overlaid on the bottom right of the image is the text "2007/08 SUBSCRIPTIONS ON SALE NOW!" in large, bold, yellow, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the poster is the Chicago Symphony Orchestra logo, a stylized "C" with a smaller "S" inside, enclosed in a square frame. Below the logo, the words "CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA" are printed in white, bold, sans-serif font.

monitors rare plant species in this area.

AT&T Foundation gave \$5,000 to Downers Grove-based Ray Graham Association for People with Disabilities to improve its Web site.

People: Chicago Cares hired Erika Erhart as development director ... . Barry Lowenkron is leaving the U. S. State Department to become vice president for the international program at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, effective Sept. 1 ... . Opportunity International of Oak Brook elected Susan Gillette to its board ... . IFF (formerly Illinois Facilities Fund) hired Steve Bricker as senior loan officer and Corella Sholl as a loan officer in its Peoria office.

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cstorch@tribune.com

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