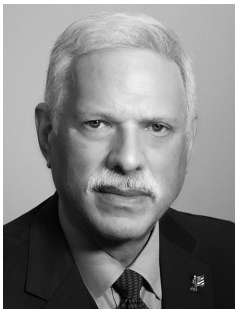
World Voice Day 2026

Robert T. Sataloff



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World Voice Day gives us a perfect opportunity to publicize and celebrate the countless advances in medical voice care, voice science, and voice pedagogy that have occurred over the last few decades. Medical voice care professionals, singing and acting teachers, performers, and patients should collaborate to educate the public about the importance of the human voice and of treating it well.

World Voice Day is featured annually in the *Journal of Singing*. The National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) is committed to collaborating with the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS), the Voice Foundation, and other organizations to celebrate World Voice Day. This article is modified periodically and republished before World Voice Day (April 16) to encourage readers to prepare to participate in and organize World Voice Day activities.[1] All singing and acting teachers, physicians, speech-language pathologists, nurses, voice patients, and others who care for and about the voice should collaborate to raise awareness of the importance of the voice and of advances in voice care.

The World Health Organization recognized a particularly high rate of laryngeal cancer in Brazil. In April of 1989, the executive committee of the Sociedade Brasileira de Laringologia e Voz (Brazilian Association of Laryngology and Voice), a multidisciplinary society that includes physicians, speech-language pathologists, and singing teachers, proposed April 16 as "Voice Day." Later, that idea was transformed to a national voice week, and even a voice month in some locations. Soon, other societies around the world recognized the importance of public education about voice; the Voice Foundation, European Laryngological Association (ELSOC), American Laryngological Association (ALA), American Broncho-Esophagological Association (ABEA), AAO-HNS, NATS, and other organizations began collaborating to establish an annual celebration of voice.

The AAO-HNS recognized this event in 2002, and the name World Voice Day was adopted. World Voice Day was celebrated in the United States for the first time on April 16, 2003. It was supported by the AAO-HNS, ALA, NATS, the Voice Foundation, and numerous other societies and organizations. A summary of the evolution of World Voice Day can be found on the website of the AAO-HNS, on the official World Voice Day website (https://worldvoiceday.org), and in a 2007 editorial by Jan G. Svec and Mara Behlau.[2]

World Voice Day activities often include lectures, concerts, educational programs, clinical voice screenings, and media events scheduled to take place on and around April 16. Web-based educational initiatives may be found through the AAO-HNS, the Voice Foundation and World Voice Day web-

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sites, and elsewhere. Laryngologists, speech-language pathologists, nurses, singers, singing teachers, actors, acting teachers, and others organize celebratory events in cities throughout the world. Voice professionals are united by a commitment to increase public appreciation of and knowledge about the human voice, and to raise awareness about the importance of good voice health and education.

For example, in Philadelphia, Voice Foundation World Voice Day events have included a PECO Crown Lights display visible throughout much of the city, singing performances, an annual choir and orchestra concert, lectures on voice care, readings for children at venues such as libraries, stand-up comedy performances, cabaret events, and other activities.

Extensive events honoring World Voice Day take place each year in the Detroit area under the guidance of Adam Rubin, in Pittsburgh with Libby Smith, in San Francisco with Clark Rosen and VyVy Young, in Los Angeles under the guidance of Michael Johns, in Cleveland through Michael Benninger, in Paris with Jean Abitbol, in Beirut under the supervision of Abdul Hamdan, and in many other cities. In addition to the physician-led and speech-pathologist-led events, NATS encourages World Voice Day activities, and many events throughout the United States are organized by singing teachers, as well as by speech-language pathologists and other voice professionals.

Many future activities will be coordinated through the relatively new ad hoc World Voice Day planning committee, notable for its broad international representation. The group's initial meeting was held in Erlangen, Germany, on July 4, 2012, and the organization is committed to sharing the excitement of voice science, medicine, therapy, pedagogy, and the vocal arts globally in collaboration with like-minded existing groups. Under the guidance initially of Johan Sundberg in Stockholm, Sweden, followed by Mara Behlau in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and currently by the Voice Foundation in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this group documented 461 World Voice Day events in 2014, and numbers as high as 795 (2018) in subsequent years. Numbers were fairly good in 2024, and fifty-five countries were represented. Continued growth is expected. The World Voice Day website functions as a historical and current repository of official global events with key personnel in sixty-six countries; major organizations—including the AAO-HNS and the Voice Foundation—are collaborating with that initiative.

The AAO-HNS ("the Academy") has developed a website, fact sheets on common voice problems, and materials for press releases to assist local communities in developing World Voice Day events. These materials are updated regularly and are available through the Academy. The Academy also establishes annual World Voice Day themes for the American celebration. In the past, these have included "Listen to Your Voice—It May Be Telling You Something" (2005), "Put Your Best Voice Forward" (2006), "Don't Tax Your Voice" (2007), "Let Your Voice Be Heard" (2008), "Invest in Your Voice" (2009), "Love Your Voice," (2010), "We Share a Voice" (2011), " Your Voice Counts" (2012), " Connect with Your Voice" (2013), "Educate Your Voice" (2014), "Voice: The Original Social Media," (2015) "Explore Your voice," (2016), "Share Your Voice," (2017), "Make the Choice to Cherish Your Voice," (2018) "Be Kind with Your Voice" (2019), "Focus On Your Voice," (2020), "One World, Many Voices," (2021) "Lift Your Voice" (2022), "Your Voice Matters" (2023), "World Voice Day: Resonate, Educate, Celebrate!" (2024), and "Empower Your Voice!" (2025). In 2026, the theme is "Caring for Our Voices."

World Voice Day offers all singing and acting teachers, otolaryngologists, speech-language pathologists, performers, public speakers, teachers, nurses, the media, and other professionals opportunities to work with each other and the public. Voice health is critical to our ability to function in today's communication-oriented society, but the voice does not receive the public recognition, appreciation or funding that it deserves. World Voice Day provides a perfect forum through which we can refamiliarize ourselves with the latest advances in laryngology and other areas of voice care and training, as well as educate our colleagues, patients, and communities through lectures, free voice screenings, community outreach programs, concerts, and other initiatives.

The remarkable advances in voice diagnosis and treatment since the 1980s have raised the standard of care for all voice patients. World Voice Day is an ideal time to highlight these advances and to educate the public about the current state of the art in voice care, education, and training. All voice care professionals, teachers, performers, and patients are encouraged to participate in this important international celebration.

NOTES

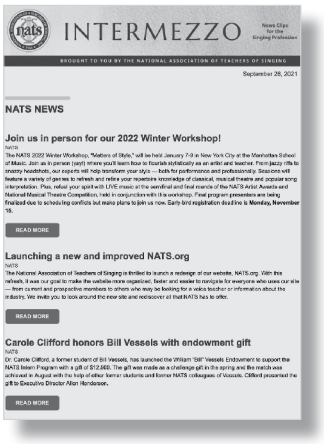
1. This article is modified in part from: Robert T. Sataloff, "World Voice Day 2025," *Journal of Voice,* 39, no. 2 (March 2025): 291–92.
2. Jan G. Svec and Mara Behlau,"April 16th. The World Voice Day," *Folia Phoniatrica et Logopaedica* 59 (2007): 53–54. For a more recent chronology/reflection of World Voice Day, see Matthew Hoch, "World Voice Day and the Pedagogic Community: Retrospection, Reflection, and Reassessment," *Journal of Singing* 79, no. 4 (March/April 2023): 477–81.

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