

# Aphasia Center of California

Volume 9 Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2006

## ACC Celebrates 10 Years of Service

*“You can’t climb to the second floor without a ladder.”*

--Emil Zatopek

**By Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D.**  
*President and Founder,  
Aphasia Center of California*

It may be hard to believe, but 10 years have passed since we opened our doors and founded the Aphasia Center of California! This special milestone provides us with an opportunity to look back and see what we have accomplished as an organization. I want to share with you what our small organization of 3 committed, compassionate, and competent speech-language pathologists, along with many wonderful and talented volunteers have achieved over 10 years.

We have improved the communication skills and quality of life for more than 600 people affected by

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*Inside: ACC's 2006 Walk to Talk*

### **You're Invited to the Center's 10 Year Anniversary Celebration!**

**What:** Please join us for an afternoon of celebration and education in honor of the Aphasia Center of California's 10 year anniversary. The afternoon will include a presentation by Roberta Elman, Ph.D., ACC Founder and President, entitled "Everything you wanted to know about aphasia..." Audience questions and answers will be encouraged. ACC speech-language pathologists, Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, MA and Sue Ewing, MA will facilitate a panel discussion with aphasia survivors and co-survivors. We'll also have refreshments and time for visiting with one another!

**When:** Sunday, November 5th, 2006 from 2 pm to 4:30 pm.

**Where:** Downtown Oakland Senior Center-200 Grand Avenue at Harrison St.

**Who:** ACC participants, family members, friends, and all others interested in aphasia.

**How:** Suggested donation of \$5 per person at the door. Please RSVP by calling the Aphasia Center at 510-336-0112.

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**Our Mission statement:** *The mission of the Aphasia Center is to encourage and expand communication and psychosocial well being for those with aphasia. We are dedicated to helping families and stroke survivors understand the ramifications of stroke and aphasia on their daily lives and to improve the quality of life for all those affected.*

## Judi Briano--Try, Try, Try!

*By Martha Lynch,  
Stroke Survivor and  
ACC Participant*

Rolling down the halls of the Aphasia Center of California in her scooter, Judy Briano speaks to everyone she meets. She has become the “unofficial” greeter for people with aphasia, as well as for people who work or visit the Downtown Oakland Senior Center building. She has a wonderful manner about her that makes you break into a smile when you meet her. Judi has a genuine friendliness, an ability to connect to people, and confidence in reaching out to everyone she meets; however, this wasn’t always the case.

After leading an active life as a school bus driver, Judi experienced a hemorrhagic stroke at the age of 44—doctors believed that she would die. After lying in a coma for a month, Judi miraculously regained consciousness and began the arduous path to recovery. Her parents, Roberta and John, helped her with every challenging step. When she first started speech therapy, she could not hold up her head and could only say a few words at a time. When you meet Judi today, you have no inkling that she has come such a distance.

Judi’s recovery did not happen overnight. She was dogged about her independence. She eventually moved from her parents’ home back to her own. Giving up driving a car was a difficult adjustment, but Judi now feels comfortable using her scooter on the bus. And she goes everywhere and does everything she wants to do,



*Judi Briano's enthusiasm for life inspires everyone who knows her*

whether it’s grocery shopping, eating at a favorite restaurant, or attending a concert. Judi is determined to make her life as rich as it can possibly be.

Judi has amazing talents that she uses to the fullest. Her collage-pictured note cards are beautiful and look professionally made. She creates them with her left hand because her right hand is paralyzed from her stroke. Not only blessed with artistic talents, Judi has an exquisite voice. She started singing in her church choir a few months ago. And at the 2005 ACC holiday party, Judi got on stage and led everyone in song a capella!

Judi also excels at raising money for the annual Aphasia Center

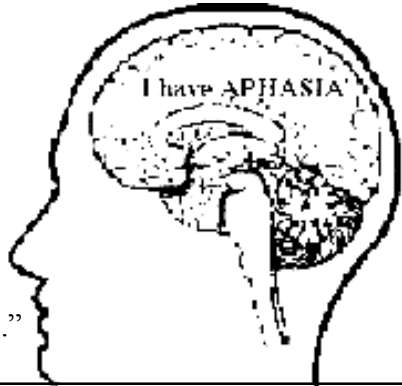
fundraising drive. For the third year in a row, Judi raised money from more individuals than anyone else at the ACC! She has no fear in asking businesses, friends, and people at her church to contribute because she believes in the cause. As Judi raises money, she also raises awareness of aphasia and the work that is done at the Aphasia Center of California.

Judi is an inspiration for us all. Judi says, “Try, try, try... You can’t sit home and not talk to anyone, you will end up in a facility with attendants taking care of you. My advice to everyone recovering from a stroke is to talk as much as you can. That’s what I do and each year gets better.”

# Aphasia Center News

**Aphasia** (uh fay' zhuh) n: an impairment of the power to use or comprehend words, usually acquired as a result of a stroke and sometimes from head injury or a brain tumor. More than one million Americans have acquired aphasia.

"Ijenti ferbis..."



## Your Quality Donations Needed

The ACC announces our new garage sale and consignment program! All money earned from these sales will benefit the speech-language treatment programs at the Center. We are looking for quality items throughout the year that can be sold. All quality furniture, costume and fine jewelry, vintage and new clothing, kitchenware, children's books, and collectibles are greatly appreciated. We cannot accept non-working electrical items, computers, or golf clubs. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the IRS. Please contact Elaine Ivankovich, Program Coordinator, to arrange for drop-off or pick-up at 925-687-9783 or 925-788-6261.

## New International Group Treatment Book

Dr. Roberta Elman of the Aphasia Center of California is the editor of an

international professional text, "Group Treatment of Neurogenic Communication Disorders: The Expert Clinician's Approach. Second Edition." Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, Sue Ewing, and Dr. Elman are contributing authors along with 27 other chapter authors from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Australia. The book will be available from Plural Publishing in San Diego in November, 2006 from <[www.pluralpublishing.com](http://www.pluralpublishing.com)>.

## Grant for Uninsured Participants

The Aphasia Center of California was the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente to fund ACC group treatment services for uninsured and underinsured individuals with aphasia. Thank you, Kaiser Permanente!

## Jefferson Award for Public Service

Dr. Roberta Elman has been awarded a Jefferson Award for making a difference in the community through her efforts at the Aphasia Center of California. Dr. Elman and the ACC will be featured in October in segments on KPIX (CBS/Channel 5) television, KCBS radio, and in a San Francisco Chronicle article. Information about the Jefferson award, as well as video from the ACC segment, will be available in October at <[www.cbs5.com](http://www.cbs5.com)>

## Warning Signs of Stroke

- ◆ Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arms, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- ◆ Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding
- ◆ Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- ◆ Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination
- ◆ Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

**Call 9-1-1** if you or someone you know has one of more of these signs.

From the American Stroke Assn.

## Thank You to Our Generous Donors

January - June 2006

If we have made any errors in this listing, please accept our apologies and contact us at (510) 336-0112.

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## Walk to Talk 2006— A Recipe for a Great Day!

by *Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D.*  
*Founder & President, ACC*

Here is our recipe for a wonderful day: Take **90 people**, mix in **beautiful weather** and a **gorgeous lake setting**, add that **all money** that is raised **goes directly to Aphasia Center programs**...and the result: **Our fourth annual "Walk to Talk!"** This year our walk participants raised more than \$14,500 for program services at the Aphasia Center!

We strolled and rolled together as a large group for a quarter of a mile along Lake Merritt. Then 40 people, a record setting number, decided to walk or roll around the entire 3½ miles of lake shoreline! Our "Walk to Talk" event included refreshments in the Downtown Oakland Senior Center's lounge and drawings for great merchandise prizes. Our raffle table had beautiful items created by the following members and friends of the Aphasia Center: Sierra Briano, Enid Meyer, Dixie Lewis, Judi Briano, Don Welcome, and Dori Ellis. Susan Musicant, Sharon Medairy and friends from [www.womenscontradance.com](http://www.womenscontradance.com) once again provided live fiddle and guitar tunes that got us in the mood for a great morning.

Jim Santanna and George Yee tied this year as our top fundraisers! And Judi Briano maintained her record as raising the most number of donations! A heartfelt thank you to all who helped and participated—your efforts assist the Aphasia Center to help so many



*ACC Board members (L to R) Enid Meyer, Steve Fry, Pat Terry, Mary Lew, Bob Lewis and Esther Akiba gather at the start of the 2006 Walk to Talk*

people affected by aphasia.

Please join me in a **ROUND OF APPLAUSE** to all who made donations to the Aphasia Center of California for the walk! Please know that your generosity is already being put to work to help those living with aphasia. We don't have space to list the names of everyone who made a contribution, but we truly appreciate each donation made.

Thanks to the following companies that donated services or merchandise for our participant prize drawing. **We encourage you to remember their generosity and support their businesses!** Albertson's-Montclair/Oakland, Banana Blossom-Oakland, Berkeley Bowl Marketplace, Compadres Bar & Grill-Oakland, Crogan's Restaurant-Montclair/Oakland, Italian Color's Restaurant-Montclair/Oakland, La Strada Restaurant, Richmond; Long's

Drugstore-Rockridge/Oakland; Neldam's Bakery-Oakland, Pac & Save-Emeryville, Pastino's Restaurant-Oakland, Peet's Coffee & Tea-Lakeshore/Oakland, Rite-Aid-Montclair/Oakland, Safeway-Rockridge/Oakland, Shreve & Co, San Francisco; Svenhard's Swedish Bakery-Oakland, Trader Joe's-El Cerrito, and Ultimate Grounds-Oakland.

This walk would not have taken place without the help of numerous event volunteers. Once again, the event would not have even been possible without the efforts of Enid Meyer, our walk co-coordinator. A big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time to help things run smoothly both before and on the day of the event: Sid Dommes, Vicki & Don Welcome, Steve Fry, Patricia Terry, Dan & Diana Sullivan,

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## ACC Celebrates 10 Years

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aphasia by providing more than 41,000 program visits. The ACC helps stroke survivors with aphasia find a renewed purpose in life and begin to participate in the world around them once again!

We have provided more than \$76,000 in sliding fee reductions to participants who are living at or below the poverty level. No one has been turned away from the ACC because of an inability to pay.

We have educated and trained thousands of healthcare professionals around the world by conducting more than 60 face-to-face presentations about our programs. We have also written 26 publications for healthcare professionals. These publications include books, book chapters, and peer-reviewed journal articles about the ACC's innovative clinical work and research.

We have shared our expertise and helped others begin Aphasia Centers and groups. These programs are now up and running in Canada, England, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Texas.

In 2006, we placed our manual and materials for the innovative Book Connection™ Program, a book club for people with aphasia, on our website [www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org) so that other speech-language pathologists could start aphasia book clubs. Currently, more than 15 groups around the United States are offering aphasia book clubs using the methods and materials created by the ACC.

We continue to use our resources wisely—we have accomplished all of this with more than 90% of the ACC's

spending going to fund direct program services for each of our 10 years!

Although the Center is physically located in the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Area, I hope you will agree that our reach has been wide and our

## Thanks to Our Donors

*continued from page 4*

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The Generous Donors for  
“Walk to Talk 2006!”

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impact life changing for people affected by aphasia.

Thank you to all of our supporters—you have helped us make a real difference for thousands of people over the last 10 years. We couldn't do it without you!! Please help us celebrate this important milestone by joining us at our 10 year anniversary event on November, 5<sup>th</sup>!

Deborah Russell  
Derek & Susan Sato  
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## 2006 Walk to Talk Donations

***A big THANK YOU to ALL donors who contributed to our third annual "Walk to Talk." Space limitations prevent listing all donors, but those who contributed \$25 or more are listed below.*** (If we have made any errors in this listing, please accept our apologies and contact us at (510) 336-0112.)

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## 2006 Walk to Talk--A Recipe for A Great Day

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Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, Sue Ewing, Bob & Dixie Lewis, Margie Westbrook, Prudence Ashley, Christy & Ron Lloyd, Elaine Ivankovich, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, Esther Akiba, Tracy & Deanna Cook, Luke Weger, Melissa Burrow, and Pat Woodward. You all helped make the recipe for our fourth annual "Walk to Talk" a real **success!**

## Medic Alert

Medic Alert bracelets ensure that your medical records can be accessed quickly if the need arises. To find out more about ordering this life-saving bracelet, call Medic Alert at 1-888-633-4298.

[www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org)

## Walk to Talk Donations

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## Remember the ACC!

Make a donation to the ACC to honor a special occasion such as a birthday, graduation, wedding, or anniversary.

This newsletter is a publication of the Aphasia Center of California

Written and edited by Martha Lynch and Roberta J. Elman

Design and layout by Morris Older

## Aphasia Center of California

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