

# Aphasia Center of California

Volume 14 Issue 1 ♦ Spring 2011

## ***Sculpting a Life with Aphasia***

*“The secret to success is to start from scratch and keep on scratching.”*

—Dennis Green

***By Ron Hausmann,  
Stroke Survivor and  
ACC Participant***

### **Life before Aphasia**

I grew up in the mid-West. My family lived close to Chicago, in an old, industrial town, Aurora, Ill. It was the 50s; life in America seemed

promising. We watched the Howdy Dowdy show, listened to the Lone Ranger on the radio, and read the Superman comics. On Saturdays, we went to the movies. I had great buddies and school was easy.

In 1965, I left for college— Washington University in St. Louis. America was radically changing. Years were turbulent and troubling and civil unrest existed in most cities. Following graduation, I traveled to the Bay Area and fell in love with the North Coast. A friend decided to become a lawyer; he said I should

do the same. With my training in biological studies in college, he thought I should try environmental law. Law schools accepted me, and my legal career began. I left for Georgetown University Law School in Washington, DC.

After law school, I began work at the Environmental Protection Agency. Congress had just passed a new act addressing suspicions concerning many pesticides.

My interest turned to defending the Clean Air Act. Lawsuits multiplied and I argued many appeals in the U.S. Court of Appeals. In 1979, the Justice Department hired me to prosecute companies that violated the law. We were successful.

In 1981, I left Washington, DC and headed west to the Bay Area. There, I entered a private law firm. Because of my stroke, I stopped practicing law in 2001.

*Continued on page 2*

### ***Join our Ninth Annual “Walk to Talk” Raise Funds and Awareness!***

**What:** The Aphasia Center of California’s Ninth Annual “Walk to Talk” is a fund-raising event to raise funds for our programs. Our “Walk to Talk” will feature a 1/4 mile and 3 mile untimed walk/run.

For more information and to pledge online, please visit our website:  
[www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org)

**When:** Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The walk will begin at 10:00am.

**Where:** Lake Merritt, Oakland. Walk starts at the Downtown Oakland Senior Center at 200 Grand Avenue.

**How:** Companies and individuals, from walkers with kids to seasoned athletes to people with their dogs on leashes can participate in this event to benefit the Aphasia Center. Help the Aphasia Center by sponsoring an Aphasia Center participant, asking friends and family for donations, or joining us for the walk. Call (510) 336-0112 for more information.

### ***Inside:***

Aphasia Center News ... page 3  
Thanks to Our Donors .. page 4  
ACC Annual Report ..... page 5  
Our Award Winners ..... page 6

**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.*



*Ron Hausmann  
and some of his  
sculptures*

## ***Sculpting a Life with Aphasia***

*Continued from page 1*

### **Stroke and Aphasia**

I got my “brain attack,” or what people referred to as my stroke, 10 years ago. I had a dissection of the left anterior carotid artery. The neurologists do not know what triggered that dissection. Like many people who have strokes, I got aphasia and wasn’t able to speak at all. I spent a year going to a speech therapist in San Francisco who helped me say words again. After a year, the speech therapist suggested that I go to the Aphasia Center because I needed therapy that would deal with the repercussions of aphasia. Therapy at the Aphasia Center continues to this day.

The most difficult part about having aphasia is that I cannot practice law. I still have trouble explaining complex thoughts that relay my thinking. The other part of aphasia is that I’ve lost the ability to write. I can only write now using a

computer program that I speak into. With the computer program, I can speak two or three words and finally get a sentence out. Then I look at what I said and rewrite. It takes many, many times to get a proper sentence written.

Another problem that I face is reading. Before the stroke, I read constantly. In the hospital following my stroke, I tried to read a newspaper and could not read the words. No one asked if I had problems with reading and it wasn’t tested. I came home and gradually tried to read to no avail. Gradually, words made sense to me, and I persisted. Last year, I got a Kindle. Using the Kindle, I read a book and listen to the words at the same time. It made all the difference. Now, I read newspapers and magazines. Technology has helped to answer my reading problem. My main task after my stroke was to improve my speech and learn to read and write again. I’m still working

at it and still improving.

### **Sculpting**

I decided to try sculpting because my right hand was disabled following my stroke. Using my right-hand in sculpting was actually therapy. I also wanted to show people how my brain was affected by my stroke. I decided to make a sculpture of my head. I made the right side of the brain as it exists normally. On the left side of the brain, I used plexi-glass to represent the brain as shown on my MRI scan. I used black paint to represent the stroke damage. I wanted people to comprehend the damage and why therapy is needed to get other areas of the brain to assume new functions. I continued to sculpt other heads. I even did an ape head, as suggested by my daughter, who is studying to be a veterinarian.

### **Conclusion**

I’ve learned many things since having my stroke. One important lesson is this: with effort and good therapy you can learn to cope with the difficulties of aphasia. I am.

# 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..."



## June: National Aphasia Awareness Month and California Aphasia Awareness Month

Help the ACC raise awareness of aphasia. Increasing the awareness of aphasia will help us to provide needed services, improve research funding, and reduce the isolation often caused by aphasia. You can help us to raise aphasia awareness by educating your friends and family about aphasia. Join us at our "Walk to Talk" event in June at Lake Merritt. Whenever you can, educate people about "aphasia" and give them the website address of the Aphasia Center of California so they can learn more:

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

## Do You Shop at Lucky, FoodMaxx or Savemart?

Lucky, FoodMaxx, and Savemart will donate money to the Aphasia Center of California every time you shop! Just call the Aphasia Center and ask us to mail you a Shares Program card. It's super simple,

doesn't cost a thing, and you don't need to give any personal information. Each time you buy groceries, you just hand your Shares Program card to the clerk, and Lucky, FoodMaxx and Savemart will automatically donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the ACC at no cost to you. So please call us today to get your free Shares Program card and start helping the ACC every time you buy groceries!! To get your Shares Program card, please call us at 510-336-0112.

## Great News! The Aphasia Center Accepts Vehicle Donations

The Aphasia Center of California has teamed up with Donate For Charity, a company that specializes in processing vehicle donations for nonprofit organizations. Donate For Charity arranges for vehicle pickup, handles all the DMV issues, sells the vehicle at auction, and distributes the net proceeds to Aphasia Center of California. So if it's time to replace an older car, or if you have a boat and trailer that are just taking up

space in the garage, consider making a donation. You'll avoid the headache of selling a used vehicle, help the Aphasia Center of California fund its ongoing efforts, and receive a tax deduction. When you're ready to donate, or if you have relatives or friends that wish to donate, simply call Donate For Charity toll-free at (866) 392-4483 or donate on-line at [www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org). We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity and help us expand our commitment to improving the quality of life for all those affected by aphasia.

**Please join the Aphasia Center of California on Facebook!!**

## Spring Cleaning

Don't forget the ACC when it comes to donating quality items. All money earned from the ACC's consignment program benefits 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.

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

July-December 2010

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

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Continued on page 6

# ACC 2010 Annual Report

## 2010 Services

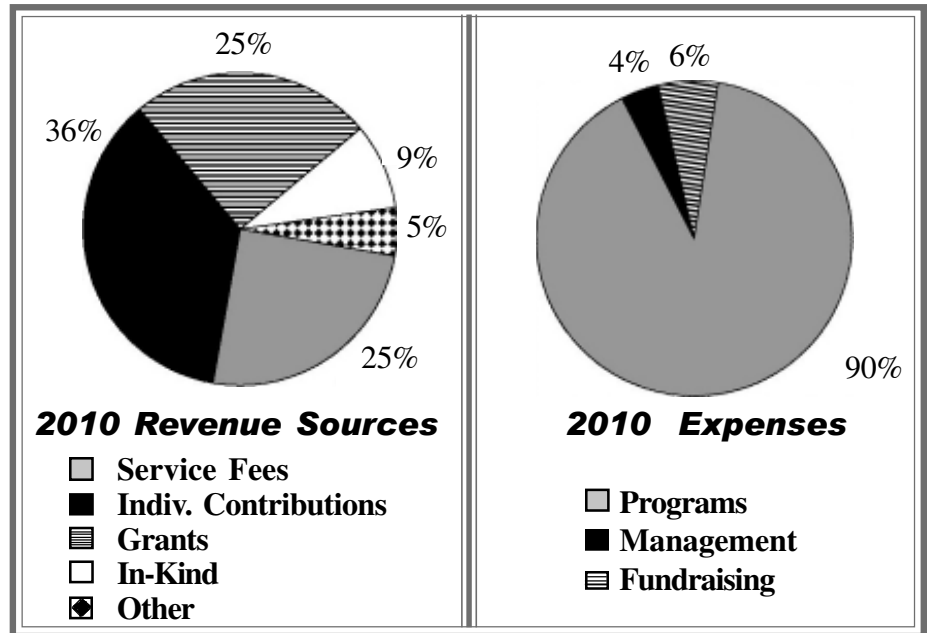
Total Visits: 3885  
 Group Communication Treatment Visits: 1747  
 Individual Speech-Language Treatment Visits: 82  
 Reading & Writing Classes: 295  
 Club Aphasia: 689  
 Fitness & Relaxation Classes: 899  
 Educational Stroke Group Series: 173  
 Information & Referral (includes phone, mail, and e-mail): 1987  
 Web site hits to date: 74,200+

## Organization and Corporate Donations

Cisco Systems Foundation  
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 Wilder Green Fund  
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## In-Kind Donations

Alameda Theatre Cineplex & Café—Alameda  
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 Bellanico Restaurant—Oakland  
 Berkeley Bowl Marketplace—Berkeley  
 The Book Tree—Oakland  
 Crogan's Restaurant—Montclair/



Oakland  
 El Jarro Restaurant—Lafayette  
 The Food Mill—Oakland  
 Harlan Simon—Oakland  
 Hobnob Eats and Drinks—Alameda  
 Italian Color's Restaurant—Montclair/Oakland  
 Jaunty—San Ramon  
 La Mediterranee Restaurant—Berkeley  
 Leah's Closet—Martinez  
 Lakeshore Café—Oakland  
 Natural Grocery Company—El Cerrito  
 Pac & Save—Emeryville  
 Palace Nails & Wax—Oakland  
 Pastino's Restaurant—Oakland  
 Peet's Coffee & Tea—Lakeshore/Oakland  
 Red Boy Pizza—Oakland  
 The Rising Loaf Café & Bakery—Lafayette  
 Second to None—Walnut Creek  
 Trader Joe's—El Cerrito  
 Trattoria Laurellinos—Oakland  
 Ultimate Grounds—Oakland

Whole Foods—Oakland

## Matching Gifts

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 Genentech  
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 Newsletter Design: Morris Older

## Donated Program Space

City of Oakland, Downtown Senior Center

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Continued from page 4

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*Brenda Garrett and Seth Andrews, ACC's 2010 Go for It Award Winners*



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## Our Award Recipients

Two Aphasia Center of California members were honored at the 2010 Holiday Party with “Go For It!” awards. These awards are given to members who believe that living fully with aphasia means that you have to “Go for it!”

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

Our 2010 honorees, Brenda Garrett and Seth Andrews, have not let aphasia stop them from living life to the fullest. Congratulations to Brenda and Seth—thank you for inspiring so many people!

This newsletter is a publication of the Aphasia Center of California  
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