



Rebuilding communication. *Transforming lives.*

# ACC Connection

Volume 20, Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2017

## *Don't Give Up! It Takes Time.*

*"You're never too small to make a big difference."*

~Anonymous

**By Roberta J Elman, PhD**  
*President and Founder*  
*Aphasia Center of California*

Determined, compassionate, and quick to laugh. These are some of the words that come to mind when I think of Regina Tipton, a current participant and volunteer at the ACC's Menlo Park program site. Regina was born in Baltimore, losing her father to a series of heart attacks at a year old. Following his death, Regina, her mother, and sister, moved to Nashville. In order to assist her family with expenses, Regina started working part-time at the age of 14. That is also when she began a lifetime of volunteering.

Healthcare was always part of Regina's life. At Middle Tennessee State University, she majored in nurs-



*Regina and Eric Tipton with Elvis at the beach*

ing and psychology. She followed her sister to the Los Angeles area in 1989, finding a job in the healthcare industry. In 1990, she met Eric Tipton when a group of friends took a trip to Las Vegas. Eric and Regina haven't been apart since and married in 1994.

Life for Regina and Eric was filled with successes and struggles. They found it challenging to live in the expensive San Francisco Bay Area, but they worked hard while renting in San Francisco and then San Mateo.

Regina says that they were finally able to buy "a little box" in Mountain View and life was good: filled with friends, music, family pets, and travel.

In November 2012, at the age of 51, Regina was diagnosed with a brain aneurysm. She had two neurosurgeries to repair the bleeding in her brain and was scheduled to go home the next day. However, that night she had the worst headache of her life, fell to the floor, and

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**Our Mission Statement:** *The mission of the Aphasia Center of California is to enhance communication skills, quality of life, and overall well-being for all those affected by aphasia.*

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

**January 2017 - July 2017**  
Please see page 4 for “Walk to Talk” donations

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## Don't Give Up! It Takes Time.

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was taken to the ICU. When she awoke the next day, she couldn't speak and did not understand what had happened to her. She had sustained a severe stroke with aphasia.

Regina says that her biggest frustration while at the hospital and during rehabilitation was not being told enough about aphasia and what that meant. She wishes that someone could have taken the time to explain things to her in a way that she could have understood.

When Regina returned home, she was isolated from the community. Eric thought that bringing home a puppy might encourage Regina to interact with others. That's when Elvis came into their lives! A rescue dog, Elvis is a Redbone

Coonhound and Australian Kelpie mix. Regina could barely speak at that time due to her aphasia, but she was motivated to say the names of Elvis's dog toys as well as training commands. With Elvis in her life, Regina found herself exercising more and using language. She says, "We rescued him, but he saved me!"

As Regina continued her recovery, she longed for a purpose in life. She found that purpose in returning to volunteering. I met Regina in 2014, during a lecture I gave about aphasia for the Pacific Stroke Association in Menlo Park. Regina says that the lecture helped her really understand aphasia for the first time, "pumped her up," and helped her move forward. She met other people with aphasia at that lecture and became

one of the first members in the Menlo Park aphasia groups in 2015.

Regina has become a volunteer for a variety of stroke and aphasia organizations including as a co-facilitator of one of our Menlo Park aphasia groups! Her main goal is to raise awareness of aphasia and she never misses an opportunity to educate each person she meets. She wanted to share with you some specific advice for stroke survivors with aphasia: "Don't give up! It takes time. If isolated, connect with others. You do have intelligence. You'll have bad days, but it doesn't mean you'll always be that way. I was told I would get 6 months and then wouldn't change. But you will change!"

I feel extremely fortunate to have met Regina at my Menlo Park lecture. With her help, and yours, I know we will change the world for people living with aphasia!



## 15th Annual Walk to Talk

An enthusiastic group of 135 people joined our 15th Annual “Walk to Talk” at Lake Merritt on June 24th to raise aphasia awareness and funds for the ACC. With the help of a \$5,000 challenge gift from an anonymous donor, we raised more than \$47,000 for aphasia programs and services!!

Special thanks to John Jankowski, who for the 7th year in a row, brought in the most donations! We had a host of people who raised more than \$500: Esther Akiba, Kathryn Anderson & Family, Fritz Coetzee, Anita Cox, Sid Dommès & Enid Meyer, Roberta Elman, Nancy &

Peter Farber-Szekrenyi, Terry Flanagan, David Giacomelli & Family, Earl Hamlin, Laura & Bob Jacinto, Mary Jane & Rich Laufenberg, Julie & Vince Lindgren, Eric Liu, Michael Miller & Family, Len Nordson & Family, Nancy Park, Pat Terry & Doug Olson, Tom Purbaugh & Karen Spina, Jim & Patty Santanna, Roy Schweyer, Myrna Schwartz, Josh Sickel, Pat & George Springer, Team Derrick Wong, Philip Tien, Cliff Tong, and Bill Wong & Mary Lew. To you and the many donors who sponsored you, thank you for your generosity and efforts in supporting what we do at the Aphasia Center!

The “Walk to Talk” couldn’t take place without all of our hard working event volunteers, including our wonderful musicians: Jody Richardson; and Mary Cranley & the band; our extraordinary event co-coordinator, Enid Meyer; and our volunteers on event day--Sue Ewing, Sami Wong, Wendy Cook, Steve Fry, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, Myrna & Barry Schwartz, Rebecca Schwartz, Betty Bugaj, Lyssa Rome along with Abe, Noah & Ben, Alexandria Lai, Aileen Aboudi, Kristen Wehara, Erica De Guzman, Cara Jacobson, Keith Diehl, Bishop Graham, Miriam Miller, Sara Nevius, Andrew Ratkiewicz, and Lauren Scheiner. ACC volunteers and donors make everything possible—thank you so much!

Please acknowledge the generosity of these businesses for our 2017 “Walk to Talk” with your support:

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**Walk to Talk 2017 Donors**  
**A big thank you to all of our "Walk to Talk" donors! It was a record setting event with more than 135 walkers at Lake Merritt on June 24th. Please be sure to join us in 2018!**

*Space limitations allow us to list donors who made contributions of \$50 or more.*

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## Do you shop at Lucky FoodMaxx or Savemart? Program Update!

Lucky, FoodMaxx, and Savemart have updated their S.H.A.R.E.S. donation program. The program is now part of eScrip. You no longer need a special card—all you need to do is register with eScrip online and then input your phone number each time you check out. It's super simple and doesn't cost a thing. Each time you buy groceries, Lucky, FoodMaxx and Savemart will donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the ACC! To register for S.H.A.R.E.S. through eScrip, go to this website: [luckysupermarkets.com/shares](http://luckysupermarkets.com/shares) and select the Aphasia Center of California as your charity. If you have any questions, please call us at 510-336-0112.

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