

Welcome from Dr. Julius Fridriksson!

Dear Friends,

For almost a decade, we have been conducting research aimed at understanding recovery from aphasia in the Aphasia Laboratory at the University of South Carolina. This work has relied on funding from the National Institutes of Health and, as importantly, the participation of individuals who have aphasia as a result of stroke. Although we have a long way to go, much has been accomplished in the recent years. For example, we now have a pretty good idea of the brain areas that support recovery from aphasia as well as what kind of brain damage has a particularly negative effect on recovery. Knowing what areas are important for recovery has allowed us to explore the effectiveness of electrical brain stimulation as a treatment for aphasia. We are particularly excited about this avenue and will let you know about our progress as results become available.

All of our work would not be possible without your participation. We very much appreciate your patience and willingness to help us in our quest to cure aphasia. My hope is that, in the long run, we will make significant progress to improve aphasia treatment and, as a result, improve the lives of people with aphasia.

Finally, I hope you enjoy this first edition of our newsletter. Our plan is to publish it on a quarterly basis and include information which may be helpful to you and your loved ones. I want to thank those of you who have taken time to contribute to this edition of the newsletter and look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Thank you,
Julius Fridriksson, Ph.D.



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Aphasia: What are the Facts?



FICTION:

Aphasia affects intelligence.



FACT:

A person with aphasia may have difficulty retrieving words and names, but the person's intelligence is basically intact. For people with aphasia, it is the ability to access ideas and thoughts through language - not the ideas and thoughts themselves- that is disrupted.



FICTION:

Aphasia is not common.



FACT:

Aphasia affects about one million Americans -or 1 in 250 people- and is more common than Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy or muscular dystrophy. More than 100,000 Americans acquire the disorder each year. However, most people have never heard of it.

- The National Aphasia Association



Living with Aphasia



We are all unique individuals. Every stroke is unique. Some people are affected by some part of the body, like the arm, leg, or neck. Sometimes the whole body is affected, making the person dizzy. Sometimes the effect is of the mind's ability to understand, speak, or read.

I have had three strokes and a TIA (transient ischemic attack). The TIA had no known effect. The first full-blown stroke had a brief effect on my legs. The next one affected me with aphasia. The latest stroke was in the brain stem and made me very dizzy for a while. In every case, I was very lucky that I was taken to a hospital quickly. Only the aphasia was the on-going effect. So, I have been working hard since with speech therapy.

I was invited to contribute to the aphasia newsletter. At first I thought it would be some more therapy for me. It would be good practice in finding the right word when speaking. I thought about it. Maybe I could share some of the frustrations from aphasia to those who don't have it. My first promise is to keep my sentences simple and easy to read. If I fall short on this goal, please let me know. I want to stimulate and entertain while I educate, but I don't want to be confusing. There is enough of that in our world.

Many people want speech quickly, especially on the telephone. Or they have some information in numbers for you, or some instructions that take many steps. I remember after my stroke with aphasia; someone brought a newspaper and I could not read the first word. Later, I attempted to read. I tried my old favorite: the comics. I couldn't get the jokes. All those simple words were very confusing. News reports were impossible with negative words piling off each other: "No longer could he forget how poorly his performance could be over looked." What does that mean? Do I care?

Eight months later, I can read many types of reading material. But news reports can be confusing for me. Instructions, insurance policies, or government letters are very hard. I hope to be easier to read than those. That is my promise. - Mike Bouknight

Community Contributions



June B's Quick Meatloaf Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1) 2 lbs. ground chuck
- 2) 1 egg
- 3) 16 oz. jar of salsa
- 4) 1/4 cup *uncooked* quick 1-minute oatmeal
- 5) 1 cup cheese (I use 1/3 cup Cheddar, 1/3 cup Colby, and 1/3 cup pepper jack)
- 6) ketchup (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Mix the first four ingredients.
- 2) Divide the meat mixture in half.
 - a) Place half of the mixture evenly into a 10 x 10 x 2 (inch) dish.
 - b) Make an indentation in the center of the meat mixture so that there is a ridge of about 1/2 to 1 inch around it.
 - c) Add cheese.
 - d) Place the other half of the meat mixture on top of the cheese.
 - e) Pinch the 2 halves together around the edges to seal the cheese inside.
- 3) Cover the top with ketchup (optional).
- 4) Bake at 350° for approximately 45-minutes.

We would love to include your contributions as a person with aphasia, a family member, or a friend! Your contribution could be anything from a poem, personal story, or strategies that you have found helpful while living with aphasia. Please contact Julie Baker at 843-792-6401 or at bakerjm6@mailbox.sc.edu to express your interest in contributing to the newsletter.



- June Boiter

Holocaust Remembrance Day: A Tribute to David Miller

In observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom HaShoah, which falls on April 11th this year, we would like to share the story of Mr. David Miller, a survivor of the Holocaust and popular member of our USC Stroke Recovery Groups, as told by his son, Henry Miller:

My dad's story of survival has rarely been heard. Like many survivors, he tried to move forward with his life after the war, and for about 40-years, he did not discuss the horrors that he endured. Unfortunately, about 20-years ago, Dad suffered a stroke which robbed him of his communication abilities. I will try to share with you a very small amount of my Dad's history that I've been able to retrieve.

Dad was born in Warsaw, Poland in 1921 and was the only son in a family of 6; he had 3 sisters along with his mom and dad. During September 1939, German troops began to occupy Warsaw. This was the month of my Dad's 18th birthday. It would be the beginning of a 5-1/2 year nightmare.

In October 1940, the Warsaw Ghetto was established, and just 1-month later, the ghetto was sealed. My father and his family were now a part of this imprisoned community. Dad was among the roughly 5000 resistance fighters who participated in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising which began on April 19, 1943. Hitler had given the order to destroy the ghetto and everyone inside. Resistance fighters fought with rocks, sticks, and whatever ammunitions they could get their hands on. When the ammo ran out, the ghetto was overrun. My father eventually escaped through the underground sewer system, which he had previously traversed numerous times while smuggling in supplies during that final year in the ghetto. He was among the very last of the Jewish population to leave Warsaw.

His freedom was short-lived, however, as he was captured and eventually sent to Auschwitz in December 1943, which was the beginning of 1-1/2 years of survival in numerous concentration camps and working in coal mines as a slave laborer. Dad would later remark in a 1949 *State* newspaper article that on some days they were given bread to eat and on other days they had nothing to eat at all. His weight had now dropped to 80 pounds. It was during this time in the camps that he would meet Felix Goldberg. This would be the beginning of a lifelong friendship of 57-years. They had survived the coal mines together and would endure the death marches in the snow that took place during the final months of the war. It was early April 1945 when Dad escaped from an out camp of Buchenwald by pushing aside a guard and fleeing to the woods. He would eventually make his way toward the direction of American Liberation soldiers. Soon after this time, Dad would reunite at a liberated Buchenwald with Felix.

With the war over, Dad was sent to a Displaced Persons' Camp. This is where he would eventually regain his weight and strength. He would also confirm the grim reality that he was the only survivor of his immediate family. He had lost his mother, father, and 3 sisters. Alone at the age of 23, he would now try to restart his life. Dad obtained a driver's license and received training to be an auto mechanic. He and his friend, Felix, would soon meet two sisters, Cela and Bluma, who had survived the camps together. Both couples would later marry in a double wedding ceremony.

Just a few months after the wedding, Mom and Dad received notice that they were being sponsored as refugees by the Beth Shalom Synagogue in Columbia, South Carolina. Mom and Dad were welcomed with open arms. Meanwhile, Mom convinced Bluma and Felix to come to Columbia with stories of wonderful opportunities in America. These young couples had survived the most horrific event of the 20th century. They had lost virtually everything during the war: their homes, their belongings, their country, their parents and grandparents. However, through the years, time would, for the most part, ease the emotional scars that these Holocaust survivors endured. - Henry Miller

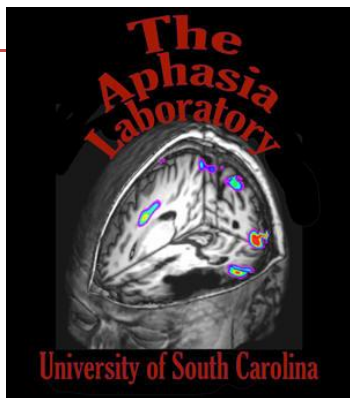


Left: David Miller in 1948;
Right: David Miller today

For Mr. Miller's complete story, please visit:
<http://www.jewishcolumbia.org/page.aspx?id=175018>



David & Cela Miller
on their wedding day.



The USC Aphasia Lab

The Aphasia Lab is located in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of South Carolina. Work in the Aphasia Lab seeks to clarify the relationships between brain damage and speech and language impairments. Much of this research relies on technologies such as MRI and non-invasive electrical brain stimulation.

If you are a person with aphasia and would like to learn more about our research opportunities, please contact Astrid Fridriksson at (803) 777-2693 or fridrika@gwm.sc.edu

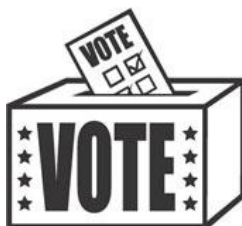
Know Your Rights!

The Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act

For federal elections, polling places must be physically accessible to people with disabilities. If not accessible, an alternative way of casting a ballot on the day of the election must be provided.

Who to contact nationally:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Voting Section- 1800G
Washington, D.C. 20530
(800) 253-3931



Who to contact locally:

State Election Commission
P.O. Box 5987
Columbia, SC 29250
(803) 734-9060
E-mail: elections@elections.sc.gov
Website: <http://www.scvotes.org>

Puzzle Time: Word Ladder

Directions: Change one letter of each word as you go down the ladder.

Puzzle A: Start with BALL

B A L L

- | | | | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
| 1. | <u> T </u> | <u> A </u> | <u> L </u> | <u> L </u> | The opposite of short. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | This kind of booth takes your money on interstates. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | A hammer is an example of this. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | The person you trick on April 1. |

Puzzle B: Start with WASHER

W A S H E R

- | | | | | | | |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Someone who wastes things. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Someone who tests food. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | A Christian holiday in the spring. |

