

# PACT NEWSLETTER

2018



The Philadelphia Aphasia Community at Temple (PACT) is a supportive environment for people with aphasia that encourages friendships, conversation, and helping others. Scott, Carolyn, Edythe, Jeannette, Melissa, Lance, and Wayne wrote this newsletter and edited it. In newsletter, people can write about the topic they choose. The Newsletter is full of helpful facts, research, and fun! Newsletter, CHAT, Spirituality, Active Living, Art, “Finding the Words”, and Technology are all of the organizations this semester. We also participate in PACT singers, Broad Street Ministries, and games. In PACT, we can talk about difficult situations and experiences. While developing friendships and seeking out new scenarios.

This is the second annual newsletter. PACT is a community of people who motivate and understand each other. We help each other develop our communication skills because it is vitally important to all of us.

## The Positive Side of Things

By: LR Mason

It's been eleven years since I was diagnosed with Aphasia by Stroke. I try to focus on the positive side of Aphasia instead of the negative. Since the stroke I'm learning more patience, laughter, and imagination.

I asked members of P.A.C.T. and Magee Rehab this question:  
In what positive way has Aphasia affected you?

Jeanette F., PACT Member

"Learning how to be a good listener"

Carolyn B., PACT Member

"Makes me take my time and slows other people down"

Wayne G., PACT Member

"I appreciate music more"

Genevieve T., Magee Rehab

"I try to stay more focused"

James P., Magee Rehab

"I appreciate the power of self, to move beyond Aphasia"

Scott T., PACT Member

"I learned the importance of spending more time with my family"

Edythe R., PACT Member

"Learned to pray more"

Debi G., PACT Member

"Learned to talk again"

John J., PACT Member

"Found a new friendly family with PACT."



## My Life With Aphasia

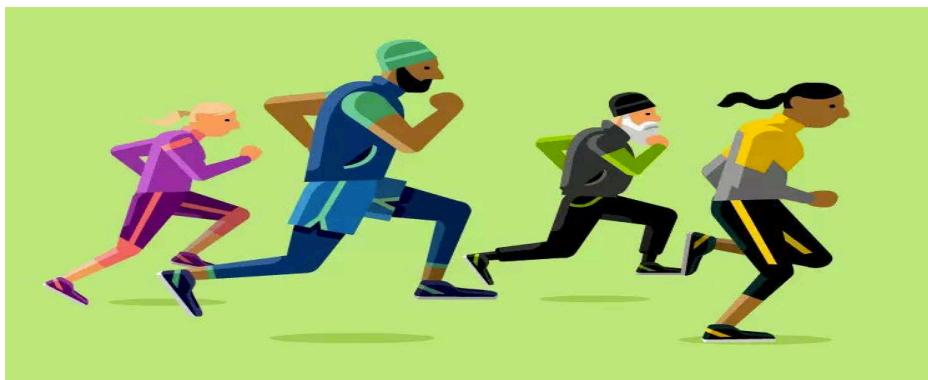
By: Scott T.

After enduring the difficulties of aphasia, going to the gym has improved my independence, confidence, overall health benefits, and involvement in my children's extracurricular activities. My independence excelled profoundly in the last two years. After enduring difficulties such as using a wheelchair or walker, exercise has become an outlet for my emotions. My independence has truly shown within the gym. Running, lifting weights, and attending physical therapy at Magee Rehabilitation Center has strengthened my physical and mental wellbeing after aphasia.

Two years following my stroke, my physical abilities have improved substantially. Currently, I have achieved physical strength that resembles my abilities from before the stroke. While making these improvements, confidence and

friendships have followed. These friendships at Magee have created an environment for me outside of aphasia. One goal that I have is to attend the Philadelphia Union League to continue my fitness. These friendships have opened more opportunities to me such as participating in 3K. Events like this and spending time in the gym has created a supportive environment that I look forward to attending every day with friends who value each other's time.

Outside of these friendships, my family is my biggest support system. My children participate in various activities such as swimming, basketball, and theater. Since the stroke, my attendance has unfortunately decreased. With my improvements in physical and mental strength, I would love to attend these events more often. One of the aspects of my life that brings me happiness is seeing the success my children have had in these activities.



## Navigate Transportation By Melissa

This article will talk about learning the bus, trolley and train system in Delaware and Philadelphia counties Pennsylvania. Also I will talk about learning medical transportation, called Customized Community transportation, a shorter version is CCT connect.

### SEPTA

My uncle and I took the trolley 101 in Media and we transferred to 69th st. to the train, Franklin Market. The directions were challenging because the signs were confusing. I sat down and my uncle helped me through the direction.

### CCT Connect

I filled out paperwork two months ago and the Occupational therapist and I met on October first to evaluate their service. I got a discount SEPTA card and I passed CCT CONNECT too.

### GPS

Now, I am going to talk about learning how to use the GPS on the cell phone. For example one Friday I used the GPS to go to a restaurant. I was comfortable using the GPS because it was five blocks away. I am nervous about trying to do longer distances that rely on using SEPTA Transportation.

### Organize the Transportation

I started reading how to navigate SEPTA transit maps and take pictures on my phone to remind how to go. I want to be more actives in my life and the community and transportation is the first step and more to come soon!



## Memories of John Bailey Jr.



John Bailey Jr., a likeable, determined, easy-going veteran, and member of PACT for 11 years. He was 58 years old. He traveled 8 years on Navy ships. He spoke a lot about his travels and he would point out on maps the places he had been.

He made every memory feel like it was just yesterday. He like sci fi movies like Supernatural, music like the Parliament Funkadelics and the Isley Brothers and Dru Hill especially the song “Tell Me What You Want”.

John had many activities. For example, he liked chess and TV and movies. I talked to John about chess, but we never had a chance to play together. Now I am motivated to play.

He always carried a chess kit in his wheelchair, but he doesn’t need a wheelchair anymore.

I will think of John when I go to the Philadelphia Soul’s football game because he always liked the game.

He was a good friend. He sent texts for every birthday and holiday. He was funny. John, a delightful fellow, always had a warm smile, as he often said quote “how’s it going?” He liked to be involved with everything, a very unassuming individual. He had a way of making us all feel special in our own way. He always made his presence known, he was the leader of our pact.

He is survived by his mother, sisters, wife, and five children. He will be greatly missed.

## Helpful Strategies for Understanding Aphasia

By Jeanette F.

Looking back at a time when I first had my stroke, I remember feeling so confused, so alone, and so hurt. I was crying all the time.

It was much harder to read, write, spell and to calculate numbers. Now that I have been living with aphasia, I have found that I can talk about it with more understanding. People with aphasia have injury to the left side of the brain and they have difficulty producing or understanding language. I have a very mild form of aphasia however, there is still so much to learn and to understand about the condition.

Some people may find it hard accepting the fact that their lives have changed so drastically.

Having the support and encouragement of family and friends is very important.

When you have aphasia, it is meaningful to know that you are being listened to and understood.

I came up with a slogan. *Keep going, push through, you're still you.* That was an encouraging reminder to let me know that yes, I can still do it. I found strategies to help me adapt other methods, for making aphasia easier.

Now, I find that I am truly learning to cope with doing things differently. After having a stroke, it gets easier to deal with this challenge called *Aphasia*.

### Strategies to help

- Getting involved with a support group for socialization, such as PACT
- Friendship with others who have aphasia
- Writing what you want to say
- Taking a breath before speaking
- When receiving directions, ask people to speak slowly
- Pray more



## What Police Should and Should Not Do

By: Wayne

Police brutality is harassing black people, which police should not do. Police should help people, not hurt them. A man is doing nothing, then police search and tell him to get on the ground and then shoot him. Police don't stop and frisk everyone, only black people.

A black man in a wheelchair, police told him "get your hands up." It wasn't clear he had a gun. He couldn't lift his hands, he was paralyzed, and the police shot him. This affected the family. Cops keep doing the same things. When will they stop?

This happened because of hidden racism. Police need to learn more training. A person in a wheelchair might not be able to raise their hands. White people don't

have these problems. A 74-year-old white man injured 7 cops and killed a black police officer. Now, he's going to court. If it were me, a black man, I'd be dead.

This makes me feel betrayed and upset and downright disappointed. Police are out there, and they could take me, but I don't have anything to hide. My family also feels disappointed and disrespected.

If you have a language disability and you see the police say, "Excuse me, I had a stroke, I have aphasia, please be patient with me." Police should be trained to deal with people with aphasia. Personally, I'm scared to go out of the house after dark.

## Why I Write

By Edythe R.

I was working at the Mental Illness Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania. At that time around California, some of the riots and protests in LA were not good. I had to think about Philly because I was afraid it would happen here too. So I thought young people, wake up, because you never know what can happen right here in Philly. I wrote the poem "Wake up" to tell young people in Philly to stop fighting and arguing, and to be unified.

*WAKE UP, WAKE UP*

WAKE UP, YOUNG PEOPLE, WAKE UP  
THE ANSWER IS NOT WHAT THAT'S  
YOU'RE SEEKING

WAKE UP, YOUNG PEOPLE, WAKE UP  
YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER ARE  
WEEPING

WAKE UP, BROTHERS AND SISTER  
FOR THE TIME, IN NOW AT HAND  
FOR ALL TO COME TOGETHER ALL  
ACROSS THE LAND

WAKE UP, YOUNG PEOPLE, WAKE UP  
THIS IS JUST A DREAM

WE ARE THIS THING TOGETHER  
LET BE TELL YOU WHAT I MEAN.

FOR SO LONG, WE'VE BEEN  
SUPPRESSED  
WITHOUT A CHANGE TO  
PROGRESSED

WAKE UP, YOUNG PEOPLE, WAKE UP  
AND YOU'LL FIND IT WORTH YOUR  
WHILE  
TO MAKE ALL THE CHANGES  
NEEDED  
TO BETTER YOUR LIFESTYLE.

I like to write poetry because I couldn't make people listen to me sing. I want them to understand my poem so they really think. When I write a poem I want people to understand my heart. Now I write poetry about weather, about aphasia, and about life, good or bad.

Writing is different now, after my stroke, because of my brain, I have to think harder than before to make it correct. After I write, I ask someone "Will you sure read this for me please? Thank you." I didn't use to have to do that.

*DETERMINATION*

KEEP BETTER, AND BE BETTER  
BUSY IT MIGHT BE  
DREAM TO GO TO SLEEP  
NEVER STOP  
LOOK FOR MORE STARS  
REACH WE ARE THE BEST

3-31-09



## BLUEBERRIES

By: Carolyn B.

Blueberry are very good for you to eat, drink, and be Merry! You can use blueberry in just about everything you do. Blueberry is an antioxidant and it is less in sugar.

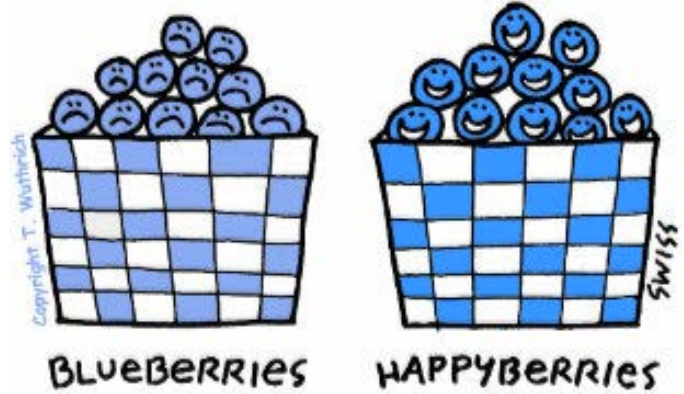
Antioxidants are compounds that inhibit oxidation. Oxidation is a chemical reaction that can produce free radicals, thereby leading to chain reactions that may damage the cells of organisms. They also may play a part in diseases, like cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

There are many ways you can prepare blueberry:

- **Smoothie** – You can make a smoothie using blueberries and other fruits; types of foods and beverages may use fruit and vegetable juice.
- **Recipes** – You can use blueberries as part of your recipes – when making a blueberry pie, cake or pudding; or entree; **Candy**; or **Raw** - Just as they are;

**Eyesight** – Eat berries two months before starting notice any effect

**Skin** – berries contain water which keeps your skin hydrated, bouncy and young looking; also these nutrients prevent wrinkles, sagging and dark circles.



### DIABETES:

A disease that result in too much sugar in the blood.

#### Most common types

- **Type 2 diabetes**- A chronic condition that affects the way the body processes blood sugar.
- **Type 1 diabetes** - A chronic condition in which the pancreas produces little or no insulin.

As you can see, blueberries and diabetes work together as friends leading you into healthy living.

**Stroke** is caused by an abrupt blockage of arteries leading to the brain. **Aphasia** can occur suddenly after a stroke or head injury or develop slowly from a growing brain tumor or disease. The main treatment for aphasia is speech therapy.

A lot of people who had strokes and aphasia also have diabetes. So you see they all fit together like a hand a glove.

# Healthy Living

A I S D C Y K S N G K C Z N P  
Y N H E E E M Y I N B K V T L  
P Z T O P O Z Z A I L F Z H X  
R A W I O I C K R D U B X E P  
Y T A T O R C K B D E K E R E  
K Z H N K X C E B U B T C A U  
B I C P M K I X R P E X X P M  
E H C E E P S D V B R V H Y E  
E G A K C O L B A O R J K S P  
A B S E I Y I I K N Y R T K Q  
C U M I P V D A A U T R P W G  
A P H A S I A N B Q O S S C P  
T N Q K N R U E A K N Y J O E  
I Y N T Y U C D E C S W U I L  
C F T X W Q N V S N Y J P T S

ANTIOXIDANTS  
APHASIA  
BLOCKAGE  
BLUEBERRY  
BRAIN

CANDY  
DIABETE  
PIE  
PUDDING  
RAW

RECIPES  
SMOOTHIE  
SPEECH  
STROKE  
THERAPY