Mark your calendar!
The annual Summer Picnic will be on July 7th.
See page 6 for details.

EDITOR’S NOTE

Dear Friends,

Now that it is finally starting to warm up, it means that it’s time for another summer picnic! Please make sure to mark your calendar for July 7th! More details about the party are on page 6. We hope to see you there.

Since our last issue, the Aphasia Center has been going through many exciting changes. Two new members have joined our team: Shira Katseff and Lisa LeJeune. Shira Katseff is a Ph.D. student in linguistics at UC Berkeley who conducts research on speech perception and production. Lisa LeJeune is a graduate student in the Psy.D. program in Clinical Psychology at the Wright Institute in Berkeley. We are delighted to have these two on board!

The Aphasia Center has also decided to move the location of the Stroke Support Group to the Aphasia Center in building AB2. We meet on Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m. for the activity portion, and from 2-3 p.m. for the reading portion. Please feel free to come join us, and please contact us if you have any questions.

The Aphasia Center has also been busy with conferences this year. Dr. And Turken presented at the International Brain Injury Association Conference in Washington, D.C., and some of us also attended the Human Brain Mapping Conference in Barcelona, Spain in June.

Please don’t forget to join us at this year’s summer picnic! We look forward to kicking off a wonderful summer with you!

Sincerely,

Nina Dronkers, Ph.D.
Director
Center for Aphasia & Related Disorders
Recent Research Publications from our Center

In this issue, we thought we would let you know about some of the recent research we have been working on. These studies tell us more about the brain areas involved in processing different kinds of information that we encounter in the world. In one study from our lab that was recently accepted for publication in the journal *Cortex* (Arévalo et al.), stroke patients saw pictures and heard words and had to decide whether they matched. The items belonged to different categories (e.g., relating to the hand, mouth, or foot). Using a lesion imaging technique known as Voxel-based Lesion-Symptom Mapping (VLSM), we created brain maps that showed us which regions in the brain are most involved in processing items from these different categories (see Figures 1 & 2). The brain regions included a network of areas in the left frontal and temporal cortex. The more we know about which regions of the brain contribute to the processing of different types of objects, the better we can understand brain organization and hopefully better help individuals who are recovering from different types of brain injuries.

Do you know that feeling when you know the word you want to say in your head, but it seems like it’s stuck on the tip of your tongue? In another recent study, we asked the question, “What parts of the brain are important when you want to come up with the words you want to say?” To look at this, we asked individuals who had had a stroke to name as many words as they could belonging to different categories. The categories included words beginning with a particular letter (e.g., *F, A, and S*), as well as words from specific categories (fruits, animals, and supermarket items). Participants were given 90 seconds to name as many items as possible. You can try this at home—it’s actually a lot harder than you would think, especially for the words starting with a certain letter. We
found that individuals whose strokes involved the temporal lobe in the left half of the brain had the most difficulty naming words that belonged to the specific categories (e.g., naming animals), while individuals with strokes that involved the left frontal lobe of the brain had the most difficulty naming words that began with a particular letter (e.g., words starting with A). The current findings show that left frontal cortex is critical for word-retrieval based on the structure of the word (such as the letter it starts with), while left temporal cortex is critical for word-retrieval based on the category the word belongs to. The findings have implications for the types of strategies that may be most effective in individuals with aphasia who have word-finding difficulties due to strokes in these brain regions. This study will appear in the journal *Aphasiology* later this year.

In another recently accepted paper (Baldo et al. to appear in the journal *Cortex*), we were interested in understanding which parts of the brain are most important for complex speech articulation. In this study, we asked patients to repeat different words 5 times in a row (e.g., try saying “spaghetti” five times fast). This can be hard for anyone, but it’s especially difficult for some people after they’ve had a stroke. Like in the other study above, we used the VLSM mapping technique, in order to better understand which brain regions were most critical for this ability. We found that a portion of the left hemisphere known as the *insula* was most critical. The insula is an area of cortex hidden underneath the frontal and temporal lobes. This region is indicated in red and by the arrows in the figure below. These findings can lead to more accurate prognoses in the early stages of stroke and help guide speech therapists in choosing the most appropriate rehabilitation techniques for patients to overcome their difficulties.
Stroke Recovery Resources in the Bay Area

**Project Recovery**
This is an adaptive physical exercise program for those with physical disabilities including moderately self-ambulatory, ortho-multi-handicapped, and other health impairments. The program will increase fitness, balance, strength, and range of motion.

Mon/Wed: 1:30-2:30pm or 2:30-3:30pm  
Tue/Thur: 2:00-3:00pm or 3:00-4:00pm.

**Location:**  
Family YMCA, Mt. Diablo Region YMCA Office  
395 Civic Drive  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

**Contact:**  
Libby Luxemberg  
(925) 687-8900.

**Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County**

**Location:**  
Mt. Diablo Medical Center  
Concord, CA 94520  
or  
John Muir Medical Center  
601 Ygnacio Valley Rd.  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

**Mailing Address:**  
Ann Dzuna  
1174 Alta Mesa Dr.  
Moraga, CA 94556-2042

**Contact:**  
Ann Dzuna, B.S., MBA  
(925) 376-6218  
adzuna@comcast.net

**Aphasia Center of California**

**Location:**  
200 Grand Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94610

**Mailing Address:**  
Roberta Elman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-NCD  
Aphasia Center of California  
3996 Lyman Rd.  
Oakland, CA 94602

**Contact:**  
Roberta Elman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-NCD  
(510) 336-0112  
rjelman@aol.com  
Website: http://www.aphasiacenter.org

**Stroke Communication Classes**
No-fee, non-credit stroke-communication classes offered to the San Francisco Bay Area for over 25 years.

**Location:**  
City College of San Francisco  
1250 Waller St.  
San Francisco, CA 94117

**Contact:**  
Joyce Freeman, M.S., CCC-SLP  
(415) 561-1005  
jforeman@ccsf.edu

**Cal State University East Bay Aphasia Group**

**Location:**  
California University - East Bay  
Speech, Language & Hearing Clinic  
MB# 1097A  
Communicative Sciences and Disorders  
Hayward, CA 94542

**Mailing Address:**  
Shelley Simrin, M.A., CCC-SLP  
California State University - East Bay  
Dept. of Communicative Sciences & Disorders  
MB# 1097A  
25800 Carlos Bee Blvd.  
Hayward, CA 94542-3065

**Contact:**  
Shelley Simrin, M.A., CCC-SLP, Clinic Director  
(510) 885-4762 or (510) 885-3233  
ssimrin@cshayward.edu

**Stroke Club San Francisco**

**Location:**  
Stonestown Family YMCA  
Senior Annex  
3150 20th Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94132

**Contact:**  
Kathy Orsi  
(415) 242-7117
Do you know the warning signs of a stroke?

Be sure to call 9-1-1 if you or someone you know has ANY of these symptoms with no known cause:

- A sudden, severe headache
- Sudden blurred vision
- Sudden dizziness
- Sudden difficulty moving one or both sides of the body
- Sudden difficulty with balance and/or walking
- Sudden difficulty speaking or understanding what is being said

For more information, visit www.strokeassociation.org
Stroke Support Group

Annual Summer Picnic!

When
Wednesday, July 7th, 12:30-3:00 p.m.

Where
Nancy Boyd Memorial Park
4738 Pleasant Hill Rd.
Martinez, CA, 94553

Directions to Nancy Boyd Park:
- From Highway 4, take the Alhambra Ave. exit
- Go South on Alhambra Ave. for 3/4 mile to Truitt Ave.
- Go left on Truitt Ave.
- Make first left on Valley Ave.
- You will see the park in front of you once you hit Church St.

What to bring
A dish or drink to share if you can.

Questions? Call Juliana at (925) 372-4649
Game Zone

www.puzzles.com

Summer Time Word Scramble

Unscramble each word. Then use the marked letters to solve the second puzzle.
Aphasia News
Center for Aphasia and Related Disorders
150 Muir Road 126 (s)
Martinez, CA 94553

http://www.ebire.org/aphasia

Newsletter Information
If you would like to receive this newsletter or you have comments/suggestions, e-mail Juliana at juliana@ebire.org, call her at (925) 372-4649 or write to:

Center for Aphasia and Related Disorders
VA Northern Calif. Health Care System
150 Muir Road 126 (s)
Martinez, CA 94553

We welcome your comments and questions!

Center Members & Affiliates
Nina Dronkers
Jenny Ogar
Janet Patterson
Sharon Willock
Analia Arevalo
Carl Ludy
Luci Varian
Juliana Baldo
Carolyn Benjamin
Patty Phaneuf
Andrea Zvinakis
Lisa LeJeune
Shira Katseff
And Turken
Ayla Koenig
Ana Soper
Cami Bebarta

We would also like to thank the members of the Stroke Support Group and their families, the Speech Pathology staff, and the East Bay Institute for Research and Education.

Game Zone Answers:
DIVE
FISH
FRISBEE
GARDEN
HIKE
HOPSCOTCH
PICNIC
SEESAW
STEAK
SLIDE
SURF
SWIM
SWING
Volleyball
WADE
HAVE A FUN SUMMER!

The Center for Aphasia and Related Disorders is supported by the VA Northern California Health Care System, the VA Medical Research Program, the National Institutes of Health, and the University of California at Davis and San Diego, as well as through generous donations from private foundations and individuals. Please feel free to contact Dr. Dronkers at (925) 372-2925 if you would like more information.