Mark your calendar!
The annual Holiday Party is December 9th.

See page 6 for details.

EDITOR’S NOTE

Dear Friends,

As the year winds down, we would like to wish all of you a wonderful holiday season. We have been very busy this fall traveling to conferences and planning for future studies to further advance our understanding of aphasia. We have presented our work at the annual meetings of the Organization for Human Brain Mapping, the Society for the Neurobiology of Language and the Academy of Aphasia. Our work has generated a lot of interest and we look forward to continuing these exciting research studies.

Juliana Baldo will soon be starting a new Brain Health and Wellness study designed to evaluate the ability of an 8-week course to improve neuropsychological functioning in individuals with a history of stroke. In addition, I will be starting a new 4-year project studying brain changes associated with recovery from stroke.

As many of you are aware, we have been fortunate to have some extremely talented and friendly interns helping out with the aphasia group and other lab functions. A huge thanks goes out to Rita Barakat, Kevin Dalziel, Giana Cirolia and Ana Abu-Rus.

Our annual holiday party will be held this year on Wednesday, December 9th from 12:00 to 3:00pm in the Aphasia group meeting place in Building R4. We look forward to this event all year and hope you can come join us in celebrating the season with good food and great company. Hope to see you all there. Please see the map on page 6 if you are not sure how to find us, or give us a call at 925-372-4649, and we’d be happy to direct you. Hope to see you there!

Have a wonderful holiday season and we wish you all the best in the New Year.

Happy Holidays!!

Yours,
Nina Dronkers, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Aphasia and Related Disorders
Role of the Left and Right Brain in Interpreting Social Situations
by Juliana Baldo, Ph.D.

While damage to the left hemisphere of the brain has been shown to cause a range of language impairments, patients with right hemisphere injury also exhibit communication deficits, such as difficulties processing the intonation in other people’s voices, following conversations, and interpreting social situations. In a recent study at our Center (to be published in the scientific journal, *Neuropsychologia*, in 2016), we compared individuals with left and right hemisphere brain injury on their ability to interpret what a character in a cartoon might be saying or thinking about a particular social situation (e.g., a scene of a couple being married by a priest or a scene of two people talking). Participants’ responses were scored based on how well they captured the gist of the social situation, as well as how typical their responses were with respect to other participants in the sample. Results showed that individuals with right hemisphere brain injury were rated as significantly less appropriate than healthy control participants and were also significantly less typical than controls and individuals with left hemisphere brain injury. The current findings expand our understanding of the roles that the right and left hemispheres play in social processing and communication and have implications for the potential treatment of social communication deficits in individuals with right hemisphere brain injury.
Bay Area Stroke Support Groups (East Bay):

Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County
Mt. Diablo Medical Center, Concord, CA 94520, or John Muir Medical Center, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek, CA 94596 Contact: Ann Dzuna, B.S., MBA, (925) 376-6218. Mailing Address: Ann Dzuna, 1174 Alta Mesa Dr., Moraga, CA 94556-2042. Meets once monthly on the second Monday from 7pm-9pm. Email: ADZUNA@COMCAST.NET

Aphasia Center of California
200 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA 94610
Contact: Roberta Elman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-NCD, (510) 336-0112
Mailing Address: Roberta Elman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BC-NCD, Aphasia Center of California, 3996 Lyman Rd., Oakland, CA 94602
Email: RJEElman@aol.com Website: www.aphasiacenter.org

California State University East Bay Aphasia Group
Cal State East Bay, Speech, Language & Hearing Clinic, MB# 1097A, Communicative Sciences and Disorders, Hayward, CA 94542 Contact: (510) 885-3233. Mailing Address: California State University - East Bay, Dept. of Communicative Sciences & Disorders, MB# 1097A, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward, CA 94542-3065
Email: ssimrin@csuhayward.edu

Stroke + Head Injury Support Group
Washington Hospital, Washington West, Anderson Auditorium C, 2000 Mowry Ave., Fremont, CA 94538
Contact: Karen Benedetti, (510) 818-6253. Mailing Address: Karen Benedetti, Washington Hospital, Rehab Dept., 2000 Mowry Ave., Fremont, CA 94538-1716

Stroke Support and Communication Group at VA Martinez
Building R4
150 Muir Road (126R), Martinez, CA 94553
Contact: Juliana Baldo, (925) 372-4649, meets every Wednesday 1pm-3pm in Building R4
Email: juliana@ebire.org

Cal State University Sacramento Aphasia Group
Maryjane Reese Language, Speech, and Hearing Center
6000 J St., Shasta Hall 172, Sacramento, CA 95819-6071
Contact: Darla Heggie, Clinic Coordinator, 916-278-6601
Bay Area Stroke Support Groups (North Bay):

Interpersonal Skills - Stroke Support Group
College of Marin, Disabled Student Services Program, 835 College Ave., Kentfield, CA 94904
Contact: Maureen Green, M.A., CCC-SLP, (415) 457-8811 ext. 7702

Bay Area Stroke Support Groups (SF/Peninsula):

Pacific Stroke Association Support Group Network
Pacific Stroke Association, (650) 565-8485. SF Peninsula www.psastroke.org

CHMC Community Health Resource Center
2100 Webster Street, San Francisco, (415) 923-3155. Classes and written information. The Stroke Survivor Support Group meets the first Thursday of the month from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Stroke/Communication Group/Acquired Brain Injury Program
City College of San Francisco, John Adams Campus, DSPS Dept., 1860 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94117.
Note: Must call to register, this is a Group Speech Therapy Course.
Contact: Judi Kaplan, M.S., CCC-SLP, or Joyce Foreman (415) 561-1005.
E-mail: jforeman@ccsf.org

Bay Area Clinical Trials (Area universities frequently run various clinical trials with persons who have experienced a stroke. You may find one you are interested in learning more about participating in. We do not promote any organization’s clinical trials, but offer these for your information only. Some trials may offer reimbursement for participation)

UCSF: http://www.ucsfhealth.org/clinical_trials/index.html
Stanford: http://med.stanford.edu/clinicaltrials/
UC Davis: http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/medicalcenter/clinicaltrials/

Web Sites/Email Contacts:

American Stroke Association: www.strokeassociation.org
National Stroke Association: www.stroke.org
StrokeNet: www.strokenetwork.org
http://www.aphasiasoftwarefinder.org/
Stroke Support Group
Annual Holiday Party

**When**
Wednesday, Dec. 9th, 12:00-3:00 p.m.

**What to bring**
A dish or drink to share if you are able and a small gift (under $10) to exchange if you wish.

**Where**
**Building R4** at the Martinez VA, 150 Muir Rd, Martinez, CA, 94553.
You can park in the regular, main patient parking lot and ask the volunteer golf cart driver to take you to Building R4 (there is not much parking adjacent to R4). Map of the campus is below. *If you have questions or get lost, call Juliana at 925-372-4649.*
Seasons Greetings from the Aphasia Center!
Aphasia News
Center for Aphasia and Related Disorders
150 Muir Road 126R
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 126R
Martinez, CA 94553

We welcome your comments and questions!

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We would also like to thank the members of the Stroke Support Group, all of our research participants and their families, and the VA Speech Pathology staff.

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.