

FREE

The Cryer



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2022 Sea Dogs Roster and Opening Day on Page 28

Mailed to Bath, Brunswick, Harpswell, Topsham, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Bailey Island and Orr's island

May is Stroke Awareness Month - Here is what you should know

First installment of a Cryer two part series

by Thomas G. Broussard, Jr., Ph.D. - Stroke Educator, Inc.



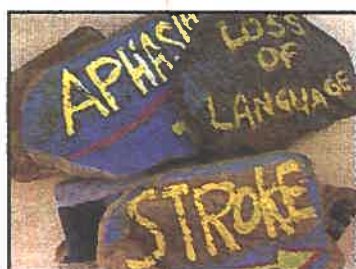
What Can Help Prevent a Stroke?

The best way to help prevent a stroke is to eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly, and avoid smoking and drinking too much alcohol. These lifestyle changes can reduce your risk of problems like arteries that become clogged with fatty substances (atherosclerosis), cholesterol and high blood pressure.

A stroke, sometimes referred to as a brain attack, occurs when the blood supply to the brain is blocked by a clot or tear in a blood vessel.

There are two types of strokes: ischemic and hemorrhagic

In an ischemic stroke a blood vessel becomes blocked, usually by a blood clot, and a portion of the brain is deprived of oxygen. Ischemic strokes are the most common type of stroke, with about 87% of all strokes which



destroy two million brain cells a minute. The causes of about 25-30% of ischemic strokes are unexplained and are referred to as cryptogenic stroke.

A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when an aneurysm, a blood-filled pouch that balloons out from an artery, ruptures, flooding the surrounding tissue with blood. The fatality rate is higher for those who experience hemorrhagic strokes.

In the United States, about 800,000 people suffer a stroke each year. Someone has a stroke every 40 seconds, and every four minutes someone dies from stroke. There are more than 140,000 deaths each year from stroke.

Stroke is also the leading cause of serious long-term disability in the United States including hemiparesis (weakness), hemiplegia (severe loss/paralysis) and aphasia (loss of language). There are over seven million stroke survivors living in the United States and two-thirds of them are currently disabled with over two million stroke survivors with aphasia. About 25-40% of stroke survivors acquire aphasia. Around 25% of people who recover from their first stroke will have another within five years.

Strokes can and do occur at ANY age. Nearly one quarter of strokes occur under the age of 65. The risk of stroke more than doubles each decade after the age of 55. About 80% of people in the United States with a stroke are preventable.

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After A Two Year Hiatus, Bowl for Kids' Sake Raises \$61,000 for Youth Mentoring Programs



The Thirty-somethings Bowl for Kids' Sake Top Fund Raising Team. (l-r) Jess Hitchcock, Ashley Crosby, Chelsea Cushman, Grace Dauphinais (Little), Jen Crosby (Big), and Kerry McRae. [Crosby Photo ©2022]

BRUNSWICK, ME – Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick is celebrating the triumphant return of their popular Bowl For Kids' Sake (BFKS) fundraiser following a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. Since 1996 the Bowl For Kids' Sake fundraiser has been synonymous with the arrival of spring in the greater Brunswick area. The event took place at Yankee Lanes on Saturday, April 9. BFKS invites teams of bowlers from local businesses, families and friends to raise donations through a peer-to-peer fundraising platform and then join-together for a fun day of bowling, prizes, 50/50 ticket sales and celebration. This year's event brought 71 bowling teams comprised of about 330 participants. The Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick organization set a goal to raise \$50,000 and through the incredible generosity of community members paired with a record number of

business sponsors \$61,000 was raised toward BBBS's one-to-one mentoring programs.

Although some of the typically supporting teams were not able to attend the event this year several new participants joined in the fun and the fundraising including, but not limited to Darlings Ford of Brunswick, Modern Pest Company and Bolos Kitchen and Cantina. The highest fundraising team named, "The Thirty-somethings" lead by Jen Crosby who was joined by her Little Sister (recently matched as part of the BBBS Community-Based Program), Grace, raised \$3,316 and won a gift certificate to the Escape Room, Brunswick.

The highest fundraising individual was Mike Desimone of Bath Iron Works who won an overnight stay and golf package from Sebasco Harbor Resort. Crosby was the second highest fundraising individual missing the top spot by only five dollars.

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MAY 2022

Community News from Brunswick, Topsham, Harpswell, Bath, Freeport and neighboring towns since 1985

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NOTICE to Topsham Residents

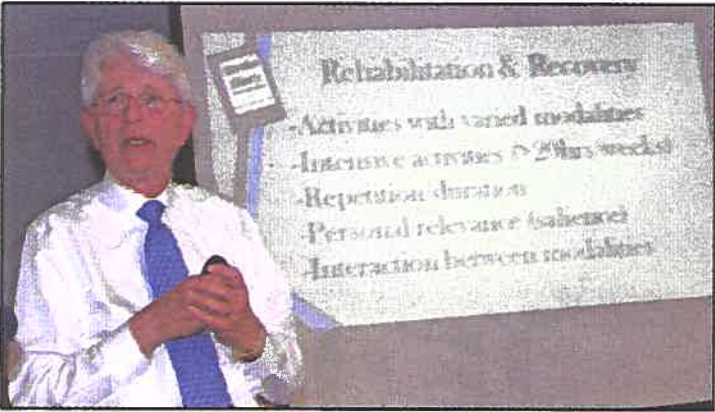
The Annual Town Meeting is at 7 PM on Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at the Orion Performing Arts Center at Mt. Ararat Middle School, Topsham

The Topsham Town Warrant is inserted inside the May issue of The Cryer and mailed to all the residential and Post Office Box holders in Topsham.

For daily news and calendar of events visit:
www.thecryeronline.com

May is Stroke Awareness Month - Here is what you should know Continued from page 1

by Thomas G. Broussard, Jr., Ph.D. - Stroke Educator, Inc.



Lecturing at North Providence, RI Hospital about Rehabilitation and Recovery.

Heart Disease starts the cascading health continuum

My Story

I felt a tug in my chest while walking with my wife. It didn't appear all the time but usually after a meal. After a couple of weeks, I told Laura (my wife) and she advised me to see the doctor immediately.

I went to the doctor on Monday and explained it to him. He thought I needed a stress test and needed one asap. I told him I would get an appointment for a cardio appointment (I didn't have one) but my Primary Care Physician (PCP) said that I couldn't leave his office until he found a stress test appointment that hour!

Within minutes (clearly, I was in more trouble than I knew) I was sent to a cardio office a couple of doors down for a stress test. At the end of the stress test, the cardio doctor was satisfied and said out loud, "There it is!"

That was a Monday. Before I left, I was scheduled for a Cath Lab (cardiac catheterization lab) to get my heart arteries checked that Friday. It was my first time and laid on the table to see my own heart arteries on the monitor (and got to see how bad they were!) above me as my PCP and Cardio doctor talked.

By the time I was finished at the Cath Lab, they came to tell me that several of the arteries were heavily blocked and needed surgery as soon as possible. I still didn't know what this would really mean but I went to see a surgeon who informed me that I needed open heart surgery soon with two arteries blocked at 100% and 90% and two others blocked at 60-80%.

Clearly, I was in trouble and had been building up decades of plaque and fatty deposits throughout my body. I am tall and thin just like my dad. I ate well, did lots of sports and walked five miles every day with Laura. Up until that point, I had not taken any pills of any kind. Many of us do not think there is anything wrong with us until it happens to us. I knew that my dad had died young (tall, thin, 49 years old) from a heart attack but it still didn't hit me (tall, thin, 54 years old) that I might very well have the same kind of deadly problems.

When we are young, we assume we will live forever. After

a bit we start to see some aging issues, but we are still not concerned about what has been happening inside of our body for 30, 40, or 50 years until health issues start to show themselves.

Skipping ahead, my open-heart surgery went well with a quadruple bypass and an aortic valve replacement. I went back to work about two and a half months later and thought that was it. Back to work and no more problems again.

Unfortunately, I got my first stroke three months later (9/26/2011) after my open-heart surgery (6/21/2011). It was probably a clot that spun off from my surgery and made its way into my brain. It was never assessed other than called it a cryptogenic (unexplained) stroke. I didn't get any blood thinners after my open-heart surgery either which could have been helpful to prevent my stroke from happening.

Stroke transition to aphasia recovery

I had lots of jobs in my life, often with quite different career directions, starting with the U.S. Navy. I loved going to sea and started as an engineer on a destroyer. Then I converted to Supply Corps and then submarines as a Supply Officer. After leaving the Navy, I moved into shipbuilding and eventually became Director, Mechanical Engineering and Design at Bath Iron Works (BIW) in Bath, Maine. After a few more jobs, I realized that as much as I loved going to sea and building ships, the next choice for me was building the shipbuilders themselves. At that point, I shifted to education and employment.

I started Career Prospects, Inc. and ran that for 15 years in southern Maine with customers around the state. My interest included assisting people with disabilities and employment. As time went by, I realized that I needed another tool, a research tool, to help me help others. I applied to The Heller School at Brandeis University and, late in life (I was 54 years old), I graduated with a research Ph.D. in Social Policy in workforce development and disabilities studies. My expertise was working with people with disabilities and employment. I worked at Vassar for a semester and then back to The Heller School as assistant, and then

associate dean. I worked there for five years until my stroke.

The last thing I remembered was staring at my shoes on the street. At that point, I had no idea what had happened. My wife and I were walking. I was behind her and when she turned around, she saw that I was in trouble. She could tell that I was having a stroke and she dragged me to the local CVS and the pharmacy in the back and called 911.

The EMTs arrived and took me to Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in Boston in less than an hour. I was lucky enough to get tPA (a kind of clot buster drug) in time. It dissolved my clot and the paralysis in my right arm, right leg, and loss of vision in my right eye were restored.

Once I woke up at the hospital and came to understand what had happened, I assumed that everything was fine and I could go home. I didn't realize that there was one more deficit that I didn't know about, this thing called aphasia.

People with stroke and aphasia often don't know what they don't know. I didn't know that I had lost my language and could not read, write or speak well. That is the beginning of any aphasia recovery; one has to become aware of one's deficits in order to target one's deficits. I became more aware of aphasia, its symptoms and the tools that were needed to regain one's language, but it didn't happen overnight. All of my clinicians, OTs, PTs, SLPs, and doctors, helped me start a lifelong journey towards recovery.

As I got better, I realized that aphasia recovery was my big research question, and experiencing aphasia was the only tool I needed. No one wants any of this to happen if it can be avoided but *experiencing* all of this (and explaining what couldn't be expressed before) is the best path forward once it is in your hands. As all speech therapists have said, there are five rules about aphasia recovery; motivation, practice, practice, practice, and more practice.

Aphasia is a terrible language

disorder that affects 25-40% of people with a stroke *yet few people know anything about aphasia, even in the healthcare community!* I started Stroke Educator, Inc. and Aphasia Nation, Inc., a non-profit with a mission to educate the wider public about stroke, aphasia, and plasticity, the foundation of all learning.

I am in my seventh year and have now written five books, hundreds of articles, over have given 450 presentation in 33 states to more than 13,000 people so far learning about recovery and how the brain really does rewire itself.

In the June issue of The Cryer will be Aphasia Awareness - Part 2. I will talk more about the process, steps, timing, and damage of the various language modalities leading to aphasia recovery.

To contact: Thomas G. Broussard, Jr., Ph.D. Stroke Educator, Inc. (www.strokeeducator.com) Aphasia Nation, Inc. (www.aphasianation.org) or tbroussa@comcast.net. Telephone: 207-798-1449.

Mid Coast Hospital Stroke Support Group (suspended during COVID, to start soon). The Stroke Support Group at Mid Coast Hospital promotes wellness in those who have survived a stroke. Each month features a guest speaker and the opportunity to ask questions

and learn from others. A stroke survivor and a speech-language pathologist from Mid Coast Hospital facilitate the group.

Author's Books

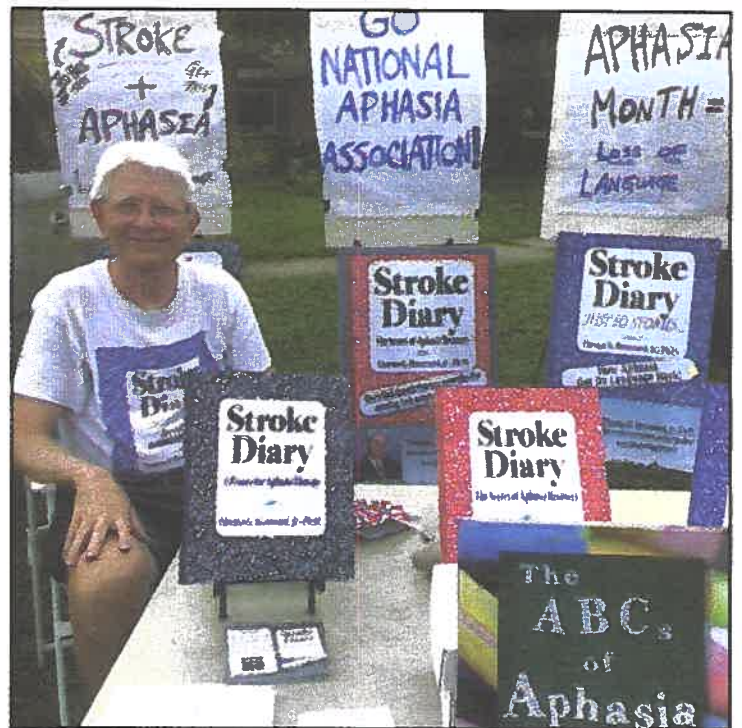
Stroke Diary: A Primer for Aphasia Therapy is practically a day-to-day diary from a stroke survivor who couldn't write ... but kept on writing anyway. A first-of-its-kind primer that blazes the trail for new aphasia therapy.

Stroke Diary: The Secret of Aphasia Recovery is a personal, intensive, enriched therapy boost for recovery, drawn from 2 an almost 500-page diary. The secret of recovery from aphasia is all about the doing.

Stroke Diary: Just So Stories ... How Aphasia Got Its Language Back validates how practice can provide the cure to aphasia recovery. Practice is more than just practice. Practice is the prescription for improvement and the cure.

The ABCs of Aphasia: A Stroke Primer is needed by every stroke survivor and one's family immediately after a stroke. Literally, it is the A-to-Z primer about stroke, aphasia, and recovery that you can't get anywhere else.

Stroke and Aphasia Recovery: Metaphors Help Us Mend contains 15 chapters with metaphorical stories that help us learn the self-directed process of recovery *using words we can understand!* It uses the foundation of all learning through the mechanics of the brain's ability to change, alter, and create new matter.



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