



REBUILDING COMMUNICATION

BUILDING Bridges



Building Bridges – Newsletter of the Aphasia Institute – The Aphasia Institute is a Canadian community-based centre of excellence, pioneering programs and practices that help people with aphasia learn how to communicate in new ways and begin to navigate their own lives again. Through direct service, research, education and training, the Aphasia Institute has built an international reputation as a world leader and educator in aphasia.

Celebrating 40 Years of Communication Support!

It's hard to believe, but 2019 marks the **40th anniversary of the Aphasia Institute**—from humble beginnings in the basement of our founder, Pat Arato, to four decades of creating and delivering a multitude of innovative solutions to people living with aphasia and their families. Look for more celebration details throughout 2019.



Walk, Talk 'n Roll

Save the Date!

On Sunday, June 9th, in celebration of the Aphasia Institute's 40th anniversary, our community of clients, staff, volunteers, and family will join together for our annual signature fundraiser. Visit www.aphasia.ca/walk-talk-roll to read the story of our client, Christine, who was determined to re-engage in her life when a massive brain bleed left her with aphasia. Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 9th and walk with Christine, her husband Vincent, and their two children!**



Our Annual Appeal was a Great Success... BECAUSE OF YOU!

Your belief in our work and in our clients helped us raise over \$31,000 to support our many initiatives – to keep creating ways to make life better for people with aphasia and their families. You've made a tremendous difference! Thank you!



I CARE

I Care is the Aphasia Institute's client-led fundraising campaign. This year the *I Care* campaign, supported by clients, volunteers, staff and family, has already raised over \$9,000! This is done through very creative means, including: a jewelry sale (pictured at right); dinner parties; bake sales; pizza parties; raffle tickets; odd repair jobs; selling gift baskets; an art sale; a baby-guessing contest; and donations in lieu of birthday gifts. This year, one volunteer even used an online fundraising app to raise money; another held a university talent show.



Our clients decide how the proceeds for *I Care* are to be used. The money raised in 2019 will support our direct client services, including conversation groups, debate club, art and music, fitness classes, and much more.

The Aphasia Institute relies on the generosity of individual donors and volunteers to deliver life-changing programs.

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Join Our "Conversations"

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MUSIC VIDEOS, YOU SAY?

If you have attended one of our annual general meetings or browsed the **Programs & Services** section of our website, you've likely seen our **Creative Expressions** music videos. If not, please take a moment to go to our website and watch them.* (We'll wait.)

Now that you've seen all 18 videos of our members acting like pop stars, we would like to introduce you to the volunteer behind their evolution... behind their creation... behind the camera: Gayle W.

When one of our clients passed away a few years ago, her daughter, Gayle, had taken a much needed rest from being her principal caregiver and from rushing her own children to and from school. She needed time to herself.

That time, however, would be short-lived. The magic she and her mother had experienced in our programs beckoned to Gayle once more. What was meant to be a brief catch-up visit instead became a reminder of how special Gayle felt about the Aphasia Institute. It became the catalyst for her to ask how she could contribute. She wanted to become a volunteer, and the timing could not have been better. The staff member responsible for

our **Spotlight Series** of annual stage performances was moving to another province. Knowing the program's benefits to our clients, volunteer coordinator Shannon Hill recommended that Gayle try her hand at something to replace the series. She could do whatever she wanted, with one caveat: As wonderful as our full-scale yearly shows were, we no longer had the resources to do them.

With Gayle's recent success as a documentary filmmaker,** she felt she could do something unique by combining music and movement with the language of video. Our clients could experience something really special and, unlike stage performance, their work could be shared anywhere and anytime.

Gayle's instincts were correct. The program has grown to include about 20 clients and 3 volunteers, and where Gayle used to be the driving force behind all the video concepts, our clients and volunteers now bring in some of their own ideas and even



their own props. The group even created a thank you video for this year's **Walk, Talk 'n Roll** donors!

The magic of what Creative Expressions does for our clients cannot be overstated. These videos allow people with aphasia to engage in ways they would never have been able to before. They create for one another a supportive camaraderie while each explores their inner child in a profound way, reaching within themselves to communicate something new and fun with every video creation. Where aphasia had threatened to silence them, our clients found a new way for their voices to be expressed and heard.

* Go to www.aphasia.ca → Program & Services → Community Aphasia Program → Creative Expressions

** For more information on Gayle and her documentary film success, be sure to visit www.aphasia.ca → Us → Reports & Publications → Building Bridges → Current Issue & Supplemental Links



Finding a way to tell the world what we do and how we do it

For the past few years, we have had the fortune to partner with Public Inc., a leader in corporate social responsibility consultancy. In fact, it was Public Inc. that worked with us to define the value of the work we do, creating our moto—"Life's a conversation"—and our promise to people with aphasia and their families: "**We help you navigate your life... one conversation at a time.**"

Recently, Public Inc. helped us find a better way to show the world who we are and what we do. The result is **Aphasia & The Aphasia Institute: Impact & Solutions**, a two-page document to help spread awareness of this communication disorder and the solutions we provide. **We hope you will share it with your family and friends!**

To download this document, go to: www.aphasia.ca → Us → Reports & Publications → Building Bridges → Current Issue & Supplemental Links

For all **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS** mentioned in this newsletter, go to www.aphasia.ca → Us → Reports & Publications → Building Bridges → Current Issue & Supplemental Links

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