March 2025

California State University SAN MARCOS

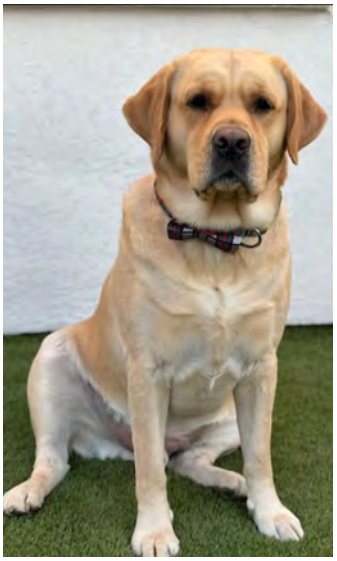
CSUSM Speech-Language Clinic
Extended Learning Building
288 Campus Way, 3rd Floor, Suite 331
San Marcos, CA 92078
760 .750.7300

The Wave #44



Riding the wave of more effective communication together

A NEW HOME FOR MYLES BY MICHAEL BOLING



Myles was born on December 1, 2022. You might wonder, “Who is Myles?” Myles is our family dog. It is an interesting story about how Myles ended up in our family.

Stella, my granddaughter, wanted a dog. She visited many kennels and found one that had a pup she fell in love with. But her parents were not in agreement to get a dog yet. She made a pact with her dad that if her soccer team won the Gold Cup, she could choose her dog.

That weekend Stella’s team played the number one team in the nation. After 90 minutes of grueling soccer, the score was tied 1-1. They went into a shootout. Stella was the 4th kicker. Stella kicked the winning goal and won the game. As she ran off the field, she screamed, “I won a puppy!”

And that is how Myles joined our family. And we love him dearly. Myles is the friendliest, most loving dog ever.

TBI AWARENESS MONTH



March is Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about one of the most misunderstood and overlooked medical conditions. Every year, millions of people around the world suffer from traumatic brain injuries.

If you have had a TBI, rehabilitation will be an important part of your recovery. Rehab might include physical, occupational, and speech therapy, as well as psychiatric care and social support. All these are designed to help you recover from the effects of your injury as much as possible.

THREE MAD-LIBS STORIES BY THE MORNING ONLINE THERAPY GROUP

Pizza for Breakfast



I have a pet named Luna. It is a snake and very fuzzy. Every morning, it makes a loud belching sound to wake me up. For breakfast, it eats pizza. Then it tries to jump on my stereo! One day, it ran into a grumpy dog in the backyard. They ran together and looked very happy. Later, I found Apollo on top of the sofa, hiding under a soccer ball. It had just flown away with my shoe! When I asked, "Why did you do that?" my pet said, "I had to go to the bathroom!" I love my silly pet!

Riding Monkeys



A vacation is when you take a trip to some gigantic place with your small family. Usually, you go to someplace that is near a lake. A good vacation place is one where you can ride monkeys, play baseball, or go hunting for penguins. I like to spend my time whispering or bouncing. When parents go on a vacation, they spend their time eating three bananas a day, and fathers play golf, and mothers sit around speeding. My family is going to go to Oceanside Beach, and I will practice shouting. Parents need vacations more than kids because parents are always very pink and because they must work 18 hours every day all year, making enough dogs to pay for the vacation.

If You Give a Dog a Waffle

If you give a dog a waffle, it will want to drive all over the toys. Then, it will find an egg and show it to a cat. The kittens will think it is grumpy and make a fart! This will make the cats feel smiley and ask for some. After it walks the food, it will hide inside a joke. When you ask, "What are you doing in there?" it will say, "I have to fart!" And that's why you should be careful giving a dog a cookie!





MY WIFE, PAULA BY MICHAEL BOLING



On this Valentine's Day 2025 I dedicate this to my wife Paula.

On March 4 of 2024. I suffered a major stroke to the right side of my brain. Without my wife's quick response to the EMTs I would not be here today. The EMTs rushed me to emergency at Scripps La Jolla Hospital while performing reverse medical attention for the stroke. When I woke up, I was in the ICU in bed. I have since undergone major rehab with my wife being with me every day to support my recovery. I don't know if any of you have had a stroke, but it is a shocking experience. To wake up strapped to a hospital gurney without the use of your limbs is major trauma. I can't thank my wife enough for her support and ongoing encouragement in my recovery.



Today I feel I have come a long way. I am getting close to full recovery. I couldn't have done any of it without my wife, Paula.

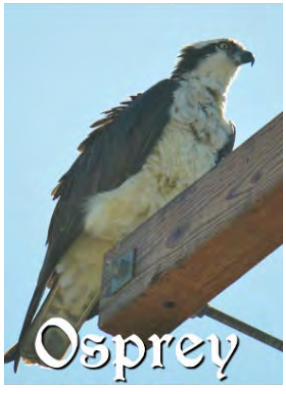
On this day of love, I just have this to say to my wife, "I love you dearly. Thank you for all your contributions."

THE BIG YEAR BY FRANK LUSSIER

I watched a movie called *The Big Year* with Jack Black, and it was interesting. If you've never seen it, you wouldn't know it's about birds, lots of them, like 755 of them.

I want to do the same thing and find that many birds. I think birds are magnificent. I find them in parks like Whelan Park in Oceanside and Buena Vista Park in Vista. My favorite bird is the red-tailed hawk. So far, I have documented 72 different birds that I've seen, like the Canadian Goose, Acorn Woodpecker, Ring-necked Duck, Black Phoebe, Black Crowned Night-Heron, Ospreys, and more.



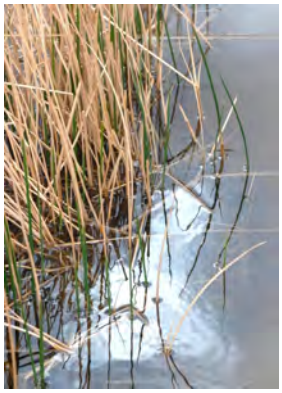


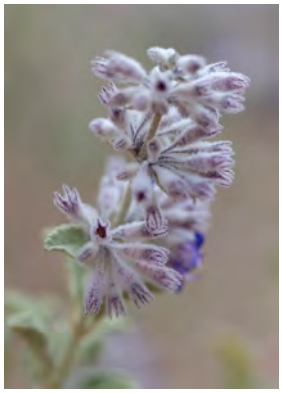


QUIET TIME BY BRUCE HEIMBACH

Every time we go on a vacation, I have (should, a mandate or self-coercion) to bring my camera. The places we go are a little different in character – landscape, paths, growth, and botany.

The 'quiet time' for me is an hour before sunrise or sunset. I like to see or find things and capture a quality photograph. That is the ***essence*** of 'quiet time' do it ***that*** way. The solitude path uses meditation and de-cluttering as powerful medicine to the mind.

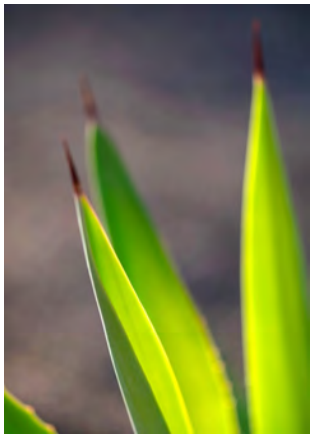














9 THINGS I WANT YOU TO KNOW BY BRIDGETT DESONIA

I offer my voice as one among the thousands of others who have speech difficulties due to stroke. The following are nine pieces of advice that come from my experience, but every survivor has their own unique voice worth hearing. These are my thoughts today. Tomorrow, I might revise them again, as I have done a hundred times before. Writing, like recovery, is a process—one step forward, two steps back, and then forward again. Through it all, I remain determined to keep moving ahead.

1. **Ableism Is the Worst**: Ableism—the discrimination against people with disabilities (physical, intellectual, or/and mental disabilities)—is cruel and deeply harmful. It stems from the belief that those with disabilities are "broken" and need to be "fixed." It ignores our worth, our humanity, and our resilience.

2. **Small Wins Matter:** Every tiny step forward is a victory. Whether it's saying a two-syllable word, having a day free from mental health struggles, or completing this article, each moment of progress is worth celebrating.

3. **Two Steps Back Are Okay Too:** Climbing a steep mountain often means pausing or stepping back to regain strength and reassess your path. My pain serves as a guide, letting me know how I'm doing, and it's okay to take a break when needed. Prioritizing my mental health is essential, allowing me to focus on gratitude and being present, even for a short while. When I feel stuck—whether it's with my writing or finding the right words—I turn to tools like the "ChatGPT" app (re-write my words) or the "Predictable" text-to-speech app for support. If I'm searching for the perfect word, I "look up" synonyms to help me move forward again. Progress isn't always a straight line—it's also about being mindful and knowing when to pause. Here's a Facebook video on ways to incorporate pause and rest into your routine.

4. **I Have Speech Difficulties but…** I'm still an intellectual (…and compassionate, empathetic, kind, loving and…). My speech may not sound like a TED Talk presenter, or a CEO's smooth and witty voice, but my mind remains sharp. Psychology tells us that first impressions form in just 2-3 seconds—enough time for someone to judge based on appearance or demeanor. Often, people see me and think, "Pitiful" or recall someone they know who has had a stroke. But if you truly get to know me, you'll realize my speech struggles are only a small part of who I am. Talk to me like you did before my stroke, and you'll find the intelligent (and mindful, kindhearted, considerate, understanding and…) person I've always been.

5. **It's OK To Be an Introvert:** I've always been introverted: quiet, reflective, and comfortable in solitude. My stroke hasn't changed that part of me but has heightened it, though it has deepened my self-reliance and introspection. After my stroke, I became super shy, but I'm still able to respond to stimulation through my inner voice and my meditative state. I'm much better at having conversations with one friend than speaking in a group, and I can also focus well when I'm alone. I have a video which you can watch on introverts here.

continued on the next page…

9 THINGS I WANT YOU TO KNOW (*CONT.*) BY BRIDGETT DESONIA

—continued from the previous page

6. **Coping with Depression:** Being a stroke survivor means losing the ability to do basic things—your job, hugging your family, and driving (which I do now). Therapy becomes your new life: physical, occupational, speech, and mental health therapy. For me, infertility and my stroke made me realize that the possibility of becoming a mom is no longer a reality. I grieve that. Daily. Everyday. Gratitude fills the good days, but the bad days are filled with grief, trauma, and depression. This duality is hard, and it's okay to admit that sometimes you need distractions, even small distractions, to survive.

7. **Caregivers Need Support Too**: Caregivers give so much of themselves, but they also need care and support. Many face challenges like PTSD, anxiety, or depression, and their well-being is just as important as the survivor's. Resources such as therapy can be invaluable lifelines, offering guidance and relief. Online communities, like stroke support groups on Facebook, can also provide connection and encouragement. No one should have to navigate this journey alone.

8. **Healing Takes a Lifetime (or Two):** Recovery from a stroke is a lifelong process. Therapy can improve physical and mental health, but full healing isn't always possible. It's a long haul. The trauma, pain, and disabilities may remain, but what truly matters is finding purpose in your goals, actions, and words that counts.

9. **It's a Long, Painful, but Worthwhile, Journey:** Before my stroke, I was pursuing a master's degree in education (which I got!). Editing and revising were part of my daily routine. After my stroke, I was left mute. Now, 5 ½ years later, I'm still working on finding my words and expressing my thoughts. It's exhausting and painful, but it's worth every effort. If this article resonates with just one person struggling with depression, disability, or the pain of a stroke, then it has all been worthwhile.

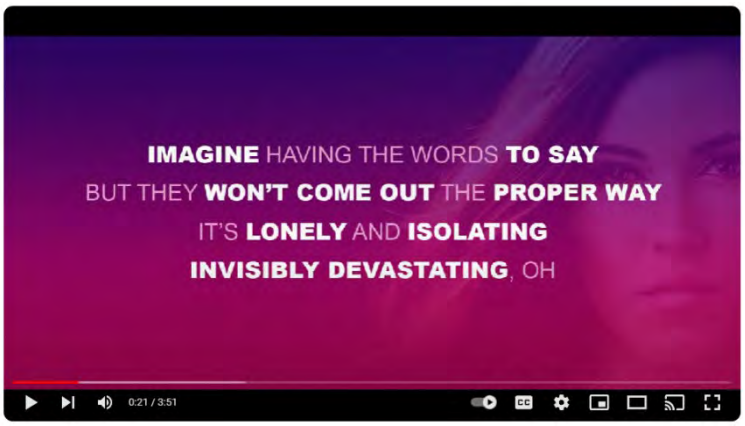
If you have comments on this article or if you would like to share your experience, feel free to contact me at bridgettdesonia@gmail.com.

THIS IS HER

Aeralie Brighton is an award-winning recording artist. Her mother, Tracie Keillor, suffered a stroke in February of 2013. Throughout the subsequent years, Aeralie witnessed her mother fight to navigate her way through aphasia and apraxia while on her road to recovery.

To commemorate this daunting feat, Aeralie and her husband developed the song titled "This is Me" to honor her mother's cause and to help bring public awareness to the aphasia. Hear it here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1p0Q5y2ANg



SLP CORNER: 5 TIPS FOR CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Be sure your questions are **open-ended**. Your questions should start with a *wh*- type word (who, what, where, why, when, how) rather than with a do/did/are/have/were-type word.
2. Once you get your client talking, you can **make observations**, suggest strategies, shape better habits, and work on sounds, words, and syntactic structures.
3. Be sure to **take your own turns** in the conversation, sharing your experiences and thoughts while modeling the behaviors you're looking to improve in your partner. Just be careful you don't dominate the conversation!
4. If you tend to get lost in the content of conversation, set up a **data-tracking method** ahead of the session, to keep yourself focused on the goal. Subtly make tick marks to tally a predetermined behavior or linguistic target. You'll end up with an enjoyable session, as well as outcome data to document your client's progress.
5. **Give feedback**. But this can tricky during a conversation, since the client may feel you're commenting on the quality of their ideas rather than their speech or skills. Be sure to establish the goals of the conversation before starting and positively acknowledge the content before drawing attention to the manner in which it was said.



FYI: You can always find previous issues of *The Wave* on the Speech-Language Clinic page of the CSUSM website: http://www.csusm.edu/slp/clinic/thewave.html