

# **A Thief That Robs the Brain of Language**

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## ***The New York Times:***

Steve Riedner of Schaumburg, Ill., was a 55-year-old tool-and-die maker, a job that involves difficult mental calculations, and a frequent speaker at community meetings when he found himself increasingly at a loss for words and unable to remember numbers. He even began to have difficulty reading his own written comments.

The neurologist he consulted thought Mr. Riedner had suffered a stroke and for three years treated him with cholesterol-lowering medication. But instead of his language ability stabilizing or improving, as should happen following a stroke, it got worse.

A second neurologist concluded after further testing that Mr. Riedner might have a condition called primary progressive aphasia, or P.P.A., a form of dementia affecting the brain's language center.

Having seen only one other case in his career, the neurologist referred Mr. Riedner and his wife, Mary Beth, to the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center at Northwestern University, whose director, Dr. M. Marsel Mesulam, is perhaps the world's leading expert on this relatively rare disorder.

Read the whole story: [The New York Times](#)