Sid Rosenthal
(1932-2011)

A longtime member of the AMI (Association of Medical Illustrators), Sidney J. Rosenthal passed away on March 13, 2011. Sid battled through multiple sclerosis (MS) for many years, working through the debilitating physical affects that slowly robbed him of his mobility.

Sid, owner of Arrco Medical Art and Design, was born in 1932, and raised in Far Rockaway, NY. An early interest in both art and medicine led him to combine his interests and pursue medical illustration. After he graduated from Brandeis University with a BA in art, he served in the Armed Forces in Korea. After discharge, Sid enrolled in the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Medical Illustration School and graduated in 1956. After graduation, he taught in the MGH program and worked as a staff medical illustrator at the hospital serving multiple departments. He launched Arrco Medical Art and Design in 1965, and earned a PhD in illustration from Colombia Pacific University. In 1986, Sid was diagnosed with MS, and ultimately was forced into early retirement from medical illustration because he lost the use of his drawing hand. However, he didn’t give up, and demonstrated a resilience and strength that would become his defining traits for the rest of his life.

Sid dedicated himself as an advocate for the disabled. He worked with students in local elementary schools, taught them about living with disabilities and inspired them to overcome challenges they would face in their lives. He ran support groups for those who were newly diagnosed with MS, helping them realize how to achieve their dreams while battling the disease. Sid supported the MS Society through volunteer efforts and sat on their Board of Trustees. He continued his work on behalf of the disabled and became a certified Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) inspector of buildings to ensure that the needs and concerns of the disabled would be clearly represented. He served as the head of the Commission on Disability for many years in Sharon, Massachusetts where he lived for 46 years, ensuring that the residents of his town could not, should not, and would not ignore the disabled.

Sid’s warmth and love of medical illustration and his community was powerful. He reached out to a number of young medical illustrators who settled in the Boston area in the early 1980s—he provided them with projects over the years, and was very encouraging as these young professionals matured.

Sid is survived by his wife, Eleanor; son, Paul; daughter, Lori; and four grandchildren.