

P. O. Box 2141  
Hudson, Ohio 44236

**The Northern Ohio Branch Mission Statement**

The International Dyslexia Association is an international organization that concerns itself with the complex issues of dyslexia. The IDA membership consists of a variety of professionals in partnership with dyslexics and their families.

We believe all individuals have the right to achieve their potential, that individual learning abilities can be strengthened and that social, educational and cultural barriers to language acquisition and use must be removed.

The IDA actively promotes effective teaching approaches and related clinical educational intervention strategies for dyslexics. We support and encourage interdisciplinary study and research. We facilitate the exploration of the causes and early identification of dyslexia and are committed to the responsible and wide dissemination of research based knowledge.

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**The Next NOBIDA newsletter will be published in April 2010. To submit an article for consideration, please forward to Monica Gordon Pershey at [m.pershey@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.pershey@csuohio.edu)**

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Founded in Memory of Samuel T. Orton

The International  
**DYSLEXIA**  
Association  
Northern Ohio Branch  
Formerly The Orton Dyslexia Society

**NEWSLETTER**  
Fall 2009



**Jean Armus, 1932 – 2009**

*The NOB/IDA lost a dear friend with the passing of Jean Armus, a long-time board member. Turn to pages 4 and 5 for tributes and remembrances.*

*Maryanne Wolf to speak at NOB/IDA Dyslexia Symposium, March 5, 2010*

**The Reading Worrier**

by Maryanne Wolf (Reprinted with permission of the author)

(Maryanne Wolf is a professor of child development at Tufts University, where she holds the John DiBiaggio Chair of Citizenship and Public Service, and is the director of the Center for Reading and Language Research. She will be NOBIDA'S featured speaker at our Annual Symposium on March 5).



I have always worried about who can read, who can't, who doesn't, and the great, life-altering consequences hidden within those distinctions. I have spent most of my adult life as a scholar, teacher, and researcher in the cognitive neurosciences pursuing these questions. Now I have a new worry, no less insidious in its potential for affecting the lives of our young: the possible differences in our children's brains — those for whom reading largely means time before a screen during school, after school, and into the late hours of the night. My worry stems from my concern for the reading brain as we know it — a precious, freshly constructed platform for each new reader's intellectual development. How it functions, however, depends a great deal on how it is formed. But that is getting ahead of the story I wish to tell about how a reading worrier became, for all purposes, a reading warrior, compelled to write about all of these issues in Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain.

I encountered my first worry in a tiny, two-room, red, brick schoolhouse in Eldorado, Illinois, where the first four years of our early education took place in the left room, and the last four on the right. Because the desks were all one size, I imagine I was barely dis-

cernible behind my brown wooden desk, a perfect place to observe the "goings on" in my little world and an ideal spot to observe and fret over my friend Jim. Once a day, Jim would transform before my eyes from the incorrigible, Huck-Finn-like leader on the playground to a white-faced, fist-clenched cartoon of himself whenever he had to read. After a little while our teacher, Sister Salesia, asked Jim to stay after school and work with her. Once, while trying to erase the blackboards after school as unobtrusively as possible, I observed them huddle over a book. It was pure pain to watch Jim try over and over without success to learn the secret code behind the letters that the rest of us knew. Suddenly aware of my watching, Jim looked over at me with such a mixture of anger, frustration, and shame, that I dashed out and never did that again.

It took two years of careful tutoring before Jim could read, but when he did, Huck Finn was back, cockier than ever, ruling his asphalt territory with verve and natural leadership. I wondered then why it all mattered so much, for I knew it did — and deeply. I also knew Sister Salesia had performed a secular miracle. Jim was now one of "us," we who could open a book and fly to Narnia, Middle Earth, and places we could barely imagine in our tiny town, where the only riches to be found were in the town's name and the dreams of its families for their children.

Much later, when I was armed with two degrees in English literature

*continued on page 3*



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
(Rates effective January 1, 2005)

**New Member Information (please print)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Country \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Benefits of Membership**  
Contact IDA Headquarters or visit our website for additional details about Institutional and Corporate member benefits.  
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~ Arrivals of Dyslexic ~ Branch Newsletters  
~ Discounts on IDA Conferences ~ Discounts on IDA Publications

**Local Branch Affiliation**

<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual with Dyslexia	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Specialist
<input type="checkbox"/> College Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Researcher/Educational
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Other Family Member of	<input type="checkbox"/> Researcher/Medical
<input type="checkbox"/> Ed. Diagnostician/Psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual w/Dyslexia	<input type="checkbox"/> Speech-Language
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Therapist	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician	<input type="checkbox"/> Pathologist
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**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS (please check one) (U.S. Currency Only)**

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing this form I certify that I (or the corporate entity) qualify for the membership category checked above.**

**Check enclosed made payable to: The International Dyslexia Association**  
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Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

American Express  Discover  MasterCard  Visa

Name on credit card (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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**MEMBERSHIP MAILING LIST RENTAL**  
At times, the IDA membership list is made available to other organizations whose products or services we think our members might find of interest. If you do not want your contact information included on these mailing lists, please check here: \_\_\_\_\_

**LD Service Provider Database**  
IDA maintains a list of service providers for people who contact us for resources. If you would like to be on this list and receive an application, please check here: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your listing will remain on the service provider list as long as your membership is active.



## From the President



Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.

Dear NOB/IDA Members and Friends,

As you already know, October is Dyslexia Awareness Month. Two major events this month highlighted the efforts of NOB/IDA to raise the awareness of the community, parents, and educators about dyslexia and its impact upon children and adults.

First, on a bright, sunny, cool October 1st, members of the three Ohio branches of IDA collectively staged the first Dyslexia Awareness Day Rally on the steps of the Ohio State House. We were there to raise the awareness of the members of the Ohio Legislature about dyslexia and to press them to pass legislation that would require early screening for dyslexia for children as they enter school. The law would also require teachers to have mandated professional development so they would know how to use the systematic, explicit, and multisensory reading strategies that have been shown to be necessary to teach children with dyslexia. Stephanie Gordon, one of the founders of NOB/IDA and a prime organizer of this political effort, described the day: "Imagine the stately Greco-style State House with majestic steps leading to its columns. On those steps a three-by-eight-foot white banner announced in bold blue letters DYSLEXIA AWARENESS DAY. From those steps we heard heart-wrenching testimonials . . . a 50-year-old brother, now a successful electrician, confessing he can't read; a successful entrepreneur, saved from EMR (Educable Mentally Retarded) placement by a determined mother, confessing she still can't read; Miss Teen International 2009, helped because her mom sought private testing and tutorial help, describing herself as "very dyslexic." Voices betrayed the emotions of the volunteers in the crowd who walked the steps to tell their stories. The word we heard that best describes the day . . . "inspirational."

Second, on October 14th, nearly 200 parents, grandparents, educators, and health professionals packed the cafeteria of Willoughby South High School for NOB/IDA's annual program "Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic." Through a variety of simulations people experienced some of the frustrations and impediments that people with dyslexia face as they attempt to bring meaning to the printed page. NOB/IDA members who conducted the simulations deliberately demonstrated some of the worst teacher behavior experienced by struggling readers, which only aggravates the school experience of a student with dyslexia and causes added emotional and behavioral issues. All participants left the program with a greater empathy for the struggles faced by students with dyslexia as they attempt to read and learn. Many thanks from all of us to those who conducted the simulations and especially to Ellen Brick, who organizes this event every year. Ellen's summary after the simulations not only synthesized the meaning of the simulations but inspired us that the frustrations and impediments can be overcome. Children with dyslexia can learn to read and become successful adults if they are taught with systematic, explicit, and multisensory reading strategies.

I left the simulation program with a renewed sense of purpose in my role as a district administrator and grateful that NOB/IDA members are giving me tools to address dyslexia in our district. Much is yet to be done to help all of our district's children achieve success in reading. Passage of the dyslexia bill would help in our efforts. I left the rally in Columbus thinking Why would the legislature not pass the law we are seeking to address the needs of children with dyslexia in schools? After all, they have been very active passing many laws and rules for schools. The have mandated all sorts of tests and accountability for schools. They have decreed that in a few years (2014) all children, including those with dyslexia, will pass state exams. Why would they not provide this legislation which would help us meet these mandates and help all children learn to read? However, at the rally we heard from a sympathetic legislator from Franklin County who said that the legislative process may take time. It may take several years for our bill to work its way to law.

Let us take the inspiration we gained from these two events and turn them into action. Write or call your state representatives asking them to support this bill and to move it quickly through to passage. Children cannot wait. A child has a small window of time to set the foundation for a lifetime of reading – early detection of dyslexia is imperative. If a child gets to third grade deficient in reading, the odds of eventually learning to read and having success in school are stacked against him or her. Each year this bill sits in the legislature is another year lost in the lives of children, especially the critical primary school years.

While pressing for the legislature to act, talk with your child's or grandchild's teacher. Ask how explicit, systematic, multisensory reading strategies are used in the classroom to develop the essential reading skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Ask how struggling readers are provided with extra instructional time to learn these skills. Contact your school district administrators. Ask them how they are helping teachers learn how to use explicit and systematic approaches to reading instruction. Ask them what data are collected to screen for reading difficulties as the children enter school. Ask them what is done with the data and what intervention programs are provided to help children overcome any reading difficulties.

October is Dyslexia Awareness month. Let's make November, and every month thereafter, Dyslexia Action Month.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Orrach, M.Ed.  
President, NOB/IDA



## Advertisements

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Appointment Intake Linc – (216) 844-3230

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Suite 700  
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 Karen Perry, Parma  
 Caryl Smarr-Mills, Millford  
 Corinne Doege, North Canton  
 Michelle Dudas, Concord  
 JoAnn Everhart, East Sparta  
 Jacqueline Kinsinger, Canton

**Watch us Grow!**  
 (or is it gro...groa...  
 or... groe... How is  
 one to know?)

Moira Erwine, Sheffield Lake  
 Kristina Johnson, Dayton  
 Sharon Regan, Garfield Heights  
 Sally Rutman, Beachwood  
 Karen Sippola, Mentor

*We are so glad you have joined us and hope  
 you will become active in our branch!*

*Thank you for joining us in our pursuit of helping every child and adult  
 achieve his or her potential. We welcome you to become involved in  
 branch activities. Please contact us at 216-556-0883 or e-mail us at  
 info@dyslexia-nohio.org.*

### In the next issue:



**Watch for reviews of the IDA  
 60th Annual Conference held at  
 the Walt Disney World Swan and  
 Dolphin Hotel, Lake Buena Vista,  
 Florida in November, 2009.**



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### The Reading Worrier

*continued from page 1*

and poised to begin another, I volunteered to teach in a Peace Corps-like situation in rural Hawaii. For all purposes indentured to the local sugar cane plantation, the tiny largely Filipino and



Asian community where I worked couldn't have been more welcoming, and the third and fourth graders I worked with couldn't have been more beautiful, or more in need of a teacher. No less than eight languages filled my room. By the second week, we, the class and I, were hopelessly in love with each other, and I was hopelessly at sea in terms of how I could ever teach so many different levels of learning in one class with one language. To this day many, many teachers across America have similar challenges and are

similarly poorly prepared to deal with them. By the end of that first year, I failed. Most of the children who couldn't read before I came, still couldn't. I didn't have the right tools, and I didn't even know if they existed. I lost the only chance I would ever have of changing the educational trajectories of those loving children. I knew in my gut that unless someone else came along to teach them, they would never reach their full potential, and that would be that. This terrible realization changed my life.

Two decades later, I am a scholar of reading still worrying about the political, emotional, and intellectual consequences of children who will never learn to become fully literate. But now I am armed with different degrees and an armamentarium of knowledge so unexpected and newly discovered that I still remain in awe of it. I work in a mix of areas and am informed by them all: child development, psycholinguistics, education, and most especially, cognitive neuroscience. At its most basic, my research is about how the brain learns to read, what is going on in brain development when it can't, and how this knowledge can inform both our teaching of typically developing children and our intervention with children who struggle — whether from reading disabilities like dyslexia, or environmental factors like being English language learners. It is an extraordinary moment to be studying the reading brain, because neuroimaging allows us to observe quite literally what Jim's brain was and was not doing as he tried to read those years ago. It also allows us to observe what more typical, young reading brains do when they first begin to acquire reading. And from beginning readers to expert readers, we can observe the changes that figuratively and physiologically transform both the neuronal circuitry and the intellectual course of our lives. Perhaps we didn't need neuroscience research to tell us that we are in many ways the stuff of what and how we read, but it is remarkable, nonetheless, to see visual proof in scans of the brain's activation chronicling our changes as we become truly comprehending readers.

Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain represents a snapshot — to be precise, three snapshots — of what we now know about the origins of reading (how the human brain learned how to read); the development of reading (from infancy's influence, to expert reading adults); the gifts and the challenges of reading failure in dyslexia (what happens when the brain can't read). It's a triptych of our knowledge and a frank apologia to this cultural invention that changed our lives as a species and as individual learners.

However, here's the proverbial rub. We human beings were never born to read; we invented reading and then had to teach it to every new generation. Each new reader comes to reading with a "fresh" brain — one that is programmed to speak, see, and think, but not to read. Reading requires the brain to rearrange its original parts to learn something new. The study of reading teaches us how wonderfully plastic the brain is and how important many of the brain's disarmingly simple-sounding design features (e.g., its ability to recognize and represent patterns so that we can access their information quickly) are to the growth of our intellectual capacities. In this way, by analogy, the study of reading is to modern cognitive neuroscience, what the study of the squid's beautiful long axon was to earlier 20th century neuroscientists: a way to study how the brain's neurons work. That is the "squid" analogy in the otherwise enigmatic title.

I use Proust as a metaphor for the most important aspect of reading: the ability to think beyond what we read. The great French novelist Marcel Proust wrote a little-known, essay-length book simply called *On Reading* in which he wrote: The heart of the expert reading brain is to think beyond the decoded words to construct thoughts and insights never before held by that person. In so doing, we are forever changed by what we read.

I worry that such a reader and such a reading brain — formed through years of immersion in texts and books that reward deep analysis, inference, and reflection — is being changed in unforeseen ways behind screens that provide all manner of information instantly and seemingly comprehensively without the same need for great effort, deep analysis, and going "beyond the information given." I worry, like Socrates long before me, that our children are becoming more "decoders of information" than true comprehenders. I worry that they are deluded by the seeming permanence and volume of their information, into thinking they "know it all" — when they have barely begun to fashion the kind of brain that has learned how to probe, infer, reflect, create, and move to whole new places on its own.

I know much about the preciousness of the reading brain, and I worry that we will lose some of its most essential contributions if children are not taught first to read, and to think deeply about their reading, and only then to e-read. This is no binary or Lud-dite perspective; it is a developmental approach to how we can form reading brains best able to learn, analyze, prioritize, and integrate anew the massive bits of information available into real knowledge, and, if we are all lucky, into wisdom. At the end of Proust and the Squid, the choice is left to the reader.

**VISIT THE NOB/IDA  
 WEBSITE AT:**

**www.dyslexia-nohio.org  
 to view the symposium  
 registration brochure**





## Jean Armus, 1932 - 2009

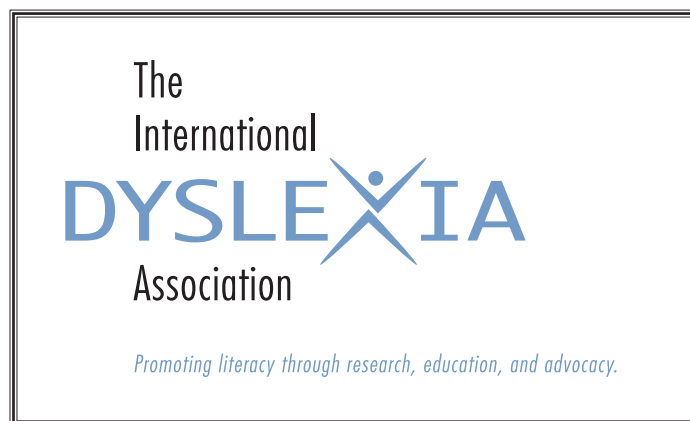
A Tribute by Sr. Marcia Kiser, NOB/IDA Board Member

Jean Armus, a Toledo resident and long-time NOB/IDA board member who introduced innovative methods of teaching to meet the challenge of dyslexia, died Saturday, August 15, 2009. She was influential in helping to erase the stigma associated with the learning disorder. Jean was best known locally for her tutoring service, Jean Armus and Associates Learning Specialists, which focuses on helping children and adults with learning disabilities, especially dyslexia.

Jean began to study dyslexia in the 1960s when, as a substitute teacher, she encountered a number of children with reading problems. Decades before the diagnosis of dyslexia was widely accepted, Jean successfully employed the Orton-Gillingham and Lindamood-Bell methods at her places of employment, the Toledo Mental Hygiene Clinic and later the Medical College of Ohio, where she was Testing Coordinator of the Learning Disorders Unit in the Department of Pediatric Neurology. In the 1970s she opened her own tutoring service where she helped hundreds of students and mentored several generations of teachers. School personnel throughout Northwest Ohio, some initially resistant to these methods, came to see their value. Many dedicated teachers who trained with Jean now work throughout the region.

Jean published several scholarly papers, was active in parent support groups, and was a speaker at local, regional, and national conferences. She is recognized as a past president of the Toledo branch of the Learning Disabilities Association, and as a board and advisory council member of the NOB/IDA.

A native of the Bronx, Jean received an undergraduate degree in music from the State University of Iowa and a master's degree in education from the University of Toledo.



## Growing Up Dyslexic: Flashcards, Game Boy and Messy Backpacks

A Tribute by Thomas H. Bartlett, Junior, St. Paul's School, Concord, NH



Tom Bartlett

Every dyslexic student gets discouraged at some time or another, and I hit the wall early. The self-doubts creep in fast, because we are just dyslexic...not stupid. By spring of my kindergarten year, I still really couldn't tell "b" from "d," but most of the kids were already beginning to read. Some of them were on "chapter books." I was stuck with flash cards. My brain was a sieve.

My teacher would give me the encouragement speech. "Keep trying and believe in yourself," she would say brightly, because everyone knows that discouragement is death for a dyslexic student. What begins as an inability to learn to read and a tendency toward a messy backpack can quickly snowball into nightmares, low self-esteem, and spiraling school drop-out rates. So, we would go for another round of flash cards.

But even then, I could see that trying to teach a dyslexic kid to read with flash cards inscribed with sight words is like yelling louder at a person who just doesn't speak English. So, I stuffed the wad of useless flash cards down into my messy backpack and trudged between home and school, with an ever-increasing sense of despondency. I considered the possibility that I was stupid.

I finally gave up on the sight word and flashcard method, but not on myself. Instead, I found Game Boy, Lindamood-Bell, and Jean Armus. I was determined to conquer Pokeman, which my six-year-old self considered the best Game Boy game ever invented (in order to play, you have to be able to read the simple directives). Jean Armus, my tutor, opened that door, using Lindamood-Bell.

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoon, Jean and I read and played word games. And I kept her up to date on my Game Boy progress. Between Jean and Game Boy, I had confidence I would eventually be a real reader.

One afternoon, when I had finally reached a high competition level in my Pokemon game, I accidentally dropped the Game Boy in the parking lot of her office, just as I was heading in for an afternoon tutoring session. The batteries fell out as the



## STATE HOUSE RALLY FOR THE OHIO DYSLEXIA BILL: AN "EYE OPENER"

by Stephanie M. Gordon, NOB/IDA Advisory Council and Executive Legislative Committee Member

The Dyslexia Awareness Day Rally in Columbus was inspirational but also an "eye-opener." The assembled crowd heard the heart-wrenching stories of Janis, saved from a class for children who are mentally retarded, and Jessica, helped by the private tutoring obtained by a mom who battled and advocated for her child with dyslexia. The "eye-opener" at the rally was that only one of the 77 legislators invited to the rally attended.

The goals of the Dyslexia Bill are to meet the learning styles of students with dyslexia and to enhance teacher preparation. The bill addresses assessment, prevention, and remediation for students with dyslexia and requires systematic, explicit reading instruction taught by a teacher adequately trained and coached. The bill provides for professional development for teachers, administrators, and superintendents. Accordingly, if a district does not have teachers who are properly trained, the district must provide a qualified tutor to work with students during the school day. Professors of education and education majors at all universities in Ohio must be educated about dyslexia and effective methods of teaching. Every student with language and reading issues will benefit from this law.

Representative Ted Celeste (Upper Arlington, Columbus) plans to introduce the Dyslexia Bill to the Education Committee by the end of this year. Our "eye-opener" magnifies the need for each one of us to personally seek out and contact our legislators, connect him/her to a mom or dad who is battling for services, impress upon him/her that you are a voter, and bombard him/her with facts, statistics, and research findings. We are presently gathering data from ongoing pilot projects to show the cost effectiveness of using systematic, explicit, and multisensory reading strategies. Cost will be a key issue among the legislators. Info to use when contacting your legislators is online at

IDA Central Ohio branch Web site, [www.cobida.org](http://www.cobida.org) (how to contact state legislators, sample letters, and fact sheets to send to legislators).

A bouquet of thanks to our supporters represented at our Rally: CHADD, LDA, Marburn Academy, Masonic Learning Centers, Notre Dame College, OCECD, Springer School.

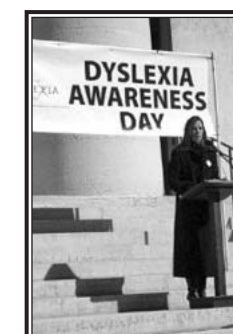
### Dyslexia Rally Photos



Gordon (wearing hat) at the Dyslexia Awareness Day Rally.



Supporters gather for the Dyslexia Awareness Day Rally.



Speakers and singers delivered their messages at the Dyslexia Awareness Day Rally.





## The Northern Ohio Branch of The International Dyslexia Association 2010 Ballot

*The Nominating Committee of NOBIDA is pleased to recommend the following members for election:*

**(Terms will begin April 1, 2010).**

### **Board of Directors (three year terms)**

### **Nominating Committee (one year terms)**

**Carol Perry**

Center Director  
Cleveland Masonic Learning Center  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Stephanie Gordon**

Dyslexia Specialist/Diagnostician  
Lakewood, Ohio

**Judith C. Saltzman**

Attorney  
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Cleveland, Ohio

**Karen St. Amour**

Learning Specialist  
Hathaway Brown School  
Shaker Heights, Ohio

**Kate Zannoni**

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Cleveland Museum of Natural History  
Shaker Heights, Ohio

**Doug Hamilton**

Director of Admissions  
Lawrence School  
Broadview Heights, Ohio

**Courtney Baker**

Marketing Director  
Lawrence School  
Broadview Heights, Ohio

The NOB/IDA annual meeting will be held at 7pm on Thursday, January 28, 2010 at Notre Dame College of Ohio. Members of NOB/IDA who will not be attending the annual meeting, please print then sign this ballot and mail to:

**Ann M. Pyros**

District Learning Resource Supervisor  
North Olmsted, Ohio

Jennifer LaHaie, Secretary  
8529 W. Wadora Circle NW  
North Canton, OH 44720

**Georgann Richardson**

Montessori Teacher  
Mentor, Ohio

**Moira Erwine**

Regional School Improvement Coordinator  
Educational Service Center  
Lorain, Ohio

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOB/IDA member signature



## 2010 Scholarship Application for the 22nd Annual Symposium of the Northern Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

***This Scholarship is offered in memory of Jean Armus***

NOB/IDA is offering scholarships to current educators and parents of a child with dyslexia. The scholarship will cover all or part the symposium registration fee only. Scholarships are available to persons who are not members of the board and who do not have another sponsor (such as an employer or school system). Scholarship winners will be notified by February 15, 2010. Deadline for application is January 25, 2010. You may type this form into an email and send to info@dyslexia-nohio.org, or prepare your response on plain paper and mail to P. O. Box 2141, Hudson, Ohio 44236.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home/daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you hold any professional certifications that pertain to the treatment of dyslexia?
2. What is your profession?
3. Are you currently employed?
4. Are you a parent of a child with dyslexia?
5. Are you a member of IDA?
6. Have you ever attended the NOB/IDA symposium in the past?
7. Have you ever attended a national conference of IDA?
8. How long have you been interested in dyslexia?
9. How do you see yourself using the knowledge you will gain at the symposium?
10. How do you see yourself possibility of sharing what you will experience at the symposium?

Game Boy bounced on the pavement. All my game progress was lost. I knew I would have to start all over again at level one. I was crushed. But Jean and I spent the entire hour that day on my Pokemon problems. Looking back, I realize now that Jean taught the whole child, not just the part that couldn't read very well.

I know now that the early "chapter book readers" and the "flash card kids" end up in roughly the same place, sooner or later, if proper teaching can be found for the dyslexic students before discouragement turns to self-defeat. Jean gave me that gift. She eventually led me from Pokemon to the graphic novel (i.e., comic book) version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and then Frankenstein, which led me to Catcher in the Rye long before I understood anything much about it except that it seemed dangerous to some adults. Jean knew well that I would be lured by its racy reputation. I still ended up working an extra hour a day, three or more days a week with a tutor for eight years, long after I could "read," in order to grasp logical writing, analysis, and the greatest bugaboo of all: spelling.

When I received the English award at the end of my freshman high school year, I was proud— but not nearly so pleased as I was the first time I was finally able to best Jean at Scrabble!

Now, I know that "spell check" is truly the greatest invention since, well....Game Boy and Pokemon. Of course, my homework still takes longer to complete than I would hope. My backpack is full of junk, too, and if I dig around in it a bit, I think I might still have those flashcards, if you know anyone they might work for.

### **SO WHAT'S LINDAMOOD-BELL?**

Dr. Charles Lindamood and his wife Patricia developed a successful program of teaching techniques for learners who struggle with reading, spelling, mathematics, and expressive writing. Based on the philosophy of Dr. Samuel Orton, and formerly known as the Auditory Discrimination in Depth Program, today's Lindamood-Bell approach successfully stimulates auditory conceptual functions. By following the specific steps of the program, individuals become aware of the mouth actions which produce speech sounds. This awareness becomes the means for verifying sounds within words and enables individuals to become self-correcting in reading and spelling. Today the five Lindamood-Bell programs focus on reading, math, receptive reading comprehension, oral comprehension, and vocabulary.

**-Sr. Marcia Kiser**





### Learn More about Dyslexia: Opportunities for Professionals and Parents

#### Lawrence School

Lawrence School, an independent school exclusively serving students with learning differences and attention deficits, offers educational seminars for parents, professionals, and members of the community. Topics include language-based learning differences and attention deficit disorders. These sessions are free of charge and open to the public. For more information on upcoming seminars, call 440-526-0003 or view the school's website at [www.lawrenceschool.org](http://www.lawrenceschool.org).

#### Lawrence School offers

##### Free Early Reading Screenings

**When:** Ongoing throughout the school year

**Time:** 30 minute appointments scheduled between 9 am and 12 noon

**Host:** Lawrence School (Lower School campus)

**Location:** 1551 E. Wallings Rd., Broadview Heights, OH 44147

**Cost:** FREE

**Contact:** Vanessa Diffenbacher, Lower School Head at 440-526-0003 or [vdiffenbacher@lawrenceschool.org](mailto:vdiffenbacher@lawrenceschool.org) to schedule an appointment

Do you know a student in grades K-3 who could benefit from a reading skills screening? Lower School Head Vanessa Diffenbacher and Assessment Center Director Ethan Schafer are offering free reading skills screenings for non-Lawrence students in grades K-3. Screenings take place at the Lower School and include a personalized feedback session and recommendations. These screenings are for non-Lawrence students and by appointment only.

#### Summer Professional Development Programs

##### Summer 2009

Due to the current economy, during the summer of 2009 NOB/IDA offered a series of summer workshops that was abridged from the number of workshops offered most summers. Advisory Board members Karen St. Amour, Lori Josephson, and Ellen Brick taught two Wilson Applied Methods programs to nearly 40 participants at each session. Board member Patricia Harping offered workshops on reading comprehension and spelling based upon the Visualizing and Verbalizing and Seeing Stars programs to nearly 50 participants. These programs continue to help parents and professional bring research-based reading practices to learners of all ages.

#### Coming Events for Summer 2010

With improving economic conditions for both schools and individuals, NOB/IDA is optimistic that the variety of summer workshops that will be offered in 2010 will return to the diverse selection offered prior to 2009. If you would be interested in providing a workshop in your area of expertise, contact Larry Orrach at [lorrac@leeca.org](mailto:lorrac@leeca.org) or 440-454-2628. If would like to attend the workshops offered by NOB/IDA be sure to watch upcoming newsletters and check the NOB/IDA website, [www.dyslexia-nohio.org](http://www.dyslexia-nohio.org), or contact us at [info@dyslexia-nohio.org](mailto:info@dyslexia-nohio.org) to obtain the schedule for summer 2010.

#### Upcoming Meetings of the Board of Directors of the NOB/IDA

December 3, 2009, January 28, 2010, April 29, 2010

The January meeting, which will be held at the Notre Dame College of Ohio in South Euclid, is the ANNUAL MEETING of the NOB/IDA Board and is OPEN TO PUBLIC. All meetings are at 7 p.m. Please email [info@dyslexia-nohio.org](mailto:info@dyslexia-nohio.org) for updates on the locations of the December and April meetings.



### Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic

The Willoughby News-Herald reported on the October 14, 2009 simulation, Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic, held at Willoughby South High School. Reporter Jacob Lammers followed parents and educators as they experienced first-hand some of the learning challenges faced by students with dyslexia and published the following article in the October 15, 2009 issue of the newspaper.

#### Parents, Educators Experience Dyslexia

Jeanine Majikas thought her 9-year-old son couldn't see well. But his eyes were checked, and they were fine.

It wasn't until recently that she discovered her son's inability to read and write was connected to a learning disability — dyslexia.

"To know that he's so frustrated and never able to verbalize it to us, that breaks my heart," the Mentor mom said.

"I knew something wasn't right, right along. But now, I don't know what to do for him."

That's when Majikas and her husband, Robert, started researching dyslexia and came across Wednesday's event at South High School in Willoughby, where parents and educators took part in simulations of the disability.

One particular simulation instructed participants to write words backward.

In another instance, they had to interpret what the instructor was saying even though the words were pronounced differently.

"The goal of this is to have educators and parents know what it feels like, what the frustration feels like," said Ellen Brick, community outreach chairwoman for the Northern Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia Association.

"It's very mentally taxing to do all these tasks and try to do them well and not be successful."

One in every five children in the U.S. has dyslexia, according to the International Dyslexia Association.

Although it is a common learning disability, several misconceptions are associated with it, said Brick, who's been teaching dyslexic children for 30 years.

She said many people think the affected student reads backward.

Brick said that students can't remember the order of the words or have difficulty identifying particular sounds with words.

Cindy Aubin, a retired Willoughby-Eastlake Schools speech pathologist, points to research that shows dyslexic children do not hear words the same way other children do.

Aubin said she wanted to attend the simulation to see what these children go through.

"The reading is one aspect. As state-testing standards are moved up, speech pathologists are called on to be more involved in reading and writing to help students achieve," she said.

With several other teachers in tow, Vanessa Diffenbacher, lower principal for Lawrence School in Broadview Heights, said the simulations were a frustrating experience.

"I've learned that it's very difficult to understand the printed words and then how it feels in front of other peers when you don't know," Diffenbacher said. "When you go through something like this, you automatically have more empathy for them in a classroom setting."

Brick said early intervention is key in helping students with dyslexia.

When the Majikases found out their son had dyslexia, they started hitting the books.

"I think a lot of it is knowledge. The most important thing is to find out because your children can't tell you what they're going through," Jeanine Majikas said.

"You have to find out what their needs are and then give them the tools."

Robert Majikas said they are working with the school, which Brick indicates is a great source of information.

"It helps to have an answer. By helping him deal with it, it helps us deal with it," Robert Majikas said.

Even with a diagnosis of dyslexia, affected children can learn to read.

"It's not that they can't read printed materials. It just has to be taught in a structured, multi-sensory approach," Brick said.

Brick said that dyslexia is simply one weakness among a sea of strengths.

Jeanine Majikas echoed that sentiment.

"They're wonderfully creative and talented children. They just need a chance," she said.

Photos, story, and video are available on the Willoughby News-Herald Web site, [www.news-herald.com/articles/2009/10/15/news/nh1571008.txt](http://www.news-herald.com/articles/2009/10/15/news/nh1571008.txt)

The dyslexia simulation will be presented as a break-out session at the 22nd Annual Dyslexia Symposium on March 5, 2010.

