What Brain Imaging Tells Us About Reading Acquisition and Intervention: Guinevere F. Eden Presents PBIDA Conference Keynote Address

By John R. Kruidenier

The Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (PBIDA) has been fortunate over the years to host several renowned experts on the neuropsychology of dyslexia as keynote speakers at its annual conference. Two years ago, Dr. Maryanne Wolf presented a broad view of the history of literacy and both the personal and cultural implications of research on the neurological effects of literacy acquisition. This year’s keynote speaker, Dr. Guinevere Eden, the current President of IDA, spoke in depth about brain imaging research and what this research tells us about reading acquisition for most readers, but especially those with dyslexia and, interestingly, those who are precocious readers. Dr. Eden summarized results from fMRI studies of reading conducted throughout the world over the last few decades, focusing on her work with colleagues at Georgetown University’s Center for the Study of Learning, where she is Director, and with collaborators at Wake Forest University and Gallaudet University.

Doctors use Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to take pictures of internal organs for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Researchers use functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) to determine which area of the brain is activated during a cognitive task such as reading by measuring changes in blood flow in the brain (the flow of oxygenated blood increases in active areas of the brain). By giving word reading tasks to children and adults while they undergo an fMRI brain scan, researchers have been able to identify which areas of the brain are active as a person reads.

According to Dr. Eden, this research has identified the neural network used for reading. This network includes (a) an area on the left side of the brain, where language is processed, responsible for recognizing letters and assembling them into words (a “word form” area), (b) areas for associating words and their pronunciations (phonological assembly), and (c) areas for associating words with their meanings (semantics).

(Continued on page 23)
Dear Readers,

This is a bittersweet letter for me, because it is my last letter as President; my term ends on December 31, 2011. I am thrilled that Julia Sadtler will be the PBIDA President in 2012! She and I have worked closely together this year, and I have learned that Julia, who has been involved with PBIDA and with the education of students with dyslexia for many years, cares passionately about the mission of helping individuals with dyslexia.

PBIDA had its 33rd annual conference October 14 at the Delaware Valley Friends School, and you will see many pictures and read many articles from the conference in this issue. I don't know that the pictures and articles adequately convey the positive feelings I saw and heard on the day of the conference. Attendants were delighted to have learned new information and strategies they could take back to their work. They were also pleased to see old friends and to make new friends and connections, because interacting with others in the field both renews your passion for your work and makes you better at your work. Putting on this conference is a yearlong effort; we just had our first team planning meeting for the 2012 conference. Put October 5, 2012, at the Woodlynde School, on your 2012 calendar!

In November I was honored to represent PBIDA at the 62nd Annual IDA conference, Reading, Literacy & Learning!, in Chicago. This was a stimulating and very full few days. Some highlights:

- I participated in the 2011 Fall Branch Council Meeting, along with Presidents of the other Branches (46), the four Regional Representatives, and the IDA headquarters staff. I learned about the new membership initiative for parents (reduced membership rate, a digital newsletter just for parents, scholarships, a parent blog), about updates on the Information and Referral initiative, and about the many varied projects taken on by Branches.

- Jeannie Bowman, Regional Representative for the eastern region (Virginia, Washington D.C., Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware, New Jersey, and Ohio) organized a regional dinner. It is delightful, informative and essential to learn more about our neighboring Branches. We resolved to collaborate and support each other in regional efforts, and you will be hearing more about those efforts.

- I attended the IDA Delegate Assembly meeting, where I was proud to cast PBIDA’s vote for Jeannie Bowman as the next chair of Branch Council!

- Finally, I attended many wonderfully informative sessions. I learned a lot, and can offer only a few highlights here. First, Mary-anne Wolfe reviewed the latest research on brain activity during reading, and reported that there were four differences between ‘normal’ readers and ‘dyslexic’ readers: dyslexic readers showed a delay in visual recognition, in word activation, in phonological processing and in semantic processing. What are the implications for instruction? Students must be taught simultaneously about word meaning, sounds, letter patterns, and multiple meanings. Efficacy studies supported multi-component instruction over unidimensional instruction. Second, I attended a panel discussion about Literacy Beyond the Third Grade. Tim Shanahan reviewed reading studies and concluded that the distressingly low level of high school reading skills can be improved only by: 1) increasing instructional time (90 minutes a day for reading); 2) involving content teachers; 3) giving more instructional time (including after school and summer) to readers two years below grade level; 4) monitoring reading levels frequently; 5) teaching vocabulary frequently, intensively and in every class; 6) improving oral reading fluency (in various classes with challenging texts) because fluency explains 25% of the differences in reading comprehension, 7) teaching comprehension strategies at a high level of intensity across disciplines; 8) teaching writing because writing has a positive impact on reading achievement; and 9) providing professional development in reading to all content teachers. Julie Świderski, Curriculum Director for the Pittsburgh Public Schools, described an impressive effort to design and implement an adolescent literacy program. Third, Ken Pugh reviewed very new data on late talkers; we know that late talkers are at risk for reading disabilities. The study found that intensive (50 minutes a day, 5 days a week, practice at home) interventions (phonological awareness, alphabetic principal, vocabulary) with 2-year-old late talkers had positive and enduring impact on the several neural pathways involved in the reading circuit.

PBIDA continues to grow and to reach out into new terrain (geographically and otherwise), but PBIDA always needs more dedicated volunteers. I hope you will read this, contact the office (www.pbida.com) to find out how you can become involved, and join us!

Nanie Flaherty
President, Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association
Letter from the Editors

Fall has been an exciting and productive time for PBIDA as we just had our 33rd Annual Fall Conference, *The Reading Brain: The Latest Research and Instructional Implications*. What is particularly exciting is that while educational practices have taken many different paths over the years, we now are starting to make educational decisions and to base instruction and interventions on what brain research tells us works. Our keynote speaker, Guinevere F. Eden, Ph.D., a Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Georgetown University Medical Center, spoke about what brain imaging research is able to teach us about reading acquisition and about the brain differences found in children and adults with dyslexia. This research also reveals important information about the effects of different treatment approaches for children with learning disabilities. John Kruidenier has summarized Dr. Eden’s presentation. Following the keynote address, conference participants had the opportunity to attend a wide variety of sessions to learn about the latest research and evidence based instruction. In this issue, we include a summary of one presentation, *Supporting Emotional Development and Regulation in Students With Learning Disabilities*. Look for more summaries in the next Focus. At the conference George Rowe, founder of the Quaker School at Horsham (TQS), received the 2011 Hoopes Award. By chance, but how fitting, our feature institution this issue is the Quaker School at Horsham. George opened the school in 1982 with three students. In 2011, the school is thriving and educating students from kindergarten through ninth grade. The school maintains its original mission to reach students with complex learning issues. In this issue you will read about how TQS uses technology, research based instructional strategies and a dedicated and highly trained staff to remediate learning deficits and to help children reach their potential in learning, social and emotional development.

We have several important events to look forward to in the Spring. The Eastern Regional Committee is co-sponsoring a Speaker Series Event with the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. At this event, a panel of experts will explore a family’s journey through dyslexia. Also in the Spring, on April 14, 2012, the Western Regional Committee is holding their second regional conference in Pittsburgh. Watch the PBIDA website for more information on this conference, *Dyslexia Today, 2012: A Conference for Professionals and Parents*, as many sessions of interest will be offered for educators, psychologists, social workers, parents and dyslexic individuals.

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Co-Editor

Advertising in Focus

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The International Dyslexia Association supports efforts to provide individuals with dyslexia appropriate instruction and to identify these individuals at an early age. The Association and the Pennsylvania Branch, however, do not endorse any specific program, speaker, product, or instructional material, noting that there are a number of such which present the critical components of instruction as defined by IDA.
On October 14, 2011, approximately 500 people—a sold out crowd—gathered at Delaware Valley Friends School for the 33rd Annual Conference, The Reading Brain: The Latest Research and Instructional Implications. Some highlights:

♦ Guinevere Eden, IDA President and Professor, Department of Pediatrics at Georgetown Medical Center, gave a wonderful talk on What Brain Imaging Tells Us about Reading Acquisition and Intervention.

♦ George Rowe, Founder of The Quaker School at Horsham, was honored with the Janet L. Hoopes Award.

♦ Attendants chose from twenty sessions; many commented that they found it difficult to choose sessions given the many interesting choices.

♦ More than thirty exhibitors filled the Exhibit Hall. (See page 18 for photos)

♦ At lunch, attendants met old and new friends; some gathered outside on the beautiful day and others met with colleagues in rooms designated specifically for tutors, psychologists, parents and so on.

PBIDA wishes to thank Delaware Valley Friends School and the conference chair, Mary Ellen Trent, for all their support and hard work in putting together this wonderful event!
What distinguishes The Quaker School from other, even similar, schools for children with learning disabilities? It is not the research-based programs or the ongoing professional development offered by well-trained teachers. It is not the beautiful, state-of-the-art building, with specially designed architectural features that is the backdrop of the learning environment. These elements are vital and positive, but the real quality is less tangible.

It is the intensity with which our faculty seeks to understand and support our students. When we admit a new student, we are not predetermining exactly which part of our program will change his life and will be most appealing. It is the willingness to continually change and adapt to the child’s changing needs. It is the network of supports, and the agility of the teachers to think differently and individually. Each teacher embraces a composite of well-trod paths as well as innovative thinking.

Children move calmly and securely through their day. The walls contain examples of hard-fought for literacy and intellectual conquests. The images are imaginative and carefully rendered. Voices are filled with humor and caring and the children are being nurtured continually.

Once fearful or anxious children now are able to take risks. Children sit through lessons they once could not tolerate because of their frustration. Accomplishments are now possible. Students discover their competencies, and begin to understand the special ways they learn. They become self-confident, secure and able to move forward in their lives.

A Brief History of TQS
In the early 1980’s a small group of Quaker educators, led by George Rowe and Beverly Morgan, grew concerned that there were capable children in many schools whose educational needs were not being met. The school opened in September 1982 with three students and two teachers who were also the co-directors. Horsham Friends Meeting provided the space. Enrollment grew steadily as accommodations and interventions were crafted to address the individual learning needs of each child. In 1989, with an enrollment of 32, the school had spread into every available corner of the Meetinghouse, and then into an unused Boy Scout cabin with attached mobile classrooms.

In response to continued requests from parents, seventh grade was added in 1994 and eighth grade in 1995. A third building was acquired from Horsham Friends Meeting, a historic two-room schoolhouse built in 1739. It was a quaint, if inefficient and inconvenient, campus. Since 1997 the school has been fully enrolled at around 70 students, students in kindergarten through ninth grade.

Five years ago the school moved into a custom-designed building. It is the first in the area designed specifically for a learning disabled population. Small rooms adjoining the main classrooms accommodate small group or individual work. Skylights provide natural light throughout the sound proof building, and assistive technology pervades the environment and curriculum.

Program and Institutional Highlights
The school’s mission is to help children develop their gifts while giving them the tools to be successful learners, and ultimately, productive, contributing members of their communities. The Quaker School delivers an individualized educational program for students with language based, nonverbal, attention and executive functioning challenges. All students have average to superior potential for learning.

Our diverse community includes children and adults from a variety of racial, cultural, religious and economic backgrounds. Many alumni are in college or are college bound. Among our college graduates are teachers, computer programmers, television news reporters, lawyers, engineers and financial planners.

Most of the teachers have advanced degrees and all have specific training in reading and/or special education. Classes are small, averaging four to six students.

The Quaker School received its first accreditation from the Pennsylvania As-
sociation of Private Academic Schools (PAPAS, now PAIS) in January 1997. We are a member of PA Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, Friends Council on Education, Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools and Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools, and the National Association of Independent Schools.

How the Programs Have Evolved

Our knowledge of how children learn has grown significantly through the richness of dedicated brain research. Our educational program has unfolded to take advantage of that new knowledge. In 2003, the entire professional staff participated in a week-long seminar on the Schools Attuned Program, developed by Mel Levine, M.D. and his colleagues from the University of North Carolina’s Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning. This training provides a common vocabulary and effective methods for recognizing, understanding and managing students with differences in learning, based on critical research synthesized from the fields of medicine, neurodevelopment, psychology and education. The Quaker School is designated by the Mind at a Time Institute as an “exemplary school”, serving as a model for other schools interested in the science of serving a “mind at a time.” As a Friends School, we honor students whose educational needs are diverse.

Language Arts:
Many of our incoming students, regardless of their age, have been unable to acquire literacy skills because their learning needs have never been properly assessed. Students subject to the core deficit of phonologic coding have never acquired what so many of their peers take for granted. That is an internalized ability to analyze the structure of words in English and apply their understanding of that structure when reading and spelling. Others who may be fluent in decoding lack comprehension skills. The school has evolved into a setting that addresses this gamut of reading needs. We have found that the students’ needs are often complementary and they assist each other in decoding and finding meaning.

About 10 years ago the majority of the staff was trained in the Wilson Language System (WRS), an Orton-Gillingham research-based program to address decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling). Teachers across the curriculum apply the strategic WRS skills and vocabulary in their classrooms. Seventy percent of the faculty has achieved Level One certification and several have attained Level Two certification. The Wilson Reading System provides teachers with the framework of skills and tools they need to help students become fluent, independent readers.

Social cognition:
Responsive Classroom is a program that supports the teaching of social/emotional skills, attitudes and values with the same structure and attention that is devoted to traditional subjects. Now our Social Skills Coordinator works with the school at large; strategies are based on the successful programs of Michelle Garcia Winner, Pam Cooke and Carol Gray.

We also provide many additional program supports and enrichments in reading and writing, science and math. Children whose talents emerge at the high end of our curricular spectrum, enjoy working with consulting specialists, while they continue to advance their basic academic, communication and advocacy skills. They become empathic as they develop personal understandings of the learning differences they encounter among peers.

Recent Developments

This fall we have added to both extremities of our program, kindergarten and ninth grade programs. Homeroom One, our youngest students’ home base, now offers programming for students who are not yet prepared for first grade work, but are ready otherwise to begin school. They have attended preschool, and come to us with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), identified as needing other than the traditional classroom environment. This setting is not only nurturing, but provides an excellent first step in a specialized academic and social education.

TAP, Transitional Academic Program, provides our oldest students an additional year in our structured and individually supportive setting. In TAP, students focus on learning skills necessary for high school and beyond. Meta-cognitive learning and organizational strategies, immersion in assistive technology, and explicit social skills programming, including regular and frequent off-campus integrated learning experiences, make for an engaging program. Our goal is for these students to gain the confidence that comes from successful participation in tasks requiring forward thinking and independence.

During 30 years of evolution, The Quaker School at Horsham has held true to its original mission and vision. Reaching students with complex learning issues that often defy other settings, TQS offers a chance for children and their parents to feel whole and acknowledged for their strengths and potential to succeed.
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Sat., March 24th, OPEN HOUSE, 9-10:30am
“Anxiety and Strategies” Lynne Siqueland Ph.D., 11am-12:30pm

Sat., April 21st, OPEN HOUSE, 9-11am
“Developmental Milestones,” Anna Baumgaertel MD, 11am-12:30pm

Thurs., May 17th, OPEN HOUSE, 9-11 am

250 Meetinghouse Rd., Horsham PA 19044 & 215.674.2875 & www.quakerschool.org
By Makopano Mutloatse, The Quaker School at Horsham

Assistive Technology at TQS

Picture the seventh grade student who reads on a second grade level but is able to fully participate in a social studies discussion about the use of the nuclear bomb during WWII. At The Quaker School at Horsham, he has kept up with the material by listening to text electronically.

Assistive Technology (AT), equipment or software designed to improve capabilities of people with disabilities, is an invaluable tool for students with learning challenges and their teachers. Assistive technology has two major functions. First, it can help compensate for the negative effect of a learning disability. A student with a reading disability, for example, may not be able to read the social studies text used in a course. A computer program with text-to-speech software that reads the text out loud enables this student to access the information in the text.

The second major function for assistive technology is to teach, to help students learn new or missing skills and concepts. The student with a reading disability, for example, might use a specially designed program to work on and improve specific reading skills.

Appropriate assistive technology is delivered at The Quaker School at Horsham by well-trained teachers to help our students achieve success and self-confidence in learning. To illustrate the point: Anthony was anxious all June about picking a book for his summer reading project. None of the novels were readable to this seventh grader who joined TQS last winter with second grade reading skills. When he learned he could listen to an audiobook, his anxiety was replaced by excitement at the chance to read Holes. Through Solo Literacy Suite, he could then write a book report on this grade-level novel, both firsts for Anthony and a boost for his esteem.

Our goal is to help students work around the roadblocks of dyslexia, ADHD and other learning disabilities, and be able to move into a high school program of their choice unhampered by their previous limitations. Assistive technology gives them the full tools to better develop reading, writing and thinking skills, which helps them become more engaged and subsequently more proficient at earlier stages of learning.

Strategically implemented technology can invigorate the higher-level development of students with learning disabilities. While a dyslexic seventh grader may be strengthening his second grade reading skills through research-based interventions, he can still participate in Social Studies conversations on "would you have dropped the nuclear bomb" because he listened to the text electronically read-aloud. A student can consider what she thinks about Anne Frank's diary instead of struggling so much to decode each sentence that the meaning takes a back seat. Students can write legible paragraphs, presenting thoughts that usually get lost in the battle to spell, through speech- to text- software.

Assistive technology fosters authentic learning by connecting students to age-appropriate material. Assistive technology stimulates mental development before the students’ reading skills allow independent access of grade-level text. Effectively integrating technology into a school program prepares students for the technology of the work world, but for students with learning disabilities it provides a more striking result. Assistive technology empowers students to think often and deeply as they prepare for a global world. At The Quaker School at Horsham, we make material accessible via interactive classroom smart boards, individual iPads, and multiple adaptive program transforming students’ abilities and self-confidence.
At The Quaker School at Horsham (TQS), thinking differently is the natural state. Demystification is a process through which our students learn to understand and accept what it is that makes them unique as learners. Here, creativity is sought and embraced much as are improved reading and comprehension scores. We work to balance the importance of both individual and community needs.

In the spirit of understanding how we learn and communicate our learning, the Learning Fair was instituted in 2010. Participation in our Learning Fair offers students an education in learning about exceptionalities; increased self-awareness; and collaborative role-modeling and participation. They are involved in the thorough preparation of a process from idea through presentation, leadership opportunities, teamwork, sustaining interest in a project over a long period of time, public speaking and creativity in exhibit and graphic design. It is the culmination of a year’s worth of research done through collaboration and teamwork.

This event has become an ideal opportunity to demonstrate and be recognized for one’s talents. Visiting the Learning Fair, one often overhears enthusiastic comments from guests:

“I thought I knew a lot about ADHD, but now I know much more!”
“I had no idea that my grandchild could explain things so clearly.”
“This is fantastic – now I really understand why this school is SO important.”

These remarks reflect on the authenticity of the students’ experiences, as they teach what they have learned. It is thrilling to see a child, usually reticent or otherwise less than optimally engaged, presenting his or her project with the confidence of one who truly understands what he or she is doing.

As students and teachers work side-by-side all year to create the content of their messages and visual displays, they develop deeper understanding and compassion for their peers whose challenges might be different from their own. They learn about their brains and appreciate how learning actually takes place for them. As they observe the various projects, they learn what makes each other tick, building respect and tolerance for differences.

One day each spring, the school becomes transformed into a science fair-like setting. Simulations, demonstrations, surveys, hands-on activities, videos, models (such as cauliflower as a brain), posters, brochures, and other paraphernalia grace the classrooms and we suspend business as usual. This year The Learning Fair will be Friday, April 27, 2012. We welcome members of the PBIDA to attend. If interested, please contact Mia Glenn (mglenn@quakerschool.org).
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HAL MALCHOW VISITS PHILADELPHIA (and suburbs)!

On October 19, 2011, Hal Malchow, co-author with his son Alex of *The Sword of Darrow*, visited Philadelphia. Hal and Alex, a student with dyslexia, wrote this book as a delightful father-and-son project when Hal was an 8 year old non-reader. Hal and Alex had together enjoyed reading aloud by Hal and joint oral story telling. One day, Alex suggested to his father that rather than telling stories together, they should “Write a book.” Over the course of many Saturdays for the next two years, Alex verbally created characters and story plot; his father then wrote the story, and together they revised and elaborated the story. *The Sword of Darrow* was published in June 2011 by Benbella Books and has received many positive reviews, especially but not only, from its intended audience, young readers ([www.swordofdarrow.com](http://www.swordofdarrow.com)). The book now has the highest Amazon customer rating of any of the top 60 bestsellers in the Children’s Action and Adventure and the Children’s Science Fiction and Fantasy categories!

Hal and Alex have generously agreed to contribute all royalties to the International Dyslexia Association, and the author is committing half of his profits to other organizations supporting learning disabilities. At the 2011 IDA conference in Chicago, Alex received the annual Remy Johnston Award; this award recognizes students with dyslexia who:

- Are worthy role models
- Refuse to use their learning difference as an excuse
- Strive for excellence
- Enrich their community

So we were very lucky to have Hal Malchow spend a day in Philadelphia! He first visited Stratford Friends School, and subsequently met with middle school students at Delaware Valley Friends School, where he described the process of writing the book with his son and answered many enthusiastic questions. It quickly became apparent that there were many aspiring authors in the group.

Julia Sadler, Mary Ellen Trent, Hal Malchow and Nanie Flaherty.

Delaware Valley Friends Middle School
Parents and educators frequently struggle to find that good middle ground between asking or expecting too little of their kids or students, and asking or expecting too much. Finding the right balance becomes even more challenging when children have learning differences that affect their ability to regulate and appropriately express their emotions. Many of them have strong and questionably appropriate reactions to even the most predictable demands and frustrations of academic life—things like completing assignments on time, mastering difficult material, and accepting constructive criticism; in turn, this makes it harder for invested adults to accurately read the reaction as either a cue to reduce expectations or a sign that the child needs firm limits coupled with encouragement to impose more self-control and follow through with the task at hand. The goal of the workshop was to suggest ways that parents and teachers could successfully reconcile their wishes to support learning-challenged kids with the need to also hold them accountable for their part in learning and in managing their emotions.

Accounting for some of the difficulty in reconciling these two objectives is what’s seen as an inherent conflict between the natural instincts underpinning parenting or care-giving and the way that many of these kids need us to respond when trying to shift the burden of controlling their emotionality away from themselves. Caring for someone typically involves alleviating his or her distress, or intervening with the stressor itself in order to eliminate it. However, in this context, that kind of action can be interpreted as a loss-of-faith message, and rob a child of the opportunity to build the “muscle” necessary for successful self-regulation and the healthier perspective that often follows.

I believe that most kids can do a lot better than their actions suggest. They do less because we ask for less. Sometimes they do less because we do too much. We need not to help less, but to help differently.

Homework is a nightmare for seventh-grader Andrew, whose poor attention, low frustration tolerance, and difficulties with comprehension understandably make it laborious. But another problem is that it’s also become a nightmare for his mother. Their evening routine looks something like this: He forgets, so she reminds, so he forgets again; she then becomes frustrated and he responds with anger; she backs down but grows resentful of his attitude while he blames her for not being able to get anything done. Wanting to avoid an escalation of the conflict, as well as wanting to make sure he at least gets his homework done, mom overlooks her son’s poor behavior and focuses on calming her son down enough for him to complete the work. He can’t help it, Andrew’s mom says to herself, thinking of his longtime struggles with learning. Besides, I feel bad for him, and don’t want to add to his stress.

Helping differently means making a shift from I must make adjustments to my reaction so that I don’t exacerbate conflict and stress my child even more to I need to respond as it feels genuine and authentic, and then help my child deal with that and respond constructively, rather than defensively or aggressively. Not only does this protect the relationship from the ravages of low grade, smoldering resentments, but better approximates what the child will experience outside of the home and outside of any supportive school environments. It is, I believe, how we teach our kids to tolerate and manage the discomforts of frustration or anxiety or criticism or disappointing others. No one likes these experiences, but the message needs to be that they are manageable. They’re also unavoidable—unless a child’s world has been trimmed of everything that could bring with it unforeseen and potentially overwhelming challenges. I also believe that it is our best shot at helping kids recognize that not being good at something is not necessarily a reason to avoid it, and that there will be times when they will need to learn things from people they don’t like and be supervised by people who don’t like them, and that these things are manageable too.

It must always be more important to the children we raise and teach than to us that their homework gets done, they get to school on time, they refrain from being disruptive, they find and keep friends. Only then are we free to let them shoulder the responsibility for making these things happen, with our unflinching support, unwavering emotional accessibility, and reframing of these challenges that expresses the following: I will never
take issue with how you feel about something, only with how you choose to deal with those feelings. I really believe you can do better (e.g., refrain from being rude on the ride home from school, curtail your tantrum over not being able to get the deadline extended, wait until after class to express your disappointment with your grade, modify your sulking so that it doesn’t define the weekend for the rest of the family) because I’ve seen you do it (these things never happen outside of the home / in other classes / in front of Grandpa / when your friends are around) – or – because I am confident that it’s within your reach. And while I respect the fact that it may always be harder for you than the next person to control your emotions when you’re upset, I believe it’s very important that I help you learn to do it well enough so that it doesn’t stop you from moving forward in your life. As a part of that, I will be looking for you to make more of an effort to respond appropriately and define your responses as choices you make instead of as things you can’t help. I will always be available to help you with this, but I’m going to try not to engage in ways that leave me picking up the slack for you or feeling disrespected. I really am on your side here and hope very much that you can see it.

Teaching kids how to cope with stressors will always be more helpful to them than taking the stressors away, but that doesn’t mean it’s easy to do. This approach to helping children who find it difficult to regulate their emotions requires a tremendous amount of self-discipline (to not go and rescue, to not allow yourself to bear the brunt of the child’s frustration), attention to detail and compassion (for discerning when a child’s level of distress is too high for them to manage successfully, necessitating a change of plan), patience (while kids test how committed you are), flexibility (for times when you need to say, “You’re right, I did need to listen better to what you were trying to tell me last night during our argument and I will be more sensitive to that in the future.”) and demonstrable benevolence (so these kids will recognize that you really are on their side, even if it doesn’t look or sound that way at first). But what a gift it is in the end, giving a child the opportunity to see reflected in what you kindly, but, as a matter of course, ask and expect of them, a larger vision of who they are and what they can do and who they can become.

(Continued from page 11)

Finally, Hal had a book signing event at the Rittenhouse Square Barnes and Noble bookstore. The supportive audience of young people, relatives of students with dyslexia and teachers enjoyed listening to Hal read from the book and answer questions.

I encourage you to consider giving this wonderful book to adults, adolescents and children for the holidays. The hardback version has been formatted to be more ‘readable’ to those with reading difficulties, and the book will be available in audio text from Learning Ally soon. Why should you buy this book? By reading this book, you can introduce readers to a thrilling tale and at the same time support the cause of dyslexia through the publisher’s donation to IDA.

A brief summary illustrates the vibrant and engaging story:

It is a dark time in the peace-loving kingdom of Sonnencrest. The country has been brutally conquered by the evil goblin empire of Globenwald. But out of this bleak state of affairs emerge two of the unlikeliest of heroes. An eccentric little princess, Babette, escapes into the forest to learn the well-guarded secrets of sorcery from the legendary good wizard, Asterux. Meanwhile, on the other side of Sonnencrest, a young man named Darrow, who is small, lame, and has never held a sword, leaves his tiny village to raise an army and take back his land. How can this pair possibly find the strength and courage to unite an entire nation and inspire others to join them?

Now don’t you want to keep reading?

Nanie Flaherty

(Continued from page 12)
Thank You to our Donors for their Generosity

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George Rowe
Recipient of the 2011 Hoopes Award

This award was established in 1993 in memory of Dr. Janet L. Hoopes, a dedicated Board member and Professor Emeritus at Bryn Mawr College. It is presented at the Annual Fall Conference to an individual or individuals in Pennsylvania or Delaware who have made a significant contribution to the education of youngsters with learning differences.

It was with great pleasure that The Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association presented the 2011 Janet L. Hoopes Award to George Rowe, founder of the Quaker School at Horsham.

During the years when George was a teacher and Head of Buckingham Friends school, he became acutely aware of several students who failed to thrive from the traditional instruction they were receiving. Realizing the need to address their unique learning styles, George found a school that is now known as the Quaker School at Horsham. In collaboration with colleague Beverly Morgan, George presided at the helm for ten years. Under his influence, the school thrived and is now celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Now in his late 80’s, George has continued to be a vital, respected, and frequent presence at the school. He actively participates in programs, meets with students to discuss methods of diverse problem-solving strategies, attends commencements, and frequents the school’s many learning and social events. In 1980, George instituted an annual party/fund raiser. This year, the money was donated to an orphanage with which the school has developed an ongoing relationship.

Under George’s initial leadership, the Quaker School at Horsham has come to be known for its warm, accepting ambiance. He has paved the path for the faculty to rescue students who must recover from the negative experiences in educational settings that are inappropriate to their needs. It is the spirit of George Rowe in the background that allows the Quaker School at Horsham to adapt, change, and grow successfully to address the distinctive learning requirements of each student.

George Rowe had a vision and a goal and he implemented and achieved both with great success. Past generations of youngsters who benefited from their educational experience thank him and future students will be forever grateful. He is a role model for all who dream seemingly impossible dreams, as, through him, they know that they can come true.
Thank You to Our Members
Thank You to our New and Renewing Members from April through September 2011

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- February 1, 2012
- March 7, 2012
- April 11, 2012
- May 2, 2012

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Stratford Friends School
Theraplay, Inc.
Voyager, a member of Cambium Learning Group
Wilson Language Training
Woodlynde School

Photography by Tom Gillem
Calendar of Events

January

Academy In Manyunk Parent & Professional Open House, January 12, 9:00-11:00. Register at www.aimpa.org


Benchmark School Admissions Open House, January 5, 9:00-11:00. Register at benchmarkschoolinfo@benchmarkschool.org or 610-565-3741.

Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, January 18, 9-11 AM. To register contact Kathy Barry at 610-640-4150, X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.

The Quaker School at Horsham Open House, January 21, 9-10:30 AM. "Assesments and Evaluations," 11:00-12:30 PM.

The Luma Center for Development and Learning, VFES. For information on the following programs, contact Nancy Allard, 610-296-6725 X183 or lumacenter.org.

- Social Skills/Executive Function – Clubs for 8-12 year-olds -- Click-It Builders Club for boys and Create-It Club for Girls, offering opportunities to practice social interaction skills and teamwork while having fun.
- Tutoring/Academic Support – Private coaching and academic/study skills support groups.
- Early Learning Programs-- Supportive, small-group weekday programs for children ages 3-6.
- Social Skills – Groups
- Foundations is a M-F morning program for 4-6 year olds that includes three key components: early literacy and pre-handwriting skills, play/social skills.
- Speech and Language Explorers is a M-F morning program for 4-6 year olds that provides a specialized, language intensive experience to children.
- Nemours BrightStart! is a specialized pre-reading program for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children who show early signs of dyslexia or may be at risk for reading challenges.
- Super K’s is a M/W/F afternoon group for 5-6 year olds who attend morning pre-k/kindergarten and need extra support in the areas of language, motor, sensory and social skills.
- Playstars is a T/TH afternoon group for 3-4 year olds who need further development of language, play and social interaction skills.

Valley Forge Educational Services, Children Who Learn Differently Series, Session 3: Paying Attention, January 18, 6:00-8:00 pm, $25.00. To register, contact Nancy Allard, 610-296-6725 X183.

February

Academy In Manyunk Open House for Parents and Professionals, February 12, 1:00-3:00 PM, Register at www.aimpa.org. Snow date February 26.


Benchmark School Admissions Open House, February 2, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.

Benchmark School Admissions Open House, February 2, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.

Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, February 8, 9:00-11:00 AM. Contact Kathy Barry, 610-640-4150 X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.

The Quaker School at Horsham Open House for Professionals, February 23, 9:00-11:00 AM,
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Kristie McCollom, Alumna

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Steve Graham, Currey Ingram Professor of Special Education and Literacy, Vanderbilt University

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Admissions Open Houses
January 5  February 2  March 1  April 12  May 3  May 24  (9-11a.m.)
Please register: 610.565.3741
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March

Academy In Manyunk Open House for Parents and Professionals, March 13, 9:00-11:00 AM, Register at www.aimpa.org.


Benchmark School Admissions Open House, March 1, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.

March

Benchmark School Admissions Open House For Professionals, March 7, 8:30-10:30 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.

Dr. Bill Stixrud: Neuropsychological Assessment of Learning Disorders and Working Memory, Academy In Manyunk, March 9, 9:00-3:00 PM. Register at www.aimpa.org.

Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, March 18, 1:00-3:00 PM. Contact Kathy Barry, 610-640-4150, X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.

The Quaker School at Horsham Open House, March 24, 9:00-10:30 AM, “Anxiety and Strategies to Help,” 11:00-12:30 PM. To register, contact Makopano Mutloatse, 215-674-2875, X14 or makomutloatse@quakerschool.org.

Valley Forge Educational Services, Children Who Learn Differently Series, Session 5, Building Home-School Alliances, March 21, 6:00-8:00 PM, $25.00, To register, contact Nancy Allard, 610-296-6725 X183

April

Academy In Manyunk Open House for Parents and Professionals, April 18, 9:00-11:00 AM, Register at www.aimpa.org.

Dr. Dan Berch: Why is Math So Hard for Some Children, Academy In Manyunk, April 20, 9:00-3:00 PM. Register at www.aimpa.org.

Fundations Level One Workshop, Academy In Manyunk, April 27. Register at www.aimpa.org.

Benchmark School Admissions Open House, April 12, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.

Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, April 4, 9:00-11:00 AM. Contact Kathy Barry, 610-640-4150, X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.

The Quaker School at Horsham Open House, April 21, 9:00-10:30 AM, “Developmental Milestones,” 11:00-12:30 PM. To register, contact Makopano Mutloatse, 215-674-2875, X14 or makomutloatse@quakerschool.org.

The Quaker School at Horsham, Learning Fair, April 27, 9:45—12:00 PM. To register, contact Makopano Mutloatse, 215-674-2875, X14 or makomutloatse@quakerschool.org.

(Continued on page 25)
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Developing a Neural Network: The Acquisition of Reading

Reading is not an innate process; it must be learned. The areas on the left side of the brain in the neural network for reading were originally designed for other, nonreading tasks. They must be retrained to handle reading. Research suggests, for example, that the word form area is in a part of the brain originally used to recognize objects and, especially, faces. While face recognition occurs bilaterally (at the same spot in both the left and right sides of the brain), the area on the left side is re-directed to the task of letter and word recognition.

As children learn to read, brain areas used for other functions are re-directed for use in reading. FMRI research shows that a neural network for reading develops and changes over a long period of time as children age and acquire reading skills. The neural reading network of 6 to 9-year-olds consists of fewer areas in the brain than the more developed neural network of 9 to 18-year-old readers. In addition, those areas active in 9 to 18-year-olds are stronger (more activated during reading) in 20 to 23-year-olds. Dr. Eden also noted that the neural network for reading changes its configuration as reading develops. While initially activating areas in both the left and right sides of the brain, it gradually moves to predominantly the left side. It also moves forward from the back of the brain to include more areas in the front as reading skills develop.

Reading Differences: Precocious Readers

The neural network for reading is not as “hard-wired” as other, more innate tasks, such as vision. For this reason, the network for reading is subject to more variation across individuals and cultures. Chinese readers, using a largely logographic writing system where a word is represented by one symbol instead of a string of letters, have a different neural network for reading. They activate more motor areas of the brain (those areas controlling movement), perhaps because they copy logographs extensively to learn them.

Dr. Eden described results from the brain scan of a precocious or hyperlexic reader at her Center, a boy with exceptionally high reading scores for his age, who learned to read at an early age without instruction. Although language-delayed, he was reading when he was 3 years old, even before he was speaking. This boy’s fMRI showed more activity in the word recognition areas of the brain but also, surprisingly, increased activity in visual areas on the right side of the brain. His neural network was clearly different from other children’s.

Reading Differences: Dyslexic Readers

Dr. Eden presented a summary of fMRI research done with another group with reading differences, those with dyslexia. While typical readers activate three main areas when reading (areas associated with word formation, pronunciation or phonological assembly, and semantics), there is underactivation in the word formation and phonological assembly areas among dyslexics. This underactivation in the back areas of the left side of the brain occurs in dyslexics speaking any of the alphabetic languages (languages such as English, French, and Italian that use an alphabet to represent words). In a study conducted by Eden and her colleagues, for example, they found that the part of the brain responsible for associating letters with sounds (phonological assembly) was underactivated in those with dyslexia during a phonological processing task. This task involved phoneme deletion: hearing a word and then saying it back without its first sound (e.g., “cat” becomes “at”).

Important studies by Dr. Eden and her colleagues have shown that when those with dyslexia are taught to read using an intensive and effective program that focuses on letter-word recognition and phonological awareness, their word recognition not only improves but there are also changes in their neural networks for reading. As might be expected, there is increased activation in the areas on the left side of the brain that are associated with phonological processing in good readers. There is also, however, much more activity on the right side of the brain in areas similar to those on the left used for phonological processing. This is a sign of accommodation by the right hemisphere.

Dr. Eden concluded her keynote address by describing a final study from the Center for the Study of Learning in which the same intensive reading instruction described above led to structural changes in the brain. The intervention, used with 11 dyslexic youths, led to an increase in brain volume (gray matter) in several areas of the brain including regions responsible for memorization. Taken together, the research studies described by Dr. Eden during her address clearly demonstrate that the neural network for reading is established as soon as individuals begin to learn to read in areas of the brain that are also involved in processing input from many sensory modalities. This network changes as reading develops, both in configuration and level of activation, leading to structural changes in the brain.
FEBRUARY 2012: Stephanie Gottwald

RAVE-O Two Day Professional Training • Tuesday & Wednesday, February 14-15, 2012 • 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Stephanie Gottwald is research coordinator at the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University. Ms. Gottwald holds a masters in linguistics and is completing a Ph.D. in language and literacy. She has conducted numerous workshops on reading fluency instruction and assessment and on reading disabilities for educators across the country and is the author of research articles on reading and reading disabilities.

MARCH 2012: William R. Stixrud, Ph.D.

Friday, March 9, 2012 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

William R. Stixrud, Ph.D., is a clinical neuropsychologist who has been in private practice since 1985. He is the director of The Stixrud Group, a group practice specializing in the neuropsychological assessment of children, adolescents, and adults with learning, attentional, social, and/or emotional disorders. The following two topics will be presented in this all day workshop:

Neuropsychological Assessment of Learning Disorders and The Neuropsychology of How the Brain Remembers What it Learns and How to Help Kids Who Can’t Remember

APRIL 2012: Dr. Daniel B. Berch

Friday, April 20, 2012 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Daniel B. Berch is Professor of Special Education and Applied Developmental Science at the University of Virginia’s Curry School of Education. He has published articles on children’s numerical cognition and mathematical learning disabilities. Dr. Berch was invited to serve as an ex officio member of the U.S. Department of Education’s National Mathematics Advisory Panel commissioned by President George W. Bush, and is currently a member of the National Center for Learning Disabilities Professional Advisory Board. In his lecture, Dr. Berch will discuss:

Why Is Math So Hard For Some Children?

MAY 2012: Dr. Steve Graham

Saturday, May 5, 2012 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Steve Graham is the Currey-Ingram Professor of Special Education and Literacy, a chair he shares with Karen R. Harris, at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College of Education. He is the former editor of Exceptional Children and Contemporary Educational Psychology and has written over 250 publications. In his lecture, Dr. Graham will discuss:

Evidence Based Practices in Writing - Don’t Sweat the Common Core Blue

JUNE 2012: Margie Gillis Ed.D.

Monday, June 11, 2012 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Margie Gillis’ work focuses on building teachers’ knowledge and skills to increase their effectiveness teaching all aspects of reading. She is past-president of the Connecticut Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, the Northeast Regional Representative for IDA and the President and co-founder of Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities. In her lecture, Dr. Gillis will discuss:

Creating Language-Rich Home and School Environments for Young Children

For more information and pricing contact Karen Keesey at Kkeesey@aimpa.org

Please Register Online at www.aimpa.org

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May

Academy In Manyunk Open House for Parents and Professionals, May 9, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at www.aimpa.org.
Dr. Steven Graham: Evidence Based Practices in Writing—Don’t Sweat the Common Core Blues, Academy In Manyunk, May 5, 9:00-3:00 PM. Register at www.aimpa.org.
Benchmark School Admissions Open House, May 3 and May 24, 9:00-11:00 AM. Register at 610-565-3741 or benchmarkinfo@benchmarkschool.org.
Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, May 2 and May 30, 9:00-11:00 AM. Contact Kathy Barry, 610-640-4150, X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.
The Quaker School at Horsham Open House, May 17, 9:00-11:00 AM. To register, contact Makopano Mutloatse, 215-674-2875, X14 or makomutloatose@quakerschool.org.
Valley Forge Educational Services, Understanding Learning and Learners, May 18, 8:30-3:30 PM. Presenter Maria Kreiter. Cost $125. Act 48. To register contact Maria Kreiter, 610-296-6725 X168.

June

Dr. Margie Gillis: Creating Language-Rich Home and School Environments for Young Children, Academy In Manyunk, June 11, 9:00-3:00 PM. Register at www.aimpa.org
Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Open House, June 27, 9:00-11:00 AM. Contact Kathy Barry, 610-640-4150, X2160 or Kathy.barry@dvfs.org.
Orton-Gillingham Training for Teachers of Adolescents, Delaware Valley Friends School, June 13-22. Contact Sara Rivers at sara.rivers@dvfs.org.
Teaching All Kinds of Minds, Valley Forge Educational Services, June 18-June 20, 8:30-3:30, 17 ACT 48 Hours, $375 before 5/31, $399 after 5/31. Register at www.vfes.net.

NEWS FROM PBIDA’S EASTERN REGION

The Eastern Regional Committee of PBIDA has been busy planning our next Speaker Series Event for the Spring of 2012. PBIDA is excited to be co-sponsoring our next event with CHOP's Reach Out and Read Program. Reach Out and Read is a program in which general pediatricians give out age appropriate books at each well visit to children, particularly to those impoverished children who might not otherwise be exposed to the world of literature. The PBIDA presentation will utilize a panel of experts to explore a family's journey through dyslexia, from early warning signs through diagnosis, to intervention.
Save the Date for the Next IDA Conference in Pittsburgh!

*Dyslexia Today, 2012: A Conference for Professionals and Parents* will be held in Pittsburgh on April 14, 2012. This will be the second Pittsburgh IDA conference. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Jan Hasbrouck, will present “Reading FAST or Reading WELL? Let's Take Another Look at Fluency.” Dr. Hasbrouck is known nationally for her research in reading fluency, academic assessment and interventions. She worked as a reading specialist and literacy coach for 15 years and then taught as a professor at the University of Oregon and at Texas A&M University. She works now as an Educational Consultant and Trainer.

Other sessions during the remainder of the day will include topics of interest to teachers, educational and school psychologists, school social workers, parents of dyslexic students, and dyslexic high school students.

Some of the topics that will be presented include:

- Preparing for College
- The Educational Implications of Assessments
- Co-existing Conditions with Dyslexia
- Helping Dyslexic Students Succeed in Math
- The Use of Assistive Technology in the Classroom and at Home
- The Social and Emotional Impacts of Dyslexia

More information about the conference will be available in January at www.pbida.org

SAVE THE DATE!

PBIDA’s 34th Annual Fall Conference
October 5, 2012
Woodlynde School, Strafford, PA

Keynote Address by Eric Tridas, M.D.

Eric Tridas, MD, FAAP is the President Elect of the International Dyslexia Association. Dr. Tridas is also the State Medical Director for Pediatric Health Choice Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care (P-PEC) facilities. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Society for Developmental Pediatrics, the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine and the Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics.

Dr. Tridas is the director of The Tridas Center for Child Development. He is a board certified pediatrician who specializes in the diagnosis and management of developmental and behavioral conditions such as ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and other neurodevelopmental and behavioral problems.

Dr. Tridas has resided in the Tampa Bay area since 1982. He completed his fellowship in Ambulatory Pediatrics, child development and learning disabilities at the Children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston. During that time he held an appointment as a Teaching Fellow at Harvard University Medical School. Dr. Tridas completed his residency in Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Buffalo. He graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine in 1977.
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Wednesday, January 18
9:00-11:00 AM
Wednesday, February 8
9:00-11:00 AM
Sunday, March 18
1:00-3:00 PM
Admissions presentation and tour.
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February 14 • March 13 • April 10 • May 8

ADMISSIONS OPEN HOUSE FOR PROFESSIONALS, 8:45 a.m.
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