

Academic Language Therapy Association®
Dedicated to the remediation of written-language skills.

bul•le•tin

Winter

2002

The bul•le•tin is a triannual publication of the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), and is free to its membership.

Academic Language Therapy Association Spring Conference and Annual Meeting April 6, 2002



**Dr. Marcia K. Henry, ALTA
Spring Conference speaker**

This year's Academic Language Therapy Association Spring Conference and Meeting promises to be a day of inspiration and ideas, featuring two keynote speakers. The first is Dr. Marcia K. Henry. Dr. Henry's topic *What's in a Word? The Decoding/Spelling Continuum Throughout the Grades* will emphasize the role word origin and word structure play in integrated decoding and spelling instruction. A framework for curriculum and instruction will guide participants through the continuum. Her discussion will include the Anglo-Saxon letter-sound correspondences (phonics) found in the primary grades and morphemes (prefixes, suffixes, and roots) found in words of Latin and Greek origin, which are useful in reading upper grade literature and content area text. Dr. Henry, with 42 years of experience in the field of dyslexia, is well known for her extensive research and publications.

The afternoon keynote speaker is Lucy Smith, CALT. Ms. Smith is the Director of Texas Hope Literacy Inc. She started HOPE (Helping Others Pursue Education) in 1997 with a handful of volunteers and students at the South Dallas County Jail and at the Gatesville unit in Central Texas. The goals of HOPE have been and continue to be:

- Provide SOLUTIONS to widespread and debilitating illiteracy inside prisons and juvenile detention centers.
- Reduce RECIDIVISM. Many offenders attribute illiteracy as the primary cause of recidivism.
- Improve AWARENESS of the world through readings of faith-based literature.

See Spring Conference on Page 3

Mark Your Calendars!
The ALTA Annual Spring
Conference is April 6, 2002.
Hillier School of Highland Park
Presbyterian Church
3821 University • Dallas, Texas



ALTA assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions. To submit news items or articles, which are subject to editing for space and style, or for advertising or other information, contact:

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Inside the bul•le•tin

- **ALTA Centers
Council News**
Page 3
- **Dues and Don'ts**
Page 4
- **Language First,
Then Reading**
Page 6
- **What Does an IDA
Board Member Do?**
Page 8
- **A Model for
Intervention: University
and Local Schools
Partnership**
Page 14

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Centers Council

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Valerie Tucker

Future Exam Dates

June 1, 2002, at the Neuhaus Center, Bellaire, Texas.

June 12, 2002, at the Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas, Lubbock, Texas.

September 28, 2002, at the Center for Youth & Families, Little Rock, Arkansas.

October 5, 2002, Center for Literacy & Learning, Abilene, Texas.

October 12, 2002, Stratford Friends School, Havertown, Pennsylvania.

President's Message



**Martha Sibley, CALT
ALTA President**

Dear Members,

Has anyone ever asked you, "Why should I join the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA)?"

Why are *you* a member of ALTA?

I have listened to others and have asked myself the same question. Most answers started with the same two ideas. First, our instructor involved us as students and gave us a deep appreciation for those who had gone before us in the profession. Secondly, after completing our training, a natural step was to align us with others whom had invested their lives in similar intensive training.

Each day I feel that support as I take telephone calls from parents. One may be just beginning the journey toward success, while another has tried everything and is "at the end of the rope." Another may be calling to express appreciation for the therapist teaching her child, and interspersed are many calls from schools wanting help with their dyslexia programs.

After each call, I am thankful for ALTA's vigilance over standards of excellence, and the strong foundation of knowledge and conviction upon which I can base my answers. I am aware, too, of my relationship with other professionals who are answering the same type of questions in much the same ways. I cannot imagine being a therapist without this source of strength and camaraderie.

So, how *do* we answer when a novice asks, "Why should I join ALTA?"

Of course, there are the obvious advantages — a newsletter and web site to keep us informed, certification for clarity of credentials, the Spring Conference to keep us current and connected. Beyond these, however, ALTA provides a mentoring environment that makes the learning curve smoother and faster for new therapists. ALTA helps members to maintain connections no matter how isolated some may be, and to feel a sense of stability even as the only therapist in a community or school.

ALTA is taking important steps to strengthen those connections and to make services more readily available.

- We have challenged our Training Centers to be proactive in introducing ALTA to their new therapists and to encourage them to begin their career as a therapist with professional guidance and support.
- The Examination/Registration process is being refined. We are trying to provide more exam dates in increased number of locations.
- Centers are being encouraged to apply as testing sites to make it more convenient for their therapists to take the registration/certification exam upon completion of the course.

See **President's Message** on Page 5

ALTA CENTERS COUNCIL NEWS

By Valerie Tucker, CALT, QI

Academic Language Therapy Association Centers Council (ALTA CC) had record attendance at its most recent meeting in conjunction with the International Dyslexia Association Conference. The majority of the accredited centers were well represented both in person and by report.


Topics of interest included:

1. The announcement by IDA that it will sponsor *The Alliance for Accreditation and Certification of Structured Language Education-Promoting Standards For Quality Professional Education*. ALTA CC is a founding member of this alliance.
2. The Accreditation and Review Committee announced that site visits have begun for accredited centers.
3. The Curriculum/Research Committee has written a comprehensive document entitled *Competency Areas for Academic Language Therapy*. This is intended to assure consistency among centers regarding competencies/terminology and to act as a

resource listing for centers to share lectures and other forms of training materials. This document will be updated on an annual basis.

4. The Scholarship Committee has announced that ALTA CC will award three \$300 scholarships this year at the April 2002 meeting.
5. The Board of Directors has added two non-voting representatives. These representatives are from The IDA and The International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC). We welcome their expertise and know that they will be positive additions to ALTA CC.

Please remember that Annual Reports and committee lists were due on December 1, 2001. Dues were to be paid by December 30, 2001.

The next scheduled meeting of the Centers Council is April 5, 2002, at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. The Board will meet from 1-2 pm followed by a full Council meeting until 4:00pm. 

Continued Spring Conference from cover

Today the program has expanded to Lyle B. Medlock Juvenile Treatment Facility in South Dallas. Implementation at the Segovia Prison in Segovia, Texas and Michaels Prison in Palestine, Texas will begin within the next two months. Other programs under her direction are HOPEAchievers, a juvenile preventative program and HOPELights, a preventative elementary program where children are referred as being at-risk. Ms. Smith is a nationally recognized speaker and has been featured in many newspapers as well as on National Public Radio.

On an added note, it is with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to Texas Scottish Rite Hospital (TSRH) as our Conference facility. In the past years, TSRH has generously donated its facility to ALTA. However, with our ever-growing membership, TSRH can no longer accommodate everyone. While we will miss the warmth and beauty of TSRH, we are excited by the growth of ALTA's membership. This year's conference will be held on Saturday, April 6, 2002,* at The Hillier School of Highland Park Presbyterian Church, 3821 University Boulevard, Dallas, Texas. For the first time, the conference is open to ALTA members and non-members. Non-members may register by calling the ALTA National Office at (972) 233-9107.

* There was a misprint in the 2001-2002 ALTA Directory on the inside front cover. The correct conference date is April 6, 2002. 

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Dues and Don'ts

ALTA Revises Dues Structure

The dues structure of the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) has been increased only once since ALTA's inception. That increase was six years ago. ALTA has been able to keep its dues at a level far below those of most other professional organizations, and we expect to be able to maintain this comparative position. For the past two years, the Board of Directors has faced the dilemma of having more expenses than revenue.

services in addition to maintaining current professional support. The following factors were situations that the Board considered.

- A large part of ALTA's budget is spent on **administrative support services available to members daily during business hours**. This affords members the opportunity to receive accurate information in a timely manner, compilation and distribution of a directory of individual therapists, coordination of conferences, newsletter publication, membership renewal, and exam registration.
- We have **allied with other professional organizations** to promote consistent standards, national recognition as a profession, research, inclusion of individual members in a national directory, referrals, and a communication network with others in the same type of educational pursuits.
- An additional financial endeavor is the **revision of the examination** in response to ALTA's responsibility in the Alliance as a certifying body for individuals from various training programs.
- ALTA offers some financial support of **local ALTA Professional Groups (ALTA Chapters)**.
- As exhibitors at conferences, ALTA members share information about ALTA and provide information for referral of individual therapists. **Exhibiting in additional venues continues to be an invaluable opportunity.**
- Through the **web site**, we are able to provide information for the members as well as the public.
- The **web site and telephone helplines**

provide answers to a wide range of questions. Such requests are rising exponentially. Although this certainly is a welcome response, this service requires additional financial support.

- The members of ALTA have attained a sophisticated level of knowledge that demands **nationally recognized presenters at conferences** to maintain high standards. Providing this quality is financially demanding.

After conducting an informal survey of the dues structure of comparative organizations, your Board is recommending the following dues structure.

- Student Members \$30
- Active Members \$60
- Qualified Instructors \$80

If you are unable to attend the Annual Conference on April 6, 2002, please use the ballot inserted in your conference registration mailing to vote on the recommended dues structure. (The ballot also includes the slate of nominated officers recommended by the Nominating Committee.) Mail your ballot to ALTA National Office, 13140 Coit Road, Suite 320, LB 120, Dallas, TX, 75240-5737. ✉



ALTA Exhibits Chair Diana Bass and Vice President/Public Relations Joanne White share information about ALTA and provide information for referral of individual therapists.

The Board conducted a careful analysis of ALTA's past and current financial records and projected expected financial responsibilities before considering any change. The Board then concluded that, in order to continue providing members with quality services, revenues must be increased. The Board unanimously voted to recommend a revision in the dues structure.

It is always difficult to make the decision to increase dues. The Board, however, was faced with the reality of needing to expand



ALTA member Judy Brubacher works to share CEU opportunities with fellow ALTA members.

Continued President's Message from page 2

- We have allied with other professional organizations to promote consistent standards, national recognition as a profession, research, inclusion in a national directory, and a communication network with others with the same type of educational pursuits.
- Part of ALTA's responsibility in this Alliance (see page 4 for related article) will be the certification of individuals from various training programs, requiring us to complete the revision of the examination, which has been needed for some time.

As we look at our past, we realize the multitude of decisions, adjustments and innovations that comprise what we have become. As we look ahead, we realize our responsibility toward our students and see multiple channels of opportunity for making ALTA what tomorrow's students will need us to be.

In responding to current opportunities to expand and advance, and recognizing opportunities that are on the horizon, your board is grappling with many complex issues. Rather than allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed with the sheer number of projects needing to be done, we are attempting to take them one at a time, analyze our role, and plan toward the necessary adjustments.

Achievement and accomplishment always come with a price. Many of your board members and committee members have already invested a huge part of themselves and their time planning and implementing many of those changes. The board has come to grips with the need to undergird this work financially if we are to accomplish the task before us in the next few years.

ALTA has been able to keep its dues at a level far below those of most other profes-

sional organizations, and we expect to maintain this comparative position. A careful analysis of our past and current financial records, however, has made it clear that the cost of impending improvements in the examination process, participating in necessary research to prove rationale for what we know is necessary for our students, and maintaining our high standards necessitates a change in income.

I urge you to read carefully the articles in this newsletter that explain the decisions about the Alliance, the opportunities to participate in some national efforts, and the recommended changes in ALTA's Bylaws. I encourage you to respond by voting either during the annual meeting at the Spring Conference, April 6, 2002, or by mail if you cannot attend the Spring Conference.

It is with great pride that I represent all of you at meetings within ALTA and with other groups. I know that each of you has a high level of training, commitment to students, and dedication to the long-range goals upon which ALTA was founded. Some of those goals will soon be reality. There will always be more goals to set and dreams to dream to make life better for our students whose courage and persistence is matched only by yours!

Being able to identify with individuals like you is one of the main reasons I am a member of ALTA! ✍

**Access the ALTA
bulletin On-line**

You may now access the Academic Language Therapy Association newsletter, ALTA bulletin, on-line. Go to ALTA's web site at www.ALTAread.org and click on the title "RESOURCES" in the heading. You will then come to the Newsletters page. There is a large banner-type heading announcing the availability of the ALTA bulletin. Click on the icon that says: "click here." The newsletter in its entirety will be downloaded to your computer. The newsletter, which is in Adobe Acrobat PDF and has numerous pages, will take several minutes to download.

Neuhaus

Language First, Then Reading

By Nell Carvell, MA, CALT, QI

In 1993 Mike Rice, President, Texas Instruments Foundation in Dallas, approached Jamie Williams, CALT, QI, Director of the Southern Methodist University Learning Therapy Program, with a request. “We need someone to write a phonics program for four-year-olds in a Head Start center,” he began. “We have provided social services for the parents and families, met all health and nutrition needs for the children, but their academic skills are not showing improvement.”

Williams asked Nell Carvell, CALT, QI, if she would join her on the project; thus the *Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP)* was born. Carvell and Williams determined the children’s primary need to be in the area of language — both oral and written. Working in conjunction with the classroom teachers, they developed a program that would be interactive, age-appropriate, and compatible with the Head Start focus on social and emotional development. Williams left SMU and the LEAP project in 1995 in order to pursue further education. Carvell continues to work with SMU, Head Start and the Texas Instruments Foundation on this project.

The children in the pilot program attended the Margaret Cone Head Start Center in Dallas. Their language skills as measured by the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test*, ranged from seriously to moderately delayed

upon entry into the program. Tying together a background in preschool education and special education (focused on dyslexia), Carvell designed a framework for modeling grammar and a rich vocabulary as part of the classroom routine. LEAP incorporated a variety of children’s literature and poster charts as well as hands-on experiences to stimulate interest, build vocabulary, and increase receptive and expressive language skills. Other areas of focus included phonological awareness (nursery rhymes and recognizing words as a unit of speech), and single letter recognition.

Two other important pieces of the LEAP process are the Teacher Training program and the Volunteer component. After the first year, 1993-94, the Cone Center teachers attended a language enhancement class at SMU designed by Cindy Hipes, CALT. The impact of this course was evident not only in the teachers’ communication skills in the classroom, but in their obviously improved self-esteem. Since that first class, Connie Peters, CALT, has revised the teacher-training course. To date more than 750 teachers have participated in the course.

Neall Rose, CALT, has served as the Volunteer Coordinator since 1994. The volunteers read to the children and lead language activities from LEAP each week. Many of the volunteers are ALTA members or former teachers, but it is not a prerequisite to volunteering. The teachers and children’s enthusiastic support, as well as the number of successive years many volunteers have participated, can measure the success of the volunteer program.

For the past several years, the Cone children have scored well above the national norm on standardized tests given at the kindergarten level at Frazier Elementary, the local elementary school. Scores




Nell Carvell works with students using the Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP).

improved from the 30th percentile in 1992 to the 70th percentile in recent years. They appear to maintain this ‘edge’ throughout the Frazier School. A new study will follow Spanish-speaking and ESL students from another LEAP/Head Start Center, the Jerry R. Junkins Center, as they enter school in the Dallas Independent School District.

The Bush administration, both at the gubernatorial and presidential level, has been supportive of this effort. On several occasions, First Lady Laura Bush has recognized achievements of the Cone Center children and LEAP. From a large grant from the Texas Education Agency in 1999, to the current Head Start and Ready to Read grants in Texas, LEAP is affecting the lives of children, teachers and communities in positive ways.

The most recent support is the awarding of a \$1.5 million grant to SMU. This money, from the Texas Instruments Foundation, will create a chair of Reading Research to insure the continuation of this project. The collaboration of a corporate foundation, a private university, and a federally funded program is serving as a model across the United States demonstrating that by working together, we can make a difference in the lives of children born in poverty.

For more information, please visit www.leapsandbounds.org. 



Nell Carvell, CALT, QI, co-author of the Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP) visits with Connie Peters, CALT who has worked to revise the teacher-training component of LEAP.

Update on Alliance

By Martha Sibley, CALT and Elizabeth Cantrill, CALT

A few years ago, the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) formed the Accreditation and Certification Committee to promote research-based and clinically proven practices for training teachers of students with dyslexia. They were charged with finding ways to standardize the accrediting of training programs, and the certification of individuals, and to make it possible for clients to connect with appropriate instruction. Since the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), the Academic Language Therapy Association Centers Council (ALTA CC), the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC), and The Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators (AOGPE) were already training, accrediting and/or certifying professionals, it was proposed that some type of "Alliance" be formed to preserve this experience and unify the efforts and standards.

On Thursday, October 25, 2001 during the IDA Conference in Albuquerque, representatives from each of the participating organizations made a presentation about the proposed Alliance and answered questions from the audience of approximately 50-75 people. Later, these same members met with representatives of IDA. Emerson Dickman, chairperson of the IDA Accreditation and Certification Committee, distributed a copy of the motion passed by the IDA Board to approve the establishment of a "Board in Formation." The purpose of this action was to lay the foundation for formal collaboration of ALTA, ALTA CC, IMSLEC, and AOGPE under the sponsorship of IDA. This officially allowed the "Board in Formation" to choose a name, incorporate, and begin meeting to write bylaws, policies, and procedures. The "Board in Formation" will serve as a bridge between the IDA

committee and the groups and is technically the organization until incorporation is accomplished and all guidelines written.

During this meeting, several names for the "Board in Formation" were suggested. After deliberation concerning how well the name communicates the purpose of the group and indicates its basic philosophies, the following name and explanatory tag line were chosen:


Alliance for Accreditation and Certification of Structured Language Education
Promoting standards for quality professional preparation
Sponsored by IDA

Current issues to be considered by the "Board in Formation" are:

1. Incorporation
 2. Development of the first year's budget
 3. IDA's identification and quantification of its staff contributions
 4. Contribution from each organization to fund the Alliance's beginnings
 5. Identification of initial projects
 - Directory of accredited training programs and certified individuals
 - Colleges and universities data base
- Research on Multisensory Structured Language Education (IMSLEC has begun this process, and would like to involve other interested organizations. Some education researchers and practitioners believe that because these strategies are embedded in the curriculum they are an integral part of the instruction. Others insist, however, that studies have not sufficiently separated out such strategies from other variables in order to prove efficacy.)

6. It is estimated that the Alliance, when officially organized, will conduct at least one project a year. This is consistent with the contributing foundation, IDA, that has underwritten the organization of the "Board in Formation" to date.

IDA conceives the structure of the Alliance as having sponsorship, but not oversight. Current plans for the Alliance point toward its board being comprised of two representatives from each of the participating organizations, including IDA. At present, IMSLEC, ALTA, and ALTA CC have committed, and AOGPE is participating in planning. Each organization will have committed to the Alliance upon the signing of the incorporation papers.

The establishment of the "Board in Formation" in preparation for the Alliance is a landmark decision in the history of our profession. It will undoubtedly provide a springboard for national recognition of our discipline. We also expect it to enhance services because of additional research and teaching opportunities. Uniting ALTA with the other professional organizations that have similar goals and standards should help us achieve our purpose of promoting high quality instructional services for students with dyslexia. 

Advertisements and Professional Services

The Academic Language Therapy Association and the Academic Language Therapy Association Foundation neither recommends nor endorses any specific school, institution, instructional program, or material. The Academic Language Therapy Association reserves the right to refuse any advertisement that is not consistent with the association.

What Does an IDA Board Member Do?

By Lenox Reed, CALT, Qualified Instructor

Lenox Reed, CALT, QI and Founding Director, Neuhaus Education Center, was re-elected to a three-year term on the Board of Trustees of The International Dyslexia Association. In this article, she shares information about her responsibilities as an IDA board member.

As an Academic Language Therapy Association member who is beginning her second term on the International Dyslexia Association board, I would like to describe my responsibilities. Trustees are expected to attend board meetings held the week of the annual conference and the last weekend in April in Baltimore. All of us serve on several committees that “meet” mostly through conference calls. Some of the committees find time to meet during the conference week or “around the edges” at the April meeting.

I have served on the Education and Publications Committees and am currently on the Membership and Development Committees, and Chair of the Information and Referral (I&R) Committee. I am pleased to say that an ALTA member new on the IDA board will also be serving on the I&R Committee—Valerie Tucker from Dallas. Will Noel from Houston is a new IDA board member who serves on the Membership Committee.

The I&R Committee is responsible for updating the Fact Sheets that are sent out by the national office in response to requests for information. The committee also responds to requests with ideas for future Fact Sheets and finding authors for them. There are more than a dozen fact sheets and 20 articles from the journal *Perspectives* available to the public for free. Recently the fact sheet, *Multisensory Teaching* was updated as was *How to Find and Select an Academic Therapist*. Topics for future Fact Sheets being considered are accommodations in the regular classroom, the genetics of dyslexia and topics for adults with dyslexia. Producing Spanish translations of current Fact Sheets is being investigated. One of the committee’s goals

is to record all Fact Sheets on audiotape and CD-ROM in English and Spanish. The requests for information run an average of 50 inquiries a day usually by telephone and email. Additionally, the committee contributes ideas about editing and content on the IDA web site.

The high demand for information leads me to the Development and Membership Committees. There are approximately 13,000 members in IDA, and over 40 branches. IDA is funded with private donations, membership dues, foundation grants, sale of publications, and conferences. Not only does membership in IDA benefit an educator such as an ALTA member, but also it helps support the organization and its branches. As many of you know, our conferences are first rate and considered by many to be the cutting-edge research on reading and addressing the needs of the at-risk student. The *Annals of Dyslexia* is the only peer-reviewed journal that addresses dyslexia and multisensory, structured language teaching. Many ALTA members may already be on the Referral for Services database that has listings for over 700 academic therapists and tutors. (Names are given out by I&R services when requested.) In addition, most of you know about the IDA Accreditation proposal that is in process.

IDA exists as the bridge between the latest research findings in the field of learning disabilities and the educators, professionals,



FOCUS Learning Academy Executive Director/CEO Leroy McClure, Jr., CALT greets Neuhaus Education Center Founding Director Lenox Reed after her presentation at the 2001 International Dyslexia Association Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. ALTA member Lenox Reed was re-elected for a second term on the board of trustees of IDA.

medical communities, school systems, and individuals with dyslexia and their families who deal with the issue. It is unique as a resource for dyslexia. Recently, all of the IDA board members participated in contributing to a response sent to the Office of Special Education Programs Summit on Learning Disabilities. The subjects addressed in the response included identification of learning disabilities, eligibility criteria for services, intervention and professional development. This response will be included in the National Center for Learning Disabilities draft consensus document as part of the reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) process. All students in special education will be affected by this reauthorization.

I hope any ALTA member who would like to respond to this article will email (lreed@neuhaus.org.) or write me. ✉

New Alphabetic Phonics Therapists Take Part in at Ceremony

Last spring, Payne Education Center graduated five new Alphabetic Phonics Therapists:

Lori Eagleton, Springtown, TX
Helen Green, Jackson, MS
Anne Ranck, Jackson, MS
Karolyn Rusch, Edmond, OK
Janet Thompson, Aledo, TX

In August, Texas therapists Lori Eagleton and Janet Thompson joined Oklahomans Mark Duesler, Marianne Morgan, and Karolyn Rusch in passing the Certification Exam to become Certified Academic Language Therapists (CALT).



Congratulations to these teachers as they join more than 600 other therapists in the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA). ALTA is a national organization dedicated to establishing, maintaining, promoting and strengthening standards to

assure that CALTs will perform quality professional services for students with dyslexia and/or related disorders. For more information about ALTA, call (972) 233-9107 ext. 204 or visit ALTA's web site at www.ALTAread.org.

How ALTA Works to Offer Help and a Glimmer of Hope

By Alice Lehtonen, CALT

One of the many fantastic features of the Academic Language Therapy Association's (ALTA) web site is the ALTA email Helpline/Hopeline. Do you have comments, questions, or need help? We can provide you with assistance. Anyone seeking help for his child, as well as those seeking to learn more about ALTA itself, can find answers by sending an email to helpline@altaread.org.

We receive inquiries of all types. Some request information about when and where the ALTA exam is administered, while others suggest recommended reading material for individuals with dyslexia. We receive inquiries and suggestions from across the nation and around the world, from Texas to Washington, and even from countries as far away as Pakistan.

I feel that not only are we providing assistance, but also we are gaining more knowledge and insight into the needs of others, both near and far, each time we communicate with individuals that send an email to the Helpline. I strongly encourage ALTA members to volunteer and take part in the Helpline.

Enthusiastic volunteers spend one week every four to five months "on duty" retrieving and responding to questions related to academic language therapy. All volunteers receive information packets to assist in answering inquiries. The email Helpline/Hopeline is a great benefit to individuals in our communities, as well as ALTA members. If you are interested in sharing this exciting responsibility, please email me at alicelehtonen@aol.com.

Velda Carr Skinner

A Model for Intervention: University and Local Schools Partnership



Marybeth Flachbart, M. Ed., CALT is reading coordinator for State of Idaho Department of Education

By Marybeth Flachbart, M.Ed., CALT, Reading Coordinator, Idaho State Department of Education and Charlie Silva, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Boise State University

Background

After two years of extensive state wide study, the 1999 Idaho State Legislature approved a three-part reading initiative, the Literacy Act: Every child's birthright. The initiative requires the following:

- **Assessment** — All kindergarten through third grade public school students will take the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) at least twice yearly to identify below grade level students;
- **Extended Time Program** — All school districts will offer 40-hours of additional instruction time beyond the regular school day to K-3 students identified as below grade level;
- **Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Course** — All pre-service teachers, as well as all certified teachers and administrators responsible for K-8 reading programs, will complete a three-credit course to renew their professional certificate; and

all pre-service teachers will pass an assessment that measures their knowledge of language structure and literacy before receiving their certificate.

The passage of the Literacy Act affected all areas of education in Idaho. The Idaho Reading Indicator is a standards-based assessment. A 10-minute indicator assesses a child's risk of reading failure. Students receive a score of 1, 2 or 3:

- A score of "3" indicates mastery of skills
- A score of "2" indicates mastery of some of the skills
- A score of "1" indicates a lack of mastery in some or all skills.

The sub-tests include:

- Kindergarten — Phonological awareness and reading readiness
- First Grade — Phonological awareness; decoding, fluency, comprehension
- Second Grade — Sight words, decoding, fluency, comprehension
- Third Grade — Adds spelling

Any child who scores a "1" on the fall, winter or spring IRI must receive 40 hours of intervention regardless of other services they may already be receiving such as Title 1, special education, etc. School districts receive funds from the Idaho State Department of Education to pay for instructor salaries, curriculum materials and supplies.

Another part of the statute is the requirement that the results of the IRI are made available to the public through the media and through the state department of education. It was the intent of the legislature to hold the schools, the school districts as well as the State Department of Education accountable for the success of the reading initiative.

In addition to the effect in K-3 classrooms, the reading initiative also had an immediate

impact on universities. They were required to change their standards for the preparation of elementary educators in the area of literacy. Boise State University responded with the creation of a 4-credit block of courses called Comprehensive Literacy. Part of the block is a 50-hour practicum where pre-service teachers work with students who are "at-risk" for reading failure. A partnership was formed with Boise State University and two local elementary schools, Amity Elementary in Boise, Idaho, and Eliza Hart Spalding in Meridian, Idaho.

University and Local School Partnership

There are three main goals of the partnership:

1. Provide intervention for students who are "at-risk" of reading failure.
2. Give pre-service teachers a structured sequential approach to teaching literacy.
3. Provide a framework for future partnerships between school personnel and university faculty.

Secondary Goals:

1. Collect data on student achievement.
2. Evaluate the learning outcomes of the pre-service teachers.
3. Expand the pilot study.

It was the responsibility of the school personnel to identify children they felt would benefit from intervention beyond state requirements. Included in the study group were not only children who scored a "1" on the IRI, but also children who scored a "2", meaning they had yet to master certain skills. The schools were also responsible for supplying materials and allocating space for the Boise State University pre-service teachers.

The University randomly selected 24 pre-service teachers, who were all enrolled in Comprehensive Literacy to serve as tutors. It was solely the responsibility of the University to evaluate and observe the tutors on a weekly basis.

Specifics of the Plan

The students were grouped together according to grade levels. The ratio of students to pre-service teacher was kept at a maximum of 5-1 and a minimum of 2-1. A secondary goal for the pre-service teachers was to gain expertise in working with small groups. Intervention took place daily, Monday-Thursday, from late January until the end of April. Kindergarten students spent 30 minutes with the tutors, first through third grade spent 45 minutes.

One of the goals for the University was to make sure pre-service teachers had gained mastery using a structured, sequential reading curriculum. The curriculum selected for kindergarten in both schools was Neuhaus Education Center's *Foundations of Language*. Amity Elementary personnel were already using *Readwell*, published by Sopriswest in their Accelerated Learning Center and chose to use that program with first through third graders involved in the study. Spalding Elementary chose to use Neuhaus Education Center's *Language Enrichment* and *Scientific Spelling*. Pre-service teachers received training from both University faculty as well as school personnel before working with their students.

Results

Students enrolled in the partnership made significant gains. Both school personnel and university faculty were pleased with the effect. Other factors, outside of the control of the project, also had an impact on the effectiveness. For example, at Spalding Elementary, the two groups of teachers most willing to participate in the partnership were Kindergarten and Third Grade. Interestingly, those two groups had the most significant increase in IRI scores.

The effect of the partnership on the pre-service teachers was also apparent. They reported a high degree of satisfaction with their field placement, confidence in their abilities to teach struggling readers and strong knowledge base in structure of the language. Attendance and punctuality, at times, has been an issue for pre-service teachers. Of the 24 pre-service teachers, there was only one absence between January and April and no reports of tardiness. Anecdotal information gathered from university faculty and school

personnel indicates the pre-service teachers had a sense of "ownership" for their groups, which may have had a positive impact on attendance.

Obstacles to Consider

Most of the roadblocks encountered in setting up the partnership were logistical. School districts have many policies and procedures in terms of releasing students during the school day for any type of remediation. A careful review of those policies is necessary. In addition, universities have complicated scheduling issues. At Boise State University, a Director of Field Experience worked with the faculty to assign exactly three students per school, each day from Monday through Thursday. Often times field placements will be assigned by simply sending pre-service teachers to schools during times that fit their schedules. Careful consideration needs to be given for training. While pre-service teachers are often an untapped resource in the community, they are not yet certified educators and need to be trained in the selected curriculum. Consideration also needs to be given to monitoring their performance and providing feedback.

Benefits

We see the partnership model as benefiting all of the stakeholders. The benefits for pre-service teachers are:

- Knowledge of a curriculum
- Accountability for student achievement

- Experience working with groups

The benefits for students are:

- 30-40 hours of small group instruction
- Research based best practices
- Opportunity to enhance literacy skills


The benefits for schools are:

- Additional small group instruction to students "at-risk" of reading failure
- Remediation without using additional school personnel
- Project meeting the state intent to enhance reading skills

The benefits to the university are:

- Opportunity to partner with schools
- Data on the relative effectiveness of curriculums
- Training for pre-service teachers

Conclusion

All of the partners were pleased with the outcome of the initial project. The partnership continues with both schools and additional schools have expressed interest in being part of the model in the future. Pre-service teachers are often an untapped resource in the community. They possess more skills and more knowledge than most volunteers and have already chosen education as their profession. With training and guidance, they can provide an exceptionally strong intervention program and compliment the efforts of the certified personnel. 

Hillier School

bulletin Calendar

Event: **Advanced Alphabetic Phonics Training**
Date: June 3-14, 2002
Sponsor: Irvin School of Education, Hardin-Simmons University
Location: Center for Literacy & Learning Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, TX
Contact: Collene Simmons
Email: csimmons@hsutx.edu

Event: **Introductory Neuhaus Basic Language Skills Training**
Date: June 17-28, 2002
Sponsor: Irvin School of Education, Hardin-Simmons University
Location: Center for Literacy & Learning Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, TX
Contact: Collene Simmons
Email: csimmons@hsutx.edu

Event: **Youth Camps for First through Twelfth Grades Math, Reading, Writing and TAAS Strategies**
Date: March and April 2002
Sponsor: Southern Methodist University Learning Therapy Program
Location: Southern Methodist University, Main Campus, Dallas, TX
Telephone: (214) 768-7323

Event: **Survey of Learning Strategies (Study Skills)**
Date: April 19 and 20, 2002, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Presenter: Diane Newton
Sponsor: Southern Methodist University Learning Therapy Program
Location: Southern Methodist University, Main Campus, Dallas, TX
Telephone: (214) 768-7323

Event: **Youth Camps for First through Twelfth Grades Reading, Writing, Vocabulary**
Date: July 2002
Sponsor: Southern Methodist University Learning Therapy Program
Location: Southern Methodist University, Legacy Campus, Dallas, TX
Telephone: (214) 768-7323

Event: **Alphabetic Phonics Dyslexia Therapist Training — Introductory Course**
Date: June 3-21, 2002
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Ave. Q, Lubbock, TX
Telephone: (806) 765-9150

Event: **Alphabetic Phonics Dyslexia Therapist Training — Advanced Course**
Date: June 17-28, 2002
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Ave. Q, Lubbock, TX
Telephone: (806) 765-9150

Event: **Learning Therapy Graduate Certificate Introductory and Advanced Classes**
Date: June 10-20, 2002, Monday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Southern Methodist University Learning Therapy Program
Location: Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX
Telephone: (214) 768-7323

Event: **Introductory Alphabetic Phonics Therapists Training**
Date: June 3-14, 2002
Sponsor: Southwest Multisensory Training Center
Location: 600 S. Jupiter, Allen, TX
Contact: Beverly Dooley
Telephone: (972) 359-6646
Email: bevdool@aol.com

Event: **Advanced Alphabetic Phonics Therapists Training**
Date: June 3-14, 2002
Sponsor: Southwest Multisensory Training Center
Location: 600 S. Jupiter, Allen, TX
Contact: Beverly Dooley
Telephone: (972) 359-6646
Email: bevdool@aol.com

Event: **Reading Readiness**
Date: August 2, 6, 8, or 9, 2002
Sponsor: Payne Education Center
Location: Oklahoma
Contact: Payne Education Center
Telephone: (405) 755-4205
Email: info@payneeducationcenter.org

Event: **Language Basics: Primary**
Date: June 2-7, 2002 or June 10-14, 2002 or June 24-28, 2002
Location: Oklahoma
Contact: Payne Education Center
Telephone: (405) 755-4205
Email: info@payneeducationcenter.org

Event: **Language Basics**
Date: June 2-7, 2002 or June 10-14, 2002 or June 24-28, 2002
Location: Oklahoma
Contact: Payne Education Center
Telephone: (405) 755-4205
Email: info@payneeducationcenter.org

Event: **Introductory Alphabetic Phonics**
Date: July 8-19, 2002 or July 23-August 2, 2002
Location: Oklahoma
Contact: Payne Education Center
Telephone: (405) 755-4205
Email: info@payneeducationcenter.org

CEU Calendar

Event: Academic Language Therapy Association Spring Conference
Date: April 6, 2002
Presenters: Dr. Marcia K. Henry and Lucy Smith, CALT
Sponsor: Academic Language Therapy Association
Location: The Hillier School of Highland Park Presbyterian Church
 3821 University Boulevard, Dallas, TX
Contact: ALTA National Office
Telephone: (972) 233-9107, ext. 204

Event: Discussion on the ADHD Student
Date: September 20, 2002, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Presenter: Dr. Paul Warren
Sponsor: Southwest Multisensory Training Center
Location: 600 S. Junitper, Allen, TX
Contact: Beverly Dooley
Telephone: (972) 359-6646
Email: bevdoool@aol.com

Event: Multisensory Math
Date: April 13, 2002
Presenter: Leah Read, CALT
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin
Location: Rawson/Saunders School, Austin, Texas
Contact: Pat Sekel
Telephone: (512) 472-1231
Email: psekell@austin.rr.com

ALTA members are responsible for maintaining their own personal CEU records for possible audit.

Event: Neuhaus Education Center Workshops
Sponsor: Neuhaus Education Center
Location: 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas
Contact: Amye Derix
Telephone: (713) 664-7676
Email: aderix@neuhaus.org

Advanced Multisensory Grammar July 30, 2002
 Advanced Scientific Spelling July 29, 2002
 Advanced Reading Comprehension July 31, 2002
 Scientific Spelling March 21, 2002 or June 4, 2002
 Reading Readiness Skills June 17, 2002 or June 18, 2002
 Reading Comprehension June 3, 2002
 Foundations for Language March 23, 2002; April 27, 2002; May 18, 2002; or May 31, 2002
 Multisensory Grammar March 26, 2002; April 6, 2002; or June 5, 2002
 History of the English Language June 6, 2002
 Written Composition June 7, 2002 or August 1, 2002
 Developing Accuracy and Fluency June 19, 2002 or August 2, 2002

Dear Academic Language Therapists,



Welcome to the Editor's Desk. This column serves as a forum for members to share experiences, opinions, or concerns related to the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA). ALTA welcomes and encourages letters from all members. Commentaries may be up to 700 words in length. All submissions must include name and telephone number and are subject to editing. Unless otherwise instructed, all published submissions will include first initial and last name of the author. Published commentaries do not necessarily reflect the views of either the Academic Language Therapy Association or the Academic Language Therapy Association Foundation.

Joanne R. White
 Editor, ALTA bul•le•tin

THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS

ALTACEUASAP

By J. Brupbacher, CALT

There are letters, letters, everywhere. Initials, media call letters, and acronyms rule our lives. As a Certified Academic Language Therapist, we must navigate these letters and also help our students through the maze of letters that they face.

So what do the letters **ALTACEUASAP** mean to you? They mean that as an Academic Language Therapy Association member, you should begin to accrue and maintain Continuing Education Units as soon as possible for the current audit period 2001-2003.

The CEU Committee of ALTA has been working diligently toward making this requirement as painless as possible. At the present time, it does not cost an ALTA member or a sponsoring agency any fee to obtain or issue CEU credits. ALTA members are responsible for keeping track of their 20 contact hours (equal to 2 CEUs) every two years and only need to report them *if* audited. At least five of the 20 hours must be earned by attendance in person at an approved workshop/seminar/meeting within the two-year period (2001-2003), while the remainder may be obtained by alternative means. (See page 13 of the ALTA bulletin/Fall 2001.)

The CEU Committee realizes that not all of its members live in a location conducive to attending conferences, workshops, or seminars that may offer CEU credits. To this end, the committee has been working on an extensive database of schools, educational service centers, organizations, and training centers that may be willing to provide hours toward fulfilling the CEU requirements. The web site at www.altaread.org maintains a calendar of pre-approved events for credit. In addition,

each ALTA bulletin features an article regarding the CEU requirement.

Dyslexia events at Texas Regional Educational Service Centers, International Dyslexia Association branch conferences, ALTA Accredited Centers (pp.111-114 in the 2001-2002 ALTA Directory), as well as college and university programs relating to dyslexia/learning disabilities have pre-approval for CEU credits.

Most states have State Educational Departments that provide training in the areas of learning disabilities, dyslexia, and related disorders. National, state, and local branches of the Learning Disabilities Association of America, Council for Exceptional Children, and Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders also have programs that may qualify. Multisensory language programs such as Lindamood-Bell, Project Read-Language Circle Enterprises, Wilson Language Training, Spalding Educational Foundation and the Slingerland Institute for Literacy are other good possibilities. Many workshops, seminars, and courses are offered in various parts of the country. Several groups or training programs, including the Neuhaus Education Center and Wilson Language Training, have online instruction available. Make it a priority to get on the mailing list or visit the web site of organizations, colleges, or training centers. In that way you will receive up-to-date information on activities in your geographical area that may qualify for CEU credit.

Fifteen of the twenty hours of the CEU requirement can be acquired by alternative methods if necessary. An ALTA member may earn CEU credit by doing a presentation, reading journals or books published

1998 or later, listening to an audio recording or watching a videotape, and/or by organizing an ALTA professional group in your area.

It is our responsibility as professionals to keep abreast of the most recent information in our field. We certainly expect our doctors, dentists, and accountants to do so. As professionals, we attend countless meetings, workshops, and training sessions. In addition, we are called on to present informational and training sessions to our colleagues. Be sure to keep your certificates of attendance of such training activities. At the end of a two-year period, you may be amazed at what you have accomplished. Some of these activities may qualify for CEU credit if you are audited.

What can you do now to prepare? Take a moment to write down a list of meetings, workshops, or training sessions that you have participated in during the last year. Check your files for signed certificates of attendance indicating the number of hours spent attending events and verify if the events have or have not received ALTA approval. Do this **ASAP**. Do not wait until you are audited. If the training was worthwhile and you think other ALTA members would be interested, please send the information to the CEU Committee (ALTA, 13140 Coit Road, Suite 320, LB 120, Dallas, TX 75240 or email ALTAadmin@airmail.net). Additions to the database are needed and appreciated. We encourage all members to share the names of organizations, centers, or programs that would be suitable for CEU credit.

Now you know that **ALTACEUASAP** are letters that simply remind us to keep abreast of new educational opportunities, to maintain good records, and to not procrastinate when seeking CEU credit. ✍

Web Site Announcements

Events! Events! Events!

Are you good at discovering things? Do you enjoy ferreting out information? Does benefiting your fellow Academic Language Therapy Association members appeal to you? The Academic Language Therapy Association Web Site Committee could use you on their team. The Web Site Committee needs someone to coordinate the Events Calendar on the web site. The responsibilities include searching for all possible sources for events throughout the country that would be of interest to our membership. The Events Calendar Coordinator and the ALTA Administrator, Anita Bruck, would then decide what to post on the web site Events Calendar. If interested, please notify Anita Bruck. You may reach her by visiting the ALTA web site at www.ALTAread.org and clicking on "Contact us."

Wanted: Marketing Mogul

The Academic Language Therapy Association web site is in need of a volunteer knowledgeable and eager to facilitate marketing for its web site. There are opportunities for companies and organizations to list on ALTA's web site for a fee. We need someone willing to spend a little time soliciting various companies and discovering qualifying companies that might be interested in advertising on our site. If interested, please notify the ALTA web site chair, Rae Cromeens. You may reach her by visiting the ALTA web site at www.ALTAread.org and clicking on "Contact us."

Registration Exam Process in Final Stages of Renovation

In the spring of 2001, a task force was formed whose goal was to review the Academic Language Therapy Association's Registration Exam process. ALTA members Pauline Hartley, Edith Hogan, and Melanie Royal met several times throughout the spring and summer to discuss comments from training centers, the ALTA administrative office, and therapists who had recently taken the exam.

The task force first looked at the Registration Exam application and made several changes and/or additions, which reflect current ALTA standards and requirements. Changes to the application were presented to the ALTA board at the August retreat with final approval to be voted on at the February 2, 2002 meeting. Other recommendations presented to the Board of Directors at the February meeting were:

- Increases in the Registration Exam fee, to bring it more in line with other professional exams.

- Application due date 30 days before exam.
- Accommodations/Modifications requests due in writing no later than 30 days before exam.
- A pool of qualified graders to be established.
- Quarterly exam dates scheduled in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, with at least one exam given yearly at each of the other ALTA accredited centers.

The Registration Exam Committee has rewritten the procedures and guidelines to reflect the changes recommended. Upon final approval by the ALTA Board of Directors, a copy of the procedures/guidelines will be made available to all accredited training centers. A copy will also be kept at the ALTA National Office for review. Any questions regarding the exam process may be directed to Melanie Royal, Registration Exam Chair, or Madeleine Crouch, ALTA Office Administrator.

Southwest Multisensory Training Center

MILESTONES

Welcome, new student members Barbara Dvoracek, Olive Hester, Janet Smith and Dawn Stevens.

Welcome, new active members Gretchen Andeel, Charlotte Clevenger, Mark Duesler, Lori Eagleton, Emily Jones, Robbie Montealegre, Judy Rockley, Martha Steger and Mary Woolf.

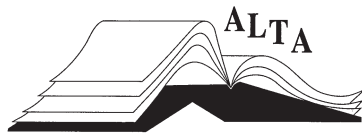
Congratulations, new qualified instructors Jana Jones, Tammy Kofford, Nancy McBride and Diane Newton.

Barbara Stevenson was honored with the "Lynda Laird Memorial Award" by the Southwest Multisensory Training Center in Allen, TX, during last fall's graduation ceremony. The award is given annually to the trainee who goes the extra mile. Barbara earned all of her 925 hours for graduation at no charge to her students. Way to go, Barbara, for the children! 📖

Mark Your Calendars!



**The ALTA Annual Spring
Conference is April 6, 2002.
Hillier School of Highland Park
Presbyterian Church
3821 University • Dallas, Texas**



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