

NEWS

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EDA BOARD MEETS AND HOLDS PRESIDENTS' GENERAL ASSEMBLY In BRUSSELS

28 - 30 April 2006

The **EDA Board** met in Brussels on Friday 28 April with a **Reception for Members' Presidents**, followed by a **Presidents' General Assembly** on Saturday 29 April and a further **Board** meeting on Sunday 30 April.

See the report on the **General Assembly** in this issue.

The Board met to make up-dated administrative arrangements for the EDA's bank account following the Board changes announced in the last issue of *EDA NEWS*, to consider the financial position of the EDA and to prepare the EDA's outline programme for the next two years. The Presidents' General Assembly was valuable for giving feed-back to the Board during which the Members' views were expressed on how the EDA should progress. There were, of course, a number of suggestions which the Board considered at their Sunday meeting.

The Presidents' General Assembly was addressed by **Susanne Conze**, responsible for **Comenius Decentralised Actions** within the **European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture**. A report on Mrs Conze's talk follows.

Changes in the Belgian law affecting non-governmental organisations, including the EDA, were announced by the EDA President and discussions on the current aims of the Association were discussed.

Jennifer and Robin Salter
Joint Editors

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EU

Talk by Susanne Conze

E.U. Comenius De-centralised Actions Department

Special Educational needs and the European Educational Programmes

Susanne Conze addressed the twenty-three delegates present and advised that her department was responsible for implementation of the **SOCRATES Comenius** (schools) and **Grundvig** (adult education) Special Educational Needs programmes of the European Union.

She outlined the history of the programmes which had begun in 1995 with phase 1 and in 2000 with phase 2; a booklet and summary of her talk were distributed. Her department is in a period of change but information on the planned future programmes will shortly be available from her department and from the **National EU Agencies**.

A new **Comenius** programme for Life-long Learning is planned to start in the autumn of 2007 ending in 2013 in which all countries within the EU can participate. Partners from at least three countries can combine to make a project. Any topic can be chosen by applicants but school partnerships will be encouraged with programmes lasting 2 – 3 years; these could attract up to 5,000 euros for each project. A teacher applying for training would have to do the training in another country (for example, during a four week exchange) and the results would have to have an international benefit. One of the aims of the Comenius Programme is to encourage the creation of networks across Europe.

The Call for topics is projected to be in October 2006 when the EU Budget has been approved with a deadline for applications by March 2007. Susanne Conze advised there was a lack of courses for training adults and her department would welcome more.

The **National EU Agencies** in each country can check applications for funding to ensure they will not fail on technical grounds; the EU cannot advise when applications are rejected for technical reasons, such as not being signed or for being incomplete in a particular detail or for other errors. The National Agencies could sometimes help with funding. When a project is approved 70% is provided on signing a contract with the EU with the balance being provided by the applicant. Only in rare cases is 100% given.

The European Dyslexia Association is in an ideal position to bring three or more partners together to make joint applications and it is hoped that its Members will take advantage of the connections already established between them.

Robin Salter

New URL for the EU from 9 May 2006:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/Socrates/comenius/natagenc_en.html



Presidents' General Assembly

29 April 2006 in Brussels

On the eve of the Assembly, on Friday 28 April, the Members' Presidents were welcomed to a **Reception** at the offices of **Dyslexia Tools & Technologies (DITT)** at Rue Defacqz, Brussels provided by **Judith Sanson**. On Saturday 29 April, the **General Assembly** was also held at Rue Defacqz.

Michael Kalmar, the EDA President, gave his opening address to the assembly which was followed by a talk by **Susanne Conze** from the European Commission's Comenius decentralised actions department of the Directorate-General for Education and Culture.



Susanne Conze

Mrs Conze's talk provided valuable information for Members who were considering making an application for funding from the Commission. and, of course, many questions were asked. Her department is responsible for the **SOCRATES Comenius** and **Grundvig** programmes as they affect disability groups.

Following Mrs Conze's talk and a coffee break the Presidents introduced themselves and said something about their own organisations. Lunch was then enjoyed at the *Etoile Blue* restaurant which had been ordered in advance.

In the afternoon session, Michael Kalmar advised that the **EDA's Statutes** would need some revision following changes in Belgian law affecting non-governmental organisations. Three topics concerning the principal aims of the EDA were then discussed, the delegates being divided into three groups. Each group appointed a *rapporteur* who reported the results of their discussions to the following plenary session. In summary, the delegates accepted that the principal aims of the EDA as

set out in the Statutes were broadly still relevant to the Members' actions although some delegates were unhappy about the perception 'disability'. The delegates thought the EDA Board should be more active in promoting the interests of the Members within the **European Disability Forum (EDF)**. The delegates thought the **EDA's Bye-Laws** should be looked at by the Board to make the Members less distant from the Board's actions. Some delegates suggested holding an annual General Assembly. It was agreed that each Member organisation should be asked to appoint a representative to be responsible for reporting local actions to the Board and

providing information of Members' activities to the Joint Editors of **EDA NEWS**. The Bye-Laws should be amended to reflect this action.

Michael Kalmar promised that the Board would consider the points made and produce an action plan to move the association forward. Actions already planned were:

1. Exploration of how the EDA can play a greater role within the European Disability Forum (EDF) with potential funding initiatives.
2. An EDA General Assembly in Luxembourg in November 2007 to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of EDA. At this Assembly the proposed changes to the EDA's Statutes would be considered. Details of the proposed changes would be issued three months in advance.
3. A 4th Multicultural Dyslexia Conference in the Spring of 2009.



Delegates at the Presidents' General Assembly

Robin Salter, a former President of the EDA, congratulated Michael Kalmar on his appointment as the new EDA President and then paid tribute to **Alan Sayles**, who had resigned in January as EDA's President due to his new appointment with the Irish Government. Alan had been an outstanding lecturer and had moved the EDA forward in the tradition of all former Presidents. He would be much missed by the EDA for his common sense and good humour. He and his wife Patricia and family were wished well for the future.

Michael Kalmar presented Alan with an inscribed tankard and **Karin Brüngrer** presented him with a bouquet of flowers. **Michael** then closed the Assembly at 18.00 which was followed by drinks and 'good-byes' between the delegates.



Alan Sayles
being presented with an inscribed tankard by
Michael Kalmar

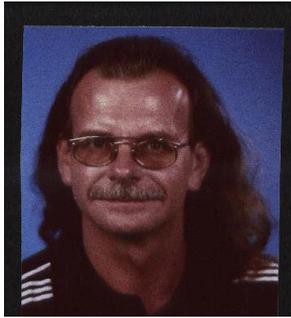


OBITUARY

ROGER SAUNDERS

1924 – 2006

Many people will be saddened at the death of **ROGER SAUNDERS** the American Psychologist who was for many years a leading member of the Orton Dyslexia Society (now the International Dyslexia Society) in USA. He lectured extensively and was a regular lecturer at the British Dyslexia Association conferences and in South Africa. His cheerful disposition, wise counsel and remarkable ability as a lecturer and tutor made him a favourite with all who knew him.



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Michael Kalmar's address

**to the Presidents' General Assembly in
Brussels on 29 April 2006**

1. **WELCOME** - especially to **Robin Salter** and **Alan Sayles**, former Presidents of the **European Dyslexia Association**, the last two still active founder members of the EDA.

2. **THE BOARD**

As of the last General assembly held on 16 July 2005 in Limassol in Cyprus, the EDA Board has consisted of 8 members: Alan Sayles (Ireland), Marta Bogdanowicz (Poland), Michael Kalmar (Austria), Karin Brünger (Germany), Carina Carlsson (Sweden), Maria Potamitis (Cyprus), Steve Alexander (UK), and Marija Kavkler (Slovenia).

Following the 9th General Assembly in Limassol, the new Board met for the first time in January 2006 in Munich. On that occasion, Alan Sayles declared his resignation both as a Board member and as President of the EDA because he had taken a new job as a Special Needs Inspector of Schools in Ireland.

At the Board's request, I agreed to take on the Presidency. Marta Bogdanowicz agreed to continue as 1st Vice-President as well as Steve Alexander as Treasurer and Maria Potamitis as Secretary. The Board agreed to appoint Karin Brünger as 2nd Vice-President, The Board now consists of 7 members.

3. **BOARD MEETINGS**

At the 9th General Assembly in 2005 the newly elected Board met briefly on Sunday 17 July in Limassol. The next full Board meeting was scheduled for 22 - 25 October 2005 during the Bundesverband Legasthenie Conference in Berlin but only a few Board members were able to attend. The Board worked mainly on the preparations for the President's Meeting.

After that, the next meeting took place in Munich 12 - 14 January 2006. The board agreed future meetings, as follows:

Brussels	28 – 30 April 2006
Vienna	June
London	November
(to be decided)	Spring 2007

Vienna
Luxembourg

June
November with 10th General Assembly

In order to save money, there were a number of telephone meetings with daily and weekly contacts via e-mail.

4. **PRESIDENTS' MEETING**

One of the recent and major decisions of the Board was to call an Extraordinary General Assembly in 2006. As 2007 will mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the EDA, the Board felt it was timely to call a meeting of all the Presidents of EDA member organisations. The purpose of the proposed meeting was to give voice to the present membership in deciding the future direction of the EDA.

5. **COMMUNICATIONS**

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Joint Editors, Jennifer and Robin Salter, for their work in producing **EDA NEWS**. This publication continues to be the main, although limited source, of information about the EDA's activities. The content of the newsletter, however, is still a problem for the Joint Editors in that the vast majority of member associations do not send in information for publication. The Board asks every member association to send information about your own association and your activities directly to the editors on a regular basis.

Please use **EDA NEWS** to advertise your conferences and later to report on them. If anything of interest in the field of dyslexia appears in your newspapers, please send it to the Editors. Also, please send them items from your own newsletter that might be of interest to other members. All member associations should be aware that they are free to translate **EDA NEWS** or any part of it into any language. It remains the Board's intention that **EDA NEWS** should continue to be available via e-mail.

The new website has been set up by Robin Salter with the help of Ian Smythe at www.dyslexia.eu.com. Further steps are being taken to develop the website. Robin is already producing **EDA NEWS** electronically as a PDF file and has been e-mailing it to all members since April 2005. Members may have future issues of **EDA NEWS** e-mailed up to three addresses simply by informing the Editors at eda@kbnnet.co.uk

All future issues of **EDA NEWS** will be available on the website as well as a number of pages on the EDA itself, including its objectives, current projects and activities. All EDA members who have a website are asked permission for the EDA to give a direct link to each member's site. *[Members can already e-mail directly to each other via the EDA's website – Jt. Eds.]*

Future plans include an 'eu domain' address; information in a number of languages; conference papers and reports; and lists of European Union activities and conferences.

6. **EUROPEAN DYSLEXIA AWARENESS WEEK**

This is a slow but growing event. Last year we had reports of Dyslexia Awareness Weeks or days being held in ten countries. The EDA has now issued a brochure explaining the purpose of the Week and giving suggestions of possible activities. Members can ask for a copy in 'MS Publisher' format from the President or Secretary.

From 2005, the European Dyslexia Awareness Week is always the week beginning with the first Monday in October which is now to be designated DYSLEXIA MONTH:

2006	-	2 - 8 October
2007	-	1 - 7 “
2008	-	6 - 12 “

7. **MEMBERSHIP**

Since the General Assembly in 2003, the Board has accepted into **Effective Membership**:

The Diverse Learners' Association FINDERS (Finland), Steirischer Landesverband Legasthenie/Styrian Dyslexia Association STLL (Austria), ARKUS (Austria) and Dyslexia International Tools and Technologies DITT (Belgium) whilst the Swedish Dyslexia Association FMLS was accepted as an **Adherent Member**. The Board agreed to maintain contact with the new dyslexia organisations developing in Russia and Estonia. Lithuania and two parental organisations in Greece and in Spain are in the stage of approval of their membership applications. The Board has so far been unsuccessful in making contacts in Portugal which is still the only country of the twenty-five EU member states where the EDA is not represented with contacts to a dyslexia organisation; the Board is still hopeful for the future.

The Board agreed that Bruern Abbey School, Tale Horinstitutet, Startdyslexia, and University of La Verne should be offered termination of membership due to lack of payment of subscriptions. The Board also agreed that The Dyslexia Association of Malta, Vereniging Balans, Associacio Catalana de Dislexia and North Cyprus Dyslexia Association should be sent reminders regarding the non-payment of subscriptions.

8. **EDA REPRESENTATION**

Whilst a lack of finances has restricted the EDA's activities, it has been possible to provide official EDA representation in some instances, especially when it is subsidised by member organisations. In the Spring of 2004, the EDA 2nd Vice-President, Michael Kalmar, represented the EDA at the 25th Anniversary celebrations of Bundesverband Legasthenie in Kiel, Germany. Carina Carlsson represented the EDA at the 25th anniversary celebrations of FMLS in Sweden. In August 2004, the EDA 1st Vice-President, Marta Bogdanowicz, and I both spoke at the World Congress on Dyslexia in Thessaloniki in Greece. In September 2004, Marta Bogdanowicz spoke in Moscow at the first conference of the Russian Dyslexia Association. Also in September 2004, Marta Bogdanowicz and Alan Sayles spoke at a dyslexia conference at the Nencki

Institute in Warsaw, Poland. In February 2005, Alan Sayles had a chance to visit The Dyslexia Association of Malta where he met the Minister for Education and spoke at four meetings of parents and professionals. I spoke greeting words on behalf of the EDA at the opening ceremony of the Berlin Convention of the Bundesverband Legasthenie in Germany in September 2005 and delivered two papers.

9. **PLANNED FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE BOARD**

- A Execution of the results of the Extraordinary General Assembly 2006
- B 2nd All European Dyslexia Conference 15 – 17 November 2007 in Luxembourg
- C Proposed changes to the Statutes of the EDA to be presented at the 10th General Assembly on 17 November 2007
- D 4th Multilingual and Dyslexia Conference in Ireland in Spring 2009.

10. **EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM**

The EDF is an organisation developed by the EU to act as an umbrella for disability-related associations in the EU. At present, the EDA is listed as an Associate Member of the EDF. A few years ago new criteria were put in place by the EU for membership. The Board is currently exploring how it can play a greater role in Europe and possibly benefit from future funding initiatives. The Board will initiate the procedures to apply for an increase in our level of membership of the EDF with a consequently greater influence on EU policy on disability and dyslexia.

11. **PUBLICATIONS**

A) A Book

At the beginning of the year 2000, our 2nd Vice-President, Marta Bogdanowicz sent out a questionnaire called “The Rights of Dyslexic Children”. The objective of the questionnaire was to try to get a complete picture of the situation regarding the rights of children with dyslexia throughout Europe. The data analysis was completed in 2003 and Marta has reported the final results of the survey at a number of conferences throughout Europe. 2004 saw the publication of the survey analysis as a book entitled ***Rights of Dyslexic Children in Europe***. The ISBN is 83-7134-171-7 and it can be ordered for 9.90 euros plus postage from the distributor: Verlag Lernen mit Pfiff, Hietzinger Kai 191, Vienna, A-1140 in Austria. The web address is: www.lernen-mit-pfiff.at Tel: 00 43 1 8797999.

B) EDA Leaflet

Whilst a lack of finances has restricted the EDA’s activities, it was possible to find sponsors for the new EDA Leaflet and to produce it without any cost to the EDA.

12. **PROJECTS**

A) STREP

In 2004, the Board agreed to support a proposal from the Nencki Institute in

Poland. The proposed STREP project was a unique attempt to establish a 'genetic fingerprint' for dyslexia. It involved the identification of brain deficits or abnormalities associated with dyslexia and their genetic background. It planned to use this information to develop a series of diagnostic tools to enable identification of various aspects of those abnormalities. The project proposed to perform large scale studies to validate those tools for widespread use. It also involved the analysis of co-morbidities between different deficits based on the large scale studies and genetic research developing a new brain-based classification of dyslexia sub-types as well as cross-language comparison work.

The STREP consortium included acknowledged experts from the USA, England, Iceland, Germany, Italy and Malta led by the Nencki Institute. After more than a year of developing the project and writing the extensive proposal, the funding application to the EU was rejected. The EDA would have had a role in subject selection and dissemination of the results.

B) INCLUDE

On a more positive note, the EDA has become a partner with others in the British Dyslexia Association's proposed and recently accepted **EU Leonardo Project** entitled *Overcoming Beneficiary Barriers to Dyslexia and Improving the Quality and Availability of Screening, Skills Training, Competency and Understanding (INCLUDE Project)*.

The aim of the project is to develop a web-based tool which will identify dyslexics, their strengths and weaknesses, skills and difficulties, to be used to inform an understanding of their learning style and help them progress via both training and employment situations to their maximum ability. This information, together with details such as interests and abilities, age, skills, background and learning methods, will help identify recommendations for ICT based vocational training, other modes of learning and career choice. Support services, including web-cam and chat based e-Counselling, mentoring and guidance will also be developed. Consequently, those disaffected by the system, with failures in education and seeking employment, will be encouraged and motivated towards development of those attributes necessary to secure employment appropriate to a dyslexic's skills and desires and to improve their skills.

The project is to carry-out seminal research and practice to help overcome the barriers to employment and learning faced by people with dyslexia as a contributory factor to social exclusion. The partners expect that the project's positive outcomes will influence policy and practice across Europe with respect to dyslexia, and help to promote lifelong learning and training with social inclusion for those who learn differently.

Two meetings have been held: one at Windsor in England and one in Budapest, Hungary. The next meetings scheduled will be in May 2006 in Thessaloniki, Greece and in September 2006 in Gdansk, Poland. The EDA has mainly been represented by Robin Salter until now but I will attend the meetings as often as possible. All costs are covered by the EU.

- C) **MINERVA** - Collaborative Additional Language e-Learning for Dyslexic Children.
- D) **A NEW e-LEARNING** - Project by Ian Smythe.
- E) **NEW PROJECT** - Project by Steve Alexander

13. **THANK YOU**

To all the Board members who have supported my Presidency and enthusiastically pursued the objectives of the EDA. I give a special 'thank you' to both Karin Brüngrer and Judith Sanson for organising today's extraordinary General Assembly.

Michael Kalmar
President

NOTE: **2007 is the EU 'Year of Equal Opportunities'** If you wish to get involved, contact: valerie.vabesien@edf-feph.org
Tel: +32 2 282.46.05

EDA CALENDAR 2007

The EDA board invites all Members to participate in providing photographs of well-known dyslexic people **IN THEIR COUNTRIES** for the EDA Calendar being prepared for 2007. The people chosen must give their written consent to be in the Calendar. All photographs and written consents must be sent for publication to:

Marta.bogdanowicz@wp.pl

BVL

Bundesverband Legasthenie und Dyskalkulie e.V.

*This is an extract from an article issued by **Annette Höinghaus Simone Wejda**, the Secretary of BVL.*

Dyslexia therapists: How to make sure that you get what you want

It is usually the task of a school to teach pupils how to read and write. A brief look at the facts, however, shows that often schools fail to fulfil that task. Therefore many dyslexic students just do not seem to fit into the scheme of educational things. Trying to make up for what is missed by the standard educational procedures, the parents of dyslexic students often spend large sums on private lessons but even that investment frequently does not bring results. Rather than having success in the long run parents have to realise that they have spent their money on virtually nothing.

Especially in the last years an increasing number of parents have contacted the German BVL to enquire about institutions that secure the sought for improvement of their children's educational conditions. They want to know where to go in order to find competent help. Since it was not only parents seeking high-quality help but institutions seeking ways of how to make their own educational profile and standard more transparent, the BVL has decided to become active.

The result is a guideline for the education of dyslexic therapists that has been created in co-operation with several leading educational and professional institutes. Its aim is to secure the standard of extra-curricular education by having the title '**Dyslexia Therapist**' registered. This step was necessary due to the lack of any special professional education culminating in very title. So far, anybody has been allowed to bear it. Things have changed, however. Thanks to the registered title not only a high standard of dyslexia therapy is secured but it is also much easier for parents to find out where to get help. Everybody bearing the registered title has already undergone standard professional training and has to be familiar with the latest scientific research in the field. **Bentheim Bildung Würzburg e.V.** was the first professional institute to be awarded the BVL Certificate in December 2005. It indicates that the institute which mainly trains teachers and psychologists fulfils the official BVL standard.

For more information see: www.bvl-legasthenie.de or contact the Project Management Registration at: hoeinghays@bvl-lehgaesthenie.de
or: gf@bvl-legasthenie.de

International Conferences & Symposia

Country	Organisation & subject	Venue and date
<u>2006</u>		
BELGIUM	Seminar: 'Does how we communicate with Children influence their quality of life & learning' EC-OC Email: ecoc@ecoc.be	BRUSSELS June 7
IRELAND	Disability Discrimination Summer School EU Framework Directive on Employment And Disability See: www.eusummerschool.info	National University of Ireland GALWAY June 6 - 16
GERMANY	Österreichischen Bundesverband Legasthenie (ÖBVL) XIV interdisziplinären Fortbildungslehrgang 06/08 Email: info@legasthenie.org	16 Wochenenden WIEN Sept 06 bis April 08

SLOVENIA	2 nd Slovenian International Conference On Specific Learning Disabilities For Teachers, Counsellors, Social Workers And Parents <i>In Slovene and English</i>	Faculty of Education University of Ljubljana LJUBLJANA September 29 - 30
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ENGLAND	British Dyslexia Association AGM	Inst. Child Health LONDON 18 November
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2008

ENGLAND	7 th British Dyslexia Association International Conference	York University YORK 26 – 29 March
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BOOK LIST - additions

The full Book List is available on our website. The Editors will be pleased for any suggestions or recommendations for inclusion in our Book List (**in any language**) which they have read and which are recognised as being of value to parents, teachers and other professionals concerned with dyslexia in their countries.

D = in Deutch E = in English F = in French

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>ISBN</u>
E MUSIC & DYSLEXIA	British Dyslexia Association		1 86156 205 5
E INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC for DYSLEXICS	Sheila Oglethorpe		1 86156 291 8
E THE RIGHTS OF DYSLEXIC CHILDREN IN EUROPE	Marta Bogdanowicz & Alan Sayles	Verlag Lernen mit Pfiff	83-7134-171-7
E GLUE EAR: an essential Guide for Teachers, parents & health professionals	Lindsay Peer	David Fulton Publishers	1-84312-352-5

NEWS

British Dyslexia Association

*(The Joint Editors acknowledge that the following information comes from the BDA's **Newsletter** for May 2006)*

It is with sadness that the BDA announced the death of **Margaret (Peggy) Hubicki** who will be remembered by many musical dyslexics. She was a remarkable lady who

worked with the BDA Music Committee almost from its inception. One of her achievements was to get the Music Examining Boards to allow dyslexic students a little more time to inspect the piece they had to sight-read. She helped many generations of music students to a better understanding of music and will be remembered as the person, more than any other, who increased awareness of the needs of dyslexic musicians (*Prof. Tim Miles*).

A number of staff changes have taken place at the BDA, including: **Prof. Susan Tresman** becomes a BDA Trustee; **Jennifer Owen Adams** is the new Education Director; **Panayiotis Panos Bouras** is the new Director of Development & External Operations; **Brian Wilson** is the new European Development Manager.

Svenska Dyslexiföreningen (Swedish Dyslexia Association) has a new postal address: Karolinska Institutet, Nanna Svartz väg 2, 171 65 Solna, Sweden.

NEW ASSOCIATION

Majorca

A new parent-based dyslexia association has been formed in Majorca and which has applied to the EDA Board for membership. More information in our next issue.

*This is the last page of **EDA NEWS** for May 2006*