

LD VOICE

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Fall 2011



Idanl

Learning Disabilities Association
of Newfoundland and Labrador

The right to learn, the power to achieve

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 - Could the Apple iPad be the next generation of assistive tech solutions?
 - Dyslexie: the new font that helps make reading easier

What's new with LDANL?

2011 has been a busy year for the Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (LDANL) as we continue to grow and work towards our goal of being the provincial voice for people living with learning disabilities.

In June we held the **10th Anniversary** of our very successful **Blind Date... With a Star!** fundraiser. As always, it was a huge success. Read more about it on page 2.

Our tutoring program continues to build on its success, with sessions available the full year round. For details and registration times for our winter session check out the back cover of this newsletter.

LDANL is always interested in helping people find assistive solutions for work or school when it comes to learning disabilities, and in that regard we have invested in an iPad 2 as an assistive technology option. Read more about it on page 4.

This past October was National LD Awareness Month, and we were able to hold several successful events and presentations, including opportunities to speak to many schools, teachers, and parents! See more about it on page 6.

Thanks to everyone for your involvement and support. We hope 2012 will continue to be as successful as 2011 has been!



Blind Date... With a Star! 10th Anniversary Gala at the Sheraton Hotel, June 21st, 2011

Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Inc.

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Blind Date... With a Star! 10th Anniversary

This past June, the Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (LDANL) was proud to organize our **10th Annual Blind Date... with a Star!** fundraiser. This event has been extremely successful for us, and has received great support from the community. This year was our largest fundraiser ever, with over 50 separate venues donating a three course meal for a table of ten. Each group was also accompanied by a local celebrity for a night of fun, food, and conversation.

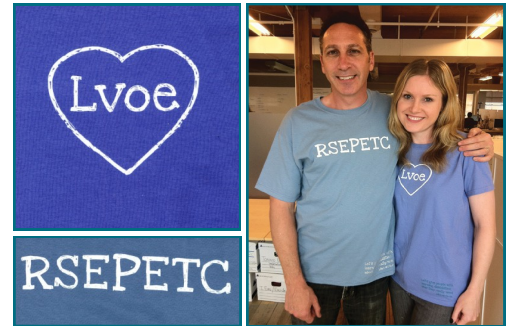
We were also able to hold several fantastic prize draws for all ticket purchasers this year as well, including \$100.00 gift certificates to the winner's restaurant of choice, and a special draw for one lucky winner and 10 guests to spend a day on a yacht with Alan Doyle of Great Big Sea, along with a specially catered dinner upon returning to port.

We would like to thank all of our major corporate sponsors; Sysco Food Services of Atlantic Canada, The Sheraton Hotel Newfoundland, The Telegram, Pennecon, Steele Communications and Rogers Cable, as well as all of the fantastic venues, guest celebrities, and of course those who purchased tickets.

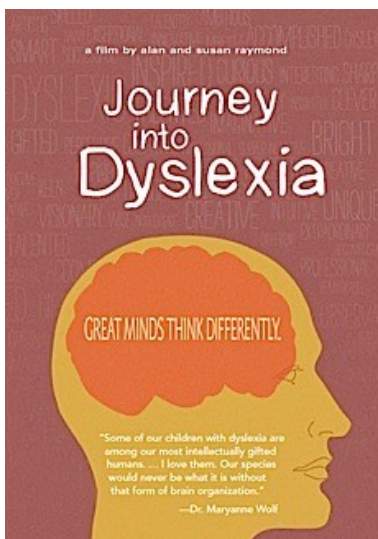
Blind Date... With a Star! is our only fundraiser, and it continues to be a huge event. Thank-you to everyone for their hard work and support and for making these past ten years such a success. We can't wait to do it again next year!

Learning Disabilities T-Shirts!

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada has recently designed and begun selling these great t-shirts to help raise awareness of LD's. T-Shirts are \$20.00 each. Men's shirts come in stone blue. Women's shirts come in light purple. Sizes x-small to x-large. If you would like to purchase one and show your support for learning disabilities awareness, please contact LDANL for more information at: [709-753-1445](tel:709-753-1445) or e-mail info@ldanl.ca



New To the LDANL Lending Library



Journey into Dyslexia is a new documentary we recently added to our lending library here at the LDANL. This film explores what it means to be dyslexic through interviews with individuals and experts, specifically focusing on the trouble individuals living with dyslexia often have in school, but also the successes they have in life. This is a great film to sit down and watch with your kids if they are stressed out about a recent LD diagnosis. It's message is quite clear; that many successful people with dyslexia view it as a *gift* and not a *burden*. If there is one major criticism of the film, it is that it spends very little time focusing

on *how* people learn to cope with dyslexia, which could have offered some very interesting insights. Overall though, this is an excellent film, and is available to borrow from us by any member of LDANL.

Check out other great DVD's in our library as well, including:

- Learning Disabilities: Hidden Gifts
- Waiting for Superman
- We're Not Stupid
- Beyond F.A.T. City: A Look back, a look ahead
- Our Stories: Candid Stories from Landmark Students
- And *much* more!



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- Rocketry
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- Music
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- Computers
- Video Production
- L.I.T. Program



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4069 Pheasant Run
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L5L 2C2

info@campkodiak.com
Toll-free: 877-569-7595



www.campkodiak.com

Blind Date...With a Star

Each year LDANL presents its annual fundraiser, *Blind Date... With a Star*. With the help of our major corporate sponsor Sysco, LDANL puts on a night of fabulous food and entertainment. Each dinner table is paired up with a local celebrity as well as one of the many fine restaurants in the St. John's area. Once paired up with your "Blind Date" you spend the evening enjoying a fine meal and even better company. For more information on the event please call the office!

Putting a Canadian Face on Learning Disabilities (PACFOLD) <http://www.pacfold.ca/>



The Technology Page

The Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (LDANL) has recently purchased an Apple iPad 2 in order to research and demo its usefulness as a piece of assistive technology. We see it as a great solution for people with learning disabilities who like to make use of assistive technology in their studies or their everyday lives.

For most of us who work with assistive technology (AT) several major factors usually come to mind about the problems with AT; it is usually expensive, specialized AT devices are usually bulky and not very portable, AT devices are either too specific or too broad in the needs they address, and they often carry a social stigma or single out individuals with learning disabilities.

The iPad, in many ways, is the answer to these problems.

Relatively affordable, portable, lightweight, customizable for an individual's needs, and with the added bonus of being a *cool* device instead of a piece of specialized hardware that singles you out, the basic nature of the iPad as a computer trumps these major problems in one blow. But any good device ultimately relies on its software, and this is where the iPad has the opportunity to really shine.

Apple tends to have a good commitment to accessibility options in all of their products, with many built in features ready to go. The touch screen interface and simple menus on the iPad are also nice, and very user friendly. Most importantly though are the Apps. Short for applications, Apps are just a hip name for the same kind of computer software you would use on a desktop or laptop. But the difference lies in how you access them. The iPad has access to the built in iTunes App store. With over 140,000 apps available in the store, there is a huge variety of programs to try out. Many are free, and most cost five dollars or less. Some Apps can be more expensive so its best to talk to us to find out what App works best for you. The simplicity of access, you install them by downloading directly to your iPad, is a fantastic feature. No need to go to the store, or order the software online, just find an app, and click download.

Some of these apps are geared towards people in need of AT solutions, and many more are just plain useful for anyone. What this means, is that instead of purchasing one catch all program or device, you can customize your iPad with lightweight -but often extremely useful or powerful- Apps for each individual need. There are organizer apps, text-to-speech apps, dictation apps, study tools, and much more. Combine this with wireless internet capabilities and you have a tool that can really pack a punch.

It's this multitasking power combined with lightweight mobility that make the iPad so useful, but a second look will reveal something else; having an iPad doesn't carry the same kind of negative stigma that other AT might. A child with a fusion writer might be singled out by his peers. A child with an iPad is the classmate with the cool toy or device that everyone else wants. This is one of the primary issues many children have with AT solutions. They don't want to be known as the kid who has a special device, or the kid who needs to do all their work on a laptop or in the computer room. Having an iPad could help alleviate these stressful feelings of being "different".

We won't say the iPad is perfect. These tablet computers are a very new technology that has not totally come into its own just yet. But the advantages can't be overlooked. Never before have AT solutions and everyday functionality come together so well, and this is only going to get better with time. So consider this as an option when you start to look at assistive technology.

If the iPad is not right for you, consider the iPod Touch or iPhone instead. While not quite as powerful, and not featuring quite as many Apps, they are still very useful devices, with much the same functionality. Otherwise, come speak to us

"Dyslexie".

Dyslexie is a new font designed by Christian Boer, a dyslexic graphic designer from the Netherlands. It helps people with dyslexia have an easier time with reading by making letters harder to rotate, swap, mirror, or confuse. Each letter is designed to be slightly more unique, usually by adding "weight" to the bottom so that each letter has an obvious orientation. Some studies have shown that fonts like this can help dyslexics make fewer errors, and read for a longer period of time without tiring.

Check out their website for more info:
www.studiostudio.nl/project-dyslexie/



COMPUSULT

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Located in Mount Pearl, NL, Compusult is the largest provider of AT Solutions in Atlantic Canada. We have over 18 years of experience providing Assistive Technology (AT) products and services to enhance learning environments and make workplaces more accessible.

Everything you Need

Here at Compusult, we provide a wide range of solutions for educational and workplace needs to assist students and employees. Our mobile bundles, which include high-quality portable Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) software and accessories, enhance communication skills using an iPad, iPod Touch, or iPhone.



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- Computer software and hardware for scanning, highlighting, and reading books and documents
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- Alternative computer keyboards and input devices
- Voice recognition and transcription software
- Word prediction and word completion software
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- Computer software to aid learning and literacy in mathematics and reading
- Interactive whiteboard systems



Mobile Solutions

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- Speak It



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October 2011: National LD Awareness Month

Shane Martland, Community Outreach Specialist for the LDANL, reports on a successful National LD Awareness month:

October saw us once again kicking off National LD Awareness Month with a number of events to help raise awareness of learning disabilities in school and the workplace.

Our Open House on October 3rd was one of our most successful, with more than 50 people attending from all over the province. Politicians, members of other not-for-profits, teachers, parents, and representatives from both major colleges made an appearance, as well as a representative from VOCM News, who interviewed our executive director.

On October 20th we hosted a showing of **Journey Into Dyslexia**, a HBO produced documentary exploring the lives of individuals with dyslexia, their struggles in school, and how they eventually overcame their challenges. Another fantastic turn out, and I can honestly say I've never experienced more in depth discussion at one of our events.

Thank you everyone for participating and helping to make both the open house and movie night events a success! We hope to have to continue having successful awareness month events in the future!

School Presentations

Throughout the month of October, Adam Chafe and I attended a number of school presentations on behalf of the organization. We got to see a lot of friendly and familiar faces as we found ourselves in elementary, junior high, and high school classes throughout the city of St. John's. Adam Chafe presented on general learning disabilities in order to help raise awareness, where my presentation was more focused on dysgraphia- given my own personal experiences with it.

The reception was fantastic, and nearly every school we approached with the offer to present took us up on it, but I want to give particular thanks to Leary's Brook Junior High. Not only were they receptive to the idea, they were the first to schedule us for not just a few classes, but the entire school. It was a lot of work, both on our part and theirs, but I feel the presentations were some of our most successful during LD Month. Certainly, it was there I felt the greatest impact of these presentations.

While I was speaking to a Grade 8 class about how important it is to understand that people with learning disabilities be accepted by their peers, a young woman raised her head and calmly declared before her class: "I haven't told anyone in my class this...but I have dyslexia."

The experience was profound for me, and I applaud her for her courage and strength.

I have done a great number of these school presentations, but this is the first time I have ever visibly seen the benefit of them manifest. That our presentation could help someone speak out and self-advocate is amazing, and I can't wait to get back out and present more.

If you or anyone you know would like the LD association to offer a presentation to a school near you, I ask that you contact either the school and refer them to us, or contact us and ask that we contact your school. We are always glad to help raise awareness, and these presentations do just that.

Shane Martland is the Community Outreach specialist for LDANL. He has served with the organization for over a year, and utilizes his experience in the field of customer service and corporate facilitation to speak out about learning disabilities. At an early age, Shane was diagnosed with dysgraphia, and assessments later in life revealed a mild form of dyscalculia, as well as Sensory Integration Dysfunction.





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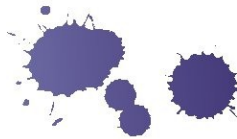
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WINTER TUTORING 2012



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Learning Disabilities Association
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Winter Tutoring Program



Uses the Barton System, an Orton-Gillingham Multi-Sensory approach to reading instruction.

A one-on-one reading tutoring program for children 7 years and older who have learning disabilities, ADHD, or are having reading difficulty.

One session consists of 60 minutes of 1 on 1 tutoring.

Program runs from 4:00pm—8:00pm, Monday to Thursday.

Complete Winter Tutoring Program

- Two 60 minute sessions per week
- 12 Full Weeks from January 16th—April 5th (24 total sessions)
- Cost: \$410.00

Space is limited for this program, and registrations and time slot preference will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.

Early registration for current students will begin December 5th, 2011, and general registration will begin on December 12th, 2011.

To register, call 753-1445 or visit our office. For more information contact the LDANL office, at 753-1445 or Idanl@nl.rogers.com.

**Suite 301, 66 Kenmount Road, St. John's
www.Idanl.ca**