

**HBIDA NANCY LAFEVERS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
PRESIDENT JESSICA HARRIS INTRODUCTION REMARKS**

FEBRUARY 21, 2015

Hilton Hotel, University of Houston

THE NANCY LAFEVERS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD was founded to recognize Branch members who made outstanding contributions for students with dyslexia and related language learning differences in our community. This prestigious award was established in spring of 2006, in memory of Nancy LaFevers Ambroze, a highly respected speech and language pathologist, who believed in early diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia.

She believed that remedial reading curriculums based on Orton-Gillingham principles were the answer for remediating students with dyslexia. An effective and powerful advocate for children with dyslexia, learning differences, and related language disorders, Nancy was a founding member of the Houston Branch of The International Dyslexia Associate where she not only served on the board, but also served as President of the Branch.

Peggy Wyatt Engman

2015 Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award

INTRODUCTION OF PEGGY ENGMAN BY CATHY LORINO

Presented February 21, 2015

Hilton Hotel, University of Houston

In 2006, three members of the Houston Branch Board decided that Nancy LaFevers should be recognized for her pioneering work and continuing support of the Branch. Meeting with Nancy in her office for lunch, Nancy Peiser, Peggy Engman, and I listened as Nancy reminisced about her adventures as an early member of the Houston Branch, events she attended, and even an article in a national magazine that had misquoted her. She had definite ideas about the event – no solemn, dignified luncheon, - she wanted to be “toasted” and “roasted.” She wanted friends and colleagues there to

poke fun at her....and, if I remember right there was discussion about wearing outrageous hats? Well, maybe, maybe not.....anyway, it was a perfect day.... But, by the end of the week, Nancy was in the hospital due to a pulmonary condition and honoring Nancy became a priority for us. In April 2006 in Nancy's hospital room we presented her with the first Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award.

Today we continue to recognize outstanding Houston Branch members who have significantly contributed to the betterment of our community of individuals with dyslexia.

It is fitting that today we honor Nancy's friend and colleague Peggy Engman as the 2015 Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award recipient. Nancy was a speech-language pathologist and so is Peggy. Nancy was a transplant to Texas and so is Peggy. They both devoted their professional lives to helping children with language learning disabilities. They both started their careers at a time when there was little knowledge about dyslexia - but they were among the first to take Alphabetic Phonics, an Orton Gillingham program, at Neuhaus Education Center in the early 1980s. They recognized, as Nancy liked to say, the missing piece for children who had a reading disability.
(44sec)

Now Peggy is a person who gets things done. She's a feisty, "Tennessee Southern Belle" with a "Texas Can Do Attitude", mixed with a good dash of "laissez le bon Temps Roulez" or "let the good times roll" from her college days in Louisiana. She received degrees from Tulane and Newcomb in New Orleans and was named alumni volunteer of the year in 1996. In Houston she started a private practice with a partner when private practice was virtually unknown. She helped Speech Language Pathologists get licensure and found money for equipment for University of Houston's communications department through her sorority, Chi Omega.

One interesting tidbit that people might not know is that Nancy told me we needed to have Peggy on the Houston board because, Nancy said as I noted earlier, "Peggy gets things done." And she was right. In fact, Peggy's first project was to organize the funds that were donated to HBIDA in memory of Nancy. Those donations became the Nancy LaFevers Ambroze Scholarship fund just as Nancy had directed in calls and letters to us.

Since then - 2006, many children and adults have been provided with funds for diagnostic testing by diagnosticians and speech language pathologists – and this is important - who are knowledgeable about dyslexia and understand how to recognize it. In an amazing feat that demanded time and patience, Peggy talked to each applicant, babied and cajoled them, and gave them resources they needed. She did this for eight years until other adventures called. In 2014, she retired, if you can call it retirement. She and Ned have 14 grandchildren and each one is an adventure.

If you know Peggy like many of us here do, you know she has huge amounts of enthusiasm and great follow-through. She can inspire others to join her in her endeavors and she can RAISE MONEY! I found a note in Peggy's Scholarship files that she doesn't know I found. It encapsulates our sentiments about Peggy....."What a joy and pleasure it has been to...work with you. Your energy, your boundless enthusiasm, your positive attitude, your willingness to work hard, and, yes, your fabulous dreams, amaze me!...You have touched my heart. What a treasure you are. Your hard work has raised awareness of our organization and your fundraising letter has enriched our branch treasury. Now we'll be able to work toward our goals of helping all children learn to read at an early age when their brains say it's the optimum opportunity. Thank you, Peggy, for challenging and inspiring us to be the best we can be. You are amazing."