



The BEAR Bulletin

Spring 2025

❖❖❖ "helping children with dyslexia to read"



Red Skelton Collection

During a recent migration of files a folder labeled 'Red Skelton Collection' was discovered. It contained messages regarding the donation of the figurines and pictures to the Learning Centre, how they were to be displayed and the wording for a proposed plaque. The collection is now on display at the Shriners' Club of Hamilton. Upon receiving the file they had a plaque made that reads:

The Red Skelton Collection was donated in 2017 from the estate of Bro. Allan G. Shelley and his wife, Beverley Shelley. In their memory always remember

Live by this credo. Have a little laugh at life and look around you for the happiness instead of sadness. Laughter has always brought me out of unhappy situations.

Red Skelton

Message from the President

The Christmas decorations are barely put away and here we are at Spring Break already. I for one hope the worst of winter is behind us. The first part of 2025 has been busy with a visit to our Learning Centre by three very talented videographers who spent two days with us as part of a national project to prepare a video for the Learning Centre program across Canada. Their travels will also take them to the other eight Learning Centres across Canada.

Planning and preparations for the Niagara satellite are moving along well with great support and involvement of the Scottish Rite members in the Valley of Niagara. Two of those members paid a visit to our Learning Centre to get a first-hand look at the operations and speak with some of our volunteers, children and parents.

Planning and preparations are under way for our Spring Graduation so look for more news on that in coming days.

As the dark winter days begin to slip away, and spring becomes more of a reality I want to especially thank our reception desk volunteers for their smiling faces and welcoming words that have greeted each one of us at the Learning Centre. Their presence has, in no small part, made the Learning Centre a welcoming place every day.

Michael Kirk—President

À bientôt!

The last Monday of February was Colleen Reinhart's last day at the Learning Centre for Hamilton. Colleen's husband has taken a position in Ottawa and they are taking up residence there. At the Centre to say goodbye and wish her well were Board President Michael Kirk and Vice-President Dale Chapman. They presented Colleen with a small gift to show their appreciation for all that Colleen has done for the Centre. It's a sad, happy, nervous and excited time for Colleen and her husband and we all wish them well in this next phase of their lives.



We're in the Movies!

Bill Cave, who assumed the role of Executive Director of the Scottish Rite Learning Centres Program in 2024, has a vision and is implementing a plan. He has established a promotional project to tell the story of the Scottish Rite, the Charitable Foundation and the Learning Centre program.

To that end the Learning Centre for Hamilton and the Hamilton Masonic Centre (the Scottish Rite building) became the backdrops for a film shoot. On February 1st and 2nd available and willing participants, including Board members, volunteers, tutors, parents and children participated. All agreed that it was a fascinating experience.

The videography team was led by Ana Valine, a Vancouver-based director, pursuing her PhD in Film/Media in Kingston. She was assisted by Peter Lee as director of photography and Sebastian Czupa, the production assistant.

It is anticipated that the final product will be presented this spring as representatives of all 9 Learning Centres across Canada gather in Hamilton.



The videography team: Sebastian, Peter and Ana in the main reception room.



Setting up for filming—on the first floor of the Centre.



Volunteer Dave Gordon getting ready for his interview. Lights, camera, action!

Promoting the Learning Centre

At the Spring Reunion of the Toronto Grand Lodge of Perfection, held on March 1, Lenny and Debbie Nazir were the guest speakers at the luncheon. Lenny is a graduate of the Learning Centre for Hamilton and has become a wonderful spokesperson for the program. The talk was very well received and the Learning Centre gratefully received a donation from the Toronto Valley.

Pictured from left to right: Jeffrey R. Dickson 33°, Deputy of Ontario, Earl Walsh 33°, Debbie Nazir, Lenny Nazir, President Mike Kirk 32°, Vice-President Dale Chapman 32°, Dean Nazir, Co-directors Barbara and Michael Baxter.



From our Co-directors

Under the training and supervision of Tutor-Trainer Meredith Hutchings, 15 tutors have been delivering Orton-Gillingham phonetic reading and spelling skills to 22 children. Congratulations to child Alex who graduated in January. Welcome to children Griffin and Quinn who started in January. Because of dedicated tutors, all children are achieving growth and success which is exciting and appreciated by every child and their families.

The success of the Learning Centre for Hamilton happens because of many special people that work together, in the best interest of every child that comes to the Centre. The following people are appreciated year-round.

Great thanks to...

Board Members: President Michael Kirk, Vice President Dale Chapman, Ian Anderson, Robert Dunne, Mario Kovacevic, Alex Mouriopoulos and Don Thornton

Tutor-Trainer: Meredith Hutchings

Tutors: Elspeth Daley, Iris Duemm, Megan Jukes, Joshua Las, Barbara Leisinger, Jennifer Marshall, Donna McManamy, Jodi Northey, Leah Panszyk, Colleen Reinhart, Claudia Riberio, Stephanie Shewfelt, and Heidi Tadeson

Volunteer Coordinator: Dale Chapman

Reception Room Volunteers: Dale Chapman, David Gordon, Kathy Hamilton, Brian Muir, Linda Murphy, Dean Nazir, Bill Patterson, Bob Philips, Bob Stewart, and Nancy Wood

Bookkeeper, Newsletter Editor, Facebook and Website Administrator: Lee Gowers

Special thanks and best wishes to each volunteer Al Baker, Arlene Baker, and Brandon Morrison, and Tutor Colleen Reinhart who have taken on different life journeys.

Much thanks to everyone for your donations and support all year.

Wishing all Spring Blessings and a Happy Easter with family and friends in April.

Barbara & Michael Baxter

From our Tutor-Trainer

Fall and now winter seem to be flying by! The Canadian wintery weather has been overshadowed by the ever shifting national and international scenes. However, luckily for us, our little Learning Centre continues to motor along smoothly thanks to everyone involved. Parents bring our deserving children regularly while our wonderful tutors step up to deliver the Structure of English in such a professional manner! The volunteers continue to make sure we are all safe and don't lose our gloves and hats. Thank you to all who keep the operation glued together.

I see excellent tutoring as I continue to observe online during these winter months. Training also continues as we see another cohort of tutors come to the end of their training cycle. Certified OG tutors are worth their weight in gold and we continue to expand our 'A team' of expertise. A shared learning session about Vocabulary and Comprehension Development was provided online in February. We continue to make our training program more efficient time-wise, as well as a more shared learning experience for our community of tutors.

We especially appreciate all these wonderful people's contributions as we see some of our cherished tutors leave our community. We said goodbye to Margaret Cowan before Christmas and now see Colleen Reinhart, our illustrious speech language pathologist, move to my neighborhood, our nation's capital. Thank you to these two for their devotion to Orton-Gillingham and their tutoring families.

With a new Executive Director now in place, we will begin to see how this wonderful national organization will grow. This June, I look forward to three days of sharing with Centre trainers from the nine Learning Centres when we meet at the Scottish Rite in Hamilton. Exciting times!.

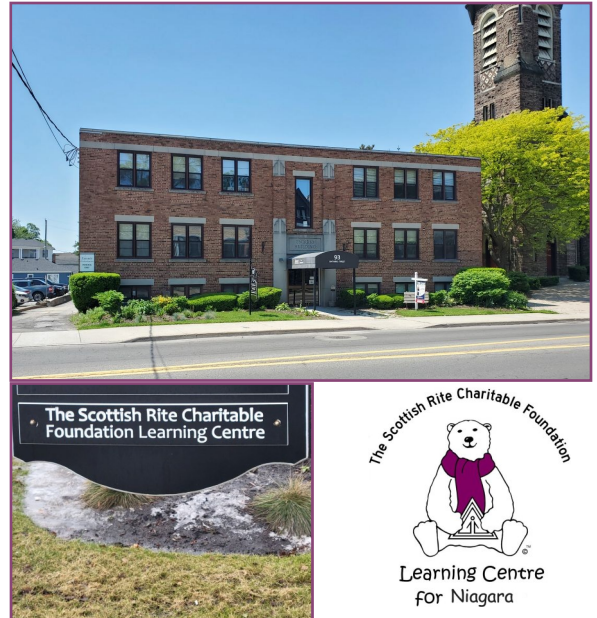
Meredith Hutchings

Learning Centre for Niagara

The Learning Centre for Niagara is steps closer to becoming a reality. This news will be most welcome to the children of the Niagara region who deal with dyslexia.

Following a long search a lease on a unit in the building pictured to the right was signed last fall. The medical arts building is on Ontario Street in St. Catharines. It is a smaller facility than the house on George Street but will easily accommodate the needs of a new centre: the plan is to begin with three tutors and children. Members of the Scottish Rite Valley of Niagara are in the process of organizing a governing board to oversee the setup and operation of the Centre. It will be run as a satellite of the Learning Centre for Hamilton for the first few years, eventually becoming a 'stand alone' operation.

There is much to do! Volunteer tutors and a tutor-trainer are top of the list, then to find children who need their help (which should be the easiest part), volunteers to hold everything together and, of course, donations to keep it going.



Niagara Board members visited the Learning Centre for Hamilton

It was a cherished dream of Tom Lewis, who served as Treasurer for the Learning Centre for Hamilton, to have a Learning Centre in Niagara. Tom passed away, quite suddenly and unexpectedly last November. He would be ever so pleased to see that dream coming to fruition. Co-incidentally it was in this very building that Tom began his career in accounting!



Reception Area



Tutoring Room





The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation
Learning Centre for Hamilton
"helping children with dyslexia to read"

Donation Form

Donor Information

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Prov _____ PC _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

Payment Options

Cheque: Please make cheque payable to: *The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton*

E-transfer: office@dyslexiacentrehamilton.com

Please send an e-mail to office@dyslexiacentrehamilton.com with your name, address and phone number so an official receipt for income tax purposes can be issued to you.

Credit Card: Card # _____

Security Code (3 numbers on back of card) _____ Expiry (MM/YY) _____

Name on Card _____

Amount of donation _____ One time ☐ Monthly ☐

Donation is in memory or honour of _____

Acknowledgement to be sent to: _____



Donations (one time or monthly) may also be made through **CanadaHelps**.
Visit CanadaHelps.org and search for Learning Centre for Hamilton.
Official receipts for income tax purposes will be issued by CanadaHelps.

Donations of \$20 or more will be acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

Donors names will be printed in our newsletter.
Please let us know how you would like to be recognized.

Donor Name: _____

Anonymous

If donating by cheque please complete this form and mail it and your cheque to:

SRCF Learning Centre for Hamilton
148 George Street
Hamilton ON L8P 1E5

If donating by credit card complete this form and email to: office@dyslexiacentrehamilton.com



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