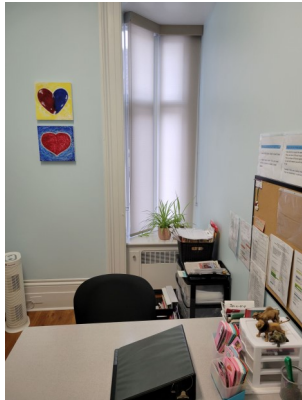




The BEAR Bulletin

❖❖❖ *“helping children with dyslexia to read”*



No Peeking!

The new windows that were installed last summer are great: no more drafts and no noise travelling between the tutoring rooms. However they provided an open view into the building for anyone walking by. No longer! Beautiful blinds have been installed on the two windows on the main floor: they still allow in some light while providing privacy for those inside. They look good from the inside, and just as good from the outside. Our thanks to the good people at Blinds-To-Go for their assistance.

Message from the President

Hopefully winter is in the rear-view mirror and warm and sunny days are on the horizon. As April is National Volunteer Month this would be a good time to highlight the volunteers that keep our Learning Centre ticking along. It goes without saying that the Learning Centre would not be open without its volunteer tutors and for their dedication we are ever grateful. But no less important and essential are the reception desk volunteers who contribute so much to the welcoming spirit of the Learning Centre and continue to make it a positive place to be. I would be remiss if I did not mention those invisible volunteers who keep our newsletter, website and Facebook page up and running and also those who work to maintain and upgrade our computer capabilities and keep an eye on the maintenance of the building.

Without volunteers we would not and could not exist.

Michael Kirk—President

National Volunteer Month: Every Moment Matters

The theme for National Volunteer Week, April 14-20, highlights the importance of every volunteer and each contribution they make at a moment when we need support more than ever. Volunteers share their time, skills, empathy and creativity to improve the well-being of our communities. In 2018 79% of Canadians aged at least 15 years took part in some form of volunteer work, giving over 2.5 billion hours. This work was worth approximately \$55 billion or 2.5 million full-time jobs.

At the Learning Centre for Hamilton we are very lucky to have so many people willing to give of themselves as we fulfill our mandate of *“helping children with dyslexia to read”*. This year our 13 volunteer tutors have delivered 419 hours of tutoring, and put in many more preparing the lessons. Our 8 reception room volunteers have been on duty for 196 hours this year. And our Board members have contributed many hours in support of the Centre, tracking finances, planning for the future, keeping the building safe and attractive, and much more. Every Moment Matters: Every Volunteer Matters.



Meet Some of Our Volunteers



Reception room volunteers Al & Arlene Baker

Photo courtesy of their niece, Lynda Yorkston

Arlene and Albert Baker are retired and wanted to do something so now volunteer at the Learning Centre for Hamilton two times a month. They have been volunteering most of their lives. Arlene helped with a reading program in schools, was a Guide leader, a Brownie leader, Commissioner and trainer with the Girl Guides of Canada for over 50 years. She was presented with the Ontario volunteer award by then Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Lincoln Alexander. Both of them volunteered with the Week of the Child committee, a group of all local agencies involved with children and Arlene was president of this group. They were also parent therapists working with troubled children and their families through Chedoke hospital. Albert was a guidance counsellor in schools and helped coach girls and boys basketball as well as being involved with the Masons, the Scottish Rite and the Shriners for many years. It was through his involvement with those organizations that they first heard about the Learning Centre for Hamilton.

I am now in my 2nd year of tutoring at the Learning Centre for Hamilton and enjoying it just as much as I did when I first started. I appreciate the opportunity to be trained in Orton-Gillingham through this apprenticeship model that the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation provides. The in-class training, collaborating with other tutors and tutoring twice a week allows me to further my learning. Preparing the lessons can be challenging and time consuming at times but seeing the skills that my student is gaining makes it all worthwhile. The achievements he is making with his reading and spelling continue to motivate me to make a difference in the lives of dyslexic students. I can't wait to see the growth that he will have made at the end of this year as he gets close to finishing Level 3. Volunteering at the centre provides me the opportunity to give back to my community and support a cause near and dear to my heart. As a Reading Specialist for HWDSB, I support teachers and struggling readers in Kindergarten to Grade 3 and am using some of my OG learning and activities in my daily practice to help improve teacher instruction and reading intervention. The students enjoy the multi-sensory activities the best. From May to October I enjoy my time at the trailer and look forward to visits with my family in Florida throughout the entire year. Lily, the dog, is my pride and joy and enjoys sitting right amongst my papers and resources when I'm writing lessons. *"Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love."* Mother Teresa



Volunteer tutor Jennifer Marshall



Board member Bob Dunne

Bob Dunne has an engineering and business background and spent the majority of his working career in the high technology sales field. During the latter stages of his career he was part of the executive management teams of two electronic instrumentation companies, retiring in 1999 as president of Fluke Electronics Canada. He and his wife set up a family consulting company with a focus on business planning and recruiting to aid small businesses. Bob has sat on several boards and/or advisory boards over the years and really enjoys this type of involvement. Currently he volunteers at the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital two half days per week and is a member of the Governance Committee of the Oakville Hospital Volunteer Association. He finds his involvement with the hospital to be a truly rewarding experience. Bob was recently invited to join the Board of the Learning Centre for Hamilton through his Masonic affiliations. He looks forward to learning more about the Centre and participating with his colleagues to realize their expansion visions.

From our Co-directors

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time: they just have the heart.”

For the first time pre and post pandemic the Learning Centre for Hamilton is running smoothly in-person four days a week, Monday to Thursday. Thirteen volunteer tutors prepare and deliver 2 individualized Orton-Gillingham lessons per week to sixteen children. Nine volunteer front desk monitors greet children, families, and tutors in the reception room. One volunteer takes care of publications and branding which includes the newsletter, website, and Facebook page. Eight volunteers are active Board Members who are responsible for various committees to meet the needs of the Centre.

The Learning Centre for Hamilton functions daily and weekly because of compassionate and caring volunteers who support children learning to read and spell. Thank you to the following people who are an important part of the success of the program year-round:

Volunteer Tutors: Barbara Baxter, Michael Baxter, Margaret Cowan, Elspeth Daley, Iris Duemm, Megan Jukes, Barb Leisinger, Jennifer Marshall, Sarah McKee, Donna McManamy, Leah Panszczyk, Colleen Reinhart, and Stephanie Shewfelt

Volunteer Reception Room Monitors: Al Baker, Arlene Baker, Dale Chapman, Bob Goodwin, David Gordon, Alex Mouriopoulos, Brian Muir, Linda Murray, and Kevin Vance

Volunteer Publications and Branding and Newsletter Editor: Lee Gowers

Volunteer Board Members: Ian Anderson, Dale Chapman, Robert Dunne, Michael Kirk, Mario Kovacevic, Tom Lewis, Alex Mouriopoulos, and Don Thornton

We are very thankful to each of you and for all you do.

Barbara & Michael Baxter

From our Tutor-Trainer

This year seems to be speeding by! We now have three cohorts of tutors being trained, all at various stages of learning how to craft and deliver Orton-Gillingham lessons. Some have taken on their second child, which is mandatory to complete certification. Our waitlist of children is growing so we hope that we can attract some new tutors to begin their training this August.

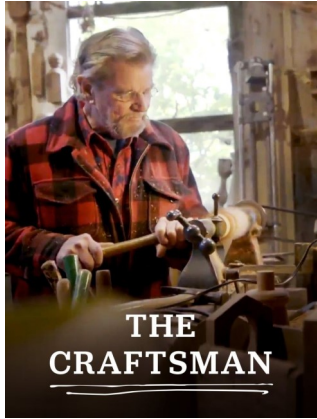
One of the wonderful characteristics of the Orton-Gillingham intervention technique is its effectiveness through consistent delivery. Twice a week, for one hour, our tutors work efficiently with our children to deliver solidly crafted, personalized lessons. In just these two hours per week, magical rewiring of the brain happens! This post-pandemic fall and winter, these pairs have been able to work in person with regularity, and consequently, lovely progress is being made on all fronts! Our tutors are progressing in their development as certified OG tutors. Children are progressing with increasingly sophisticated literacy reading and spelling skills.

As we settle in as a more experienced Learning Centre, our training has also begun a more consistent annual schedule. We are working to make the training process more efficient and effective. For example, we have begun to present parts of the nine module, 45 hour, compulsory training to the entire group of tutors. One of our tutors, Colleen Reinhart, is a Speech Language Therapist, and she presented a terrific session about language development to the group last year. This fall, a psychologist shared information about the process of diagnosing dyslexia. These shared training experiences are beneficial as they provide times for tutors to strengthen their ties with each other and become more aware of the expertise each brings to the Learning Centre.

In addition, we had our first Zoom Tutor Sharing. Tutors shared practical ideas which they have implemented into their OG lessons. We will be doing more of these sharing sessions for sure: we are very lucky to have such a talented group of people volunteering their expertise with the children who come for OG lessons. Our wonderful Centre Directors, Michael and Barbara Baxter, have organized tutor resources beautifully. Some of the new ideas which are being shared will help us to expand this inventory with some fun, motivating additions. Thank you Baxters, and thanks to all of our terrific tutors and families!

Meredith Hutchings

Dyslexia on Television



Eric Hollenbeck is a 70-something gentleman who, with his family, is in the restoration business. For almost 50 years they have owned and operated Blue Ox Millworks in Eureka, California, using the tools and techniques of the past century to repair or reproduce custom millwork. Eric is a woodworker, environmentalist, veteran of the Vietnam War, mentor and storyteller. He is also dyslexic. In every episode of *The Craftsman* he talks openly about the obstacles he has overcome, including self-doubt and a feeling of worthlessness. Eric dropped out of school at age 16: not being able to read or write he felt stupid and inadequate and undervalued his work. Since 2000 Blue Ox has partnered with the Humboldt County Office of Education to work with marginalized students who have been expelled from school, so they discover self-esteem and the value of good, quality work. Every episode of *The Craftsman* reveals another amazing project and a fascinating story. *The Craftsman* airs on The Magnolia Network.

And finally....

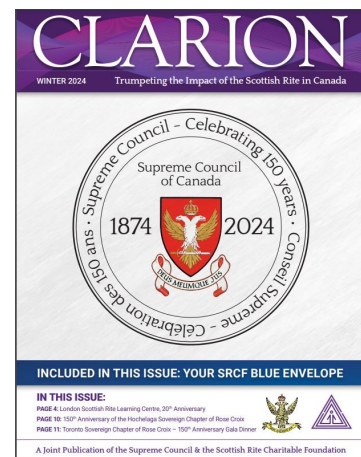
Dust off your clubs and round up your friends for the 95th Edition of the "Red Apple Trophy".

There will be prizes for a hole-in-one, mens and ladies longest drives and closest to the pin.

A day of golf will be topped off with a delicious meal in the club house.

For more information or to register call Ken Adamson at 905.522.1622 ext 22 or HamiltonValleyGolf@gmail.com

The Winter 2024 edition of the *Clarion* has been mailed to all members of the Scottish Rite and is available for viewing on the website of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of Canada: scottishritecanada.ca. This edition has an excellent article about the Learning Centre for Hamilton, submitted by Board President, Ill. Bro. Michael Kirk, 32°.



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