



June 2022  
Volume 9

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# The Bear Bulletin

Learning Center for Hamilton

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a wonderful wrap up for this school year! On Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup> we celebrated three significant milestones for the Learning Centre and particularly for our children and volunteer tutors. With the end of the school year, we became a mature Learning Centre and celebrated that milestone with the formal dedication of the Learning Centre. The formal ceremony was emotional, and it was made even more so by its being held in the Scottish Rite Cathedral. Our profound thanks to Illustrious Bro Robert Whitmore Sovereign Grand Commander, for conducting the ceremony.

That remarkable event was followed by the formal recognition of the Learning Centre's first eight graduates. We are so proud of their success and recognize their hard work and dedication as well as the positive support of their families in making it a reality.

If that were not enough for one day, we also celebrated the certification of Barbara and Michael Baxter as Orton-Gillingham tutors.

Congratulations to all!

We are now planning to return in September with additional new tutors and new children.

## CO-DIRECTORS MICHAEL AND BARBARA BAXTER'S MESSAGE

Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation  
Learning Centre for Hamilton  
Dedication and First Graduation  
June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
What a grand day!

The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton was officially dedicated June 5th because the Centre had certified tutors and children who were ready to graduate. Tutors Michael and Barbara Baxter completed their certification in August 2021. In June 2022, eight children had successfully completed the Orton Gillingham program after 3-4 years of commitment and hard work, overcoming dyslexia.

Dedication and Graduation! It takes a team to help a child have the right to read. These two goals were reached because of the commitment of many people:

Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and executive  
Tutor Trainer Meredith Hutchings from Ottawa  
Tutors Michael and Barbara Baxter, Meredith Hutchings, Nikki Brooks, and Claudia Ribeiro  
Board Members - present President Michael Kirk, past President Don Thornton, Mario Kovacevic,  
Ian Anderson, Thomas Lewis, David Walden, and Ken Laliberte  
Volunteer Coordinator Dale Chapman  
Current volunteers: Stu Berketo, Dale Chapman David Gordon, Lee Gowers, Mike Kirk, Peter  
Lesser, Don Thornton, and Kevin Vance  
Former volunteers: Ian Craig, Brian Kiernan, Gary McLean, Dave Monette, Mike Samoila, Peter  
Smith, Steve Warren, and Patti Harris- Lundstrom  
Ken Adamson: Scottish Rite Liason  
Leslie Drake: Bookkeeper  
Past Newsletter Editor Lee Kools and present Newsletter Editor Kevin Vance  
Andrew Kovacevic: Social Media Support  
Michelle Sala: Psychologist Support  
Tony Stayrer: Video Security System  
Michael and Barbara Baxter: Co-directors Learning Centre for Hamilton

We are extremely excited and proud of our children, Dylan, Charlie, Lenny, Natalie, Paige, Jake, Sydney, and Dakota, our first graduates from the Orton Gillingham program at the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton.

We wish everyone a happy, safe, and healthy summer and look forward to working with present and new tutors, and present and new children and their families in September.

## THE LEARNING CENTRE HISTORY

The Learning Centre for Hamilton Ceremony of Dedication and Graduation was the result of a nine year process needed to make the Learning Centre dream a reality. There were several key steps involved in creating the Centre which led to its official opening in 2018.

The idea for the Learning Centre was presented to the Hamilton Scottish Rite on February 1, 2013.

The report recommending that the Centre proceed received tentative approval in January 2014.

Letters Patent were granted by Ontario on June 30, 2016.

Approval for Charitable Status was received from the Canada Revenue Agency on November 7, 2016.

The lease of 148 George Street, Hamilton was obtained in late 2016.

Renovations of 148 George Street commenced in summer of 2017 and were completed in early 2018.

Fundraising events including the first and second galas at Liuna Gardens were held in 2016 and 2018.

Plays put on under the direction of Lee Kools and golf tournaments sponsored by the Valley of Hamilton were held as fundraisers.

Training of the first tutors began in February 2018.

The first children were accepted and started their lessons in April 2018.

The official opening of the Learning Centre for Hamilton was held on September 16, 2018.

The Learning Centre held its Ceremony of Dedication and First Graduation on June 5, 2022 to recognize the first eight children who have graduated from the program and the certification of two tutors.

As we look to the future, the Learning Centre for Hamilton is continuing to grow. In the fall of 2022 we will welcome five new tutors and new children who will receive the gifts of reading and spelling.



Thank you to the Valley of Toronto A & ASR for their generous donation of \$5000 to the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton presented by Gareth Taylor, President of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada at the Dedication and Graduation.



## TESTIMONIALS AT THE GRADUATION—JUNE 5TH 2022

**Parent Debbie’s Testimonial:** ... “Not only has Lenny been given the ability to read and write proficiently, but Lenny has also been given the ability to LEARN, increased self-esteem and has even gained a LOVE of reading! ...Lenny no longer has dyslexia standing in their way of learning and being successful at school. Lenny is now able to aspire to post-secondary education and is planning on using their creativity and ability to think outside the box for a career in marketing or web design. Lenny also plans to somehow volunteer at the Learning Centre as a way of giving back and staying connected to this amazing Centre that has given Lenny so much.” ...

**Parent Doug’s Testimonial:** “... Over the past years we have seen the progress made by Paige. With that progress came increased confidence and a greater sense of self-esteem. These are priceless gifts that you have given our daughter. Her future is brighter because of you. This program works. Look around at the young men and women here today – they are the proof.”

**Parent Ilona’s Testimonial:** “We couldn’t be more thankful for the support of the Learning Centre for Hamilton. From the moment Dakota started tutoring we’ve experienced nothing but positivity and confidence in Dakota’s ability to grasp new concepts. Not only in reading, spelling, and writing, but in all areas academically. We’re happy to report this is the first year Dakota has achieved 80s and 90s without constant support. We’ve never seen Dakota more excited about learning.” ...

**Parent Aoife’s Testimonial:** “Getting Dylan’s acceptance to the program came with tears of joy. One of the most important things that this program gave us was hope. ... We are so proud of the effort that Dylan gave this program and we are eternally thankful to the Learning Centre for Hamilton, and the Scottish Rite for this life changing experience.” ...

### **Child Natalie’s Testimonial:**

I have dyslexia.

I never thought I would make it this far, but I did. It was not easy but look at me I’m graduating. When I joined this program, I had no hope that it would help, because I had tried thing after thing just to get my schoolwork done. It took a lot of hard work to be here today. I did not have hope, but now I do feel like I could do anything if I wanted to. I feel like a normal kid, and I can do my grade work without people looking at me weird. Now I can just do what I should have been doing from the start. To be honest this grade 8 year is the first time I felt normal, like everyone else. I’m so happy that kids with dyslexia can get help so they can feel good about themselves.

## CONGRATULATIONS FIRST GRADUATES



Learning Centre for Hamilton  
Orton Gillingham Graduates of 2022  
Dakota, Lenny, Charlie, Paige, Dylan, and Natalie  
Absent: Jake and Sydney

“Learning to read is not a privilege,  
but a basic and essential human right.”



Sincerest thanks to the official party members from the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Canada who conducted the Ceremony of Dedication: Ill Bro Robert Whitmore Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill Bro Ronald Taylor Deputy for Ontario, Ill Bro Tomas Wills Active Member for Hamilton, Ill Bro Gordon Maitland Grand Prior, Ill Bro Gareth Taylor President of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and Michael Kirk Learning Centre for Hamilton Board President.

The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton  
is dedicated to the glory of God and the service of children.