



# The BEAR Bulletin

❖❖❖ *"helping children with dyslexia to read"*

## The Bear Symbol

- \* Different teddy bears have been used as logos with Scottish Rite Learning Centres in Canada, the US and Scotland to emphasize service to children and the warmth and friendliness of the Centres
- \* In Canada a warm fuzzy and friendly polar bear is used as a distinctive symbol to indicate the independence of the Canadian program in the cooler part of North America while reaching out to children in need
- \* The polar bear carries the copyrighted logo of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada

## Message from the President

The end of November signals the commencement of the Holiday Season and we wish the best to all our Learning Centre friends as the celebrations unfold. It also signals that we are almost halfway through this school year. COVID-19 and seasonal flu are rearing their heads again. While it would be great to return to the old normal the Learning Centre will be continuing with the same health and safety protocols that have served us well since the return to in-person tutoring in September 2021.

Even as in-person tutoring continues we realize that lessons will be missed because of illness and weather. While some have indicated a desire for an online alternative the rules under which the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centres operate do not currently permit that option.

The past few months have been busy for the Centre on a different front: all of our publications and marketing materials have been revamped and we are expecting our renovated website to be live very soon. In addition our Facebook page is 'under new management' and will be much more active in the future.

Thank you to all who work so diligently to make a difference in the lives of the children and the families we serve.

May your Holiday Season be filled with joy and celebration.

*Michael Kirk—President*

## Thank you to our Donors

**With the support of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation and generous donors we are giving children the gifts and lifelong skills of reading and spelling.**

With gratitude to David Kemp and Robert Kerr.

With gratitude to the Brantford Scottish Rite Association. A cheque was presented to Board President Michael Kirk and Board member Don Thornton at the Murton Lodge of Perfection on October 30.

With gratitude to the Murton Lodge of Perfection for donations in honour of Ill Bro. Robert S. Whitmore, 33° and Ill. Bro. David A. Bennett, 33°.

With gratitude to members of the Rose Croix and Moore Sovereign Consistory for donations received at the Fall Reunions.

## From our Co-directors

Since opening in September 2018 the Learning Centre for Hamilton has been successfully meeting its goals. The Learning Centre has been up and running in-person Tuesdays and Thursdays since the end of September. Nine tutors have been providing Orton-Gillingham lessons to 10 children. Our goal for next September is to extend our program to also include Mondays and Wednesdays, therefore establishing more programming to help more children with dyslexia.

Every year has had its challenges but we have consistently found ways to keep providing programming. This fall's challenge has been getting everyone into the building. Sickness (colds, flu, COVID) has interfered with consistent programming and we see this may continue to be an issue throughout the winter. We have continued with requiring double

## From our Tutor-Trainer

This fall has been a productive time at the Hamilton Learning Centre. With the welcoming of four new tutors and four new families our weekly activity has increased significantly. The care taken by our tutors, new and returning, to individualize their approaches to meet their child's needs are exemplary!

Along with tutor training, observations of lessons are ongoing this fall. This is a unique feature of the Orton-Gillingham technique. The training is like an apprenticeship, as each tutor gradually gains the skills and expertise to teach the structure of English in all its sophisticated facets.

We have a truly special group of tutors and I want to thank each of them for working so diligently and

vaccinations and masking for the safety of all in the Learning Centre. We do not see this practice changing.

Even though lessons are irregular, growth is being seen in all children thanks to dedicated tutors. Children and families are very happy for the services provided through our Learning Centre.

The creation and completion of new marketing materials and social media platforms has been beneficial for awareness, support, and soliciting new children and tutors.

Many people are responsible for the continued success of the Learning Centre for Hamilton: the children and their families, President Mike Kirk and board members Mario Kovacevic, Tom Lewis, Ian Anderson, Don Thornton, and Dave Walden, bookkeeper Leslie Drake, volunteers Dale Chapman, Lee

caringly. Thank you, Sarah McKee, Elspeth Daley, Donna McManamy, Colleen Reinhart, Heather McNulty, Stephanie Shewfelt, Jennifer Marshall, Michael Baxter, and Barbara Baxter.

Thank you to all involved in building the Learning Centre for Hamilton community: President Mike Kirk, Learning Centre Board members, co-directors, volunteers, tutors, children, and families. Also, I wish to thank Orton-Gillingham colleagues in Moncton and Halifax who provide me with feedback and guidance to improve the training process.

Our co-directors have been very busy at the Centre. They have ensured that all our tutoring rooms are equipped for each tutor-child pair.

Gowers, Kevin Vance, and Andrew Kovacevic, tutor-trainer Meredith Hutchings, and tutors Sarah McKee, Elspeth Daley, Donna McManamy, Colleen Reinhart, Heather McNulty, Stephanie Shewfelt, Jennifer Marshall, and Michael and Barbara Baxter.

Thank you for the on-going support and donations from the Scottish Rite, freemasons, masonic lodges, and the many other donors. Your support ensures the continuation of the program.

Thank you to all, for all you do to help children overcome dyslexia. Together we are better.

**Wishing all people near and far a joyous festive season with family and friends.**

*Barbara & Michael Baxter*

They have gone the extra mile to catalogue all of the tutor resources available in our resource room: this list is beneficial in that each tutor can take advantage of the hands-on resources that make OG lessons so effective. In addition they have diligently resourced many new books for our 'library', so that each child can select something to read that is of interest and at an appropriate reading level. These 'new readers' are becoming part of the club of readers, an experience that is life-changing and will last their lifetimes.

To all who make the Learning Centre for Hamilton such a special and growing place, have a safe holiday and enjoy this time with your loved ones.

*Meredith Hutchings*

## An Honour for a Co-director

Barbara Baxter, co-director of and tutor at the Learning Centre for Hamilton was recently nominated for the 2022 Woman of Spirit Award, presented by the Women's Canadian Club of Hamilton.

In his letter of nomination Learning Centre Board President Mike Kirk explained that Barb and Mike Baxter first came to the Centre looking for a volunteer activity that allowed them to use their skills to give back to their community. He outlined how Barb became a tutor, detailing the training and commitment it took to become a certified OG tutor. He went on to explain how she became a co-director of the Centre and all that the position entailed. He wrote 'all this she undertook with grace and enthusiasm, determined to make things work for this new Learning Centre and the children it services.' The nomination spoke of Barb's generous nature, not only with her time and skills, but with acts and deeds such as ensuring there are peanut-free snacks for the children, special treats for special days, thank you cards and small gifts for the volunteers, even offering to help the neighbour of the Centre with his gardening. In fact Barbara gave each of the other nominees for the Woman of Spirit Award a card of congratulations at the award luncheon!

Her nomination package also included information about Barb's involvement with the House of Hope, the first shelter for victims of domestic abuse in north-east Saskatchewan. Her efforts towards having the House of Hope funded and built (twice – in November 2014 as it neared completing the structure burned down) meant that victims of domestic violence in that part of the province didn't need to travel long distances to find safety.

The nomination letter ended by saying 'We are left to wonder what state the Learning Centre would be in today had Barbara and Michael Baxter not appeared on the scene, ready to do whatever needed to be done. We, their students and their families are forever grateful and deeply indebted to them'.

The Woman of Spirit Award was initiated to honour a famous Hamilton woman from our past and one from our present. The award is presented at a luncheon in October, which

is Women's History Month. Scotiabank donates \$500 in the name of the winner to the charity of her choice and the Women's Canadian Club presents her with a piece of artwork crafted by a local woman artist. This year the award was presented to Charaya Thach, Chair of the YWCA Hamilton Board of Directors.



Barbara and Michael Baxter with Michael Kirk  
Photo by Shelley Cameron

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**In taking on the role of Co-director she brought with her a rare sense of insight and compassion for all the students and their families, making the Learning Centre more of a supportive and caring community.**

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Nominees for the 2022 Woman of Spirit Award

Photo by Shelley Cameron



Learning Centre  
for Hamilton

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

# Donation Form

## Donor Information

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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 email to office@dyslexiacentrehamilton.com with your name, address and phone number so we can issue an official receipt for income tax purposes.

**Credit Card**      VISA       MasterCard

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of donation \_\_\_\_\_      One time       Monthly



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.

Those donating \$500 or more will receive a certificate of appreciation and a pin.

After filling out this form please mail it to:

**Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation  
Learning Centre for Hamilton  
148 George Street  
Hamilton ON L8P 1E5**