



The Foundation Newsletter

THE SCOTTISH RITE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION OF CANADA

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Halifax-Dartmouth opens Learning Centre

September 17 was an exciting day at the old Notting Park School in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, as the ribbon was cut to officially open the new Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre. Officiating at the opening were (l-r) Eric Lavers and Ivan Truen of the Dartmouth Masonic Properties Foundation, Grand Sovereign Commander Robert Townshend,



past Sovereign Grand Commander Orlan Weber and Robert Taylor, Chairman Masonic Foundation of Nova Scotia and Deputy for Nova Scotia, PEI and Labrador. In the background is Vern Toole, chair of fund raising. Lessons began October 20 with six children and six tutors. The Centre is hoping to accept another group of children in January. Prior to its opening, the Centre had received 15 inquiries from parents. Inquiries are expected to rise significantly once classes begin.

The Centre has four tutoring rooms, a large reception area for family, staff offices, group meeting/boardroom and a staff lounge. All tutoring sessions are video and audio recorded.

This information is reviewed by the tutor trainer to provide tutors with feedback and recommendations for their tutoring sessions.



Credit Card donations now possible

It's now possible to donate to the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation using your credit card. The new option was officially launched at September's Annual General Meeting in Halifax by Allard Loopstra, head of the Foundation's communications committee. Twenty Brothers at the AGM were so excited by the opportunity that they used the credit card option on the Blue Envelope right then and there.

"It's all about making it easy to give while still being secure," said Allard. "Donors can make annual or monthly

payments and forget about cheques or money orders. You don't even have to use the Blue Envelope. Just call the Hamilton Office at 905 522-0033 and they'll take care of the details. And if your Valley has a 'swipe' machine you'll even be able to give at events."

Discussions have begun to make donating by credit card on the Internet possible, although no launch time has been established.

At present, donations can be made using Visa and MasterCard. Debit cards can't be used.

Monthly donations will be withdrawn from the donor's bank account on or about the 25th of each month. If you're part of a credit card loyalty program you will get points for your donation to the Foundation.

The complete list of donation options (for both Masons and non-Masons) appears on the Foundation's web site: www.srcf.ca. In addition, all Valleys are being provided with counter top display holders and a pamphlet that outlines donation options.

Central Alberta nabs highest participation rate

Halifax Valley takes two of three awards at AGM

In the second year of an awards program to recognize donations to the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, a trend is emerging. Last year, Windsor won all three categories as they prepared to open a new Learning Centre for Dyslexic Children. This year, Halifax Valley won two of the three awards as they prepared to open a Learning Centre in Dartmouth. The Halifax Learning Centre celebrated its official opening on September 17.

Following are the award winners:

Highest Average Donation

Calculated by dividing the total amount donated (both individual and from events) by the total membership. The top five Valleys are:

	<i>Avg. donation</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Members</i>
Halifax	\$218.97	\$125,906.47	575
Windsor	125.46	70,759.40	564
London	25.75	39,519.52	1,535
Central Alberta	24.94	2,145.00	86
Chatham	23.68	6,156.20	260

Highest Participation Rate

As SRCF President John Lawer said: "This category is quite important to us because we are trying to increase the participation rate. What we've found over the years is that people who donate, donate quite generously (an average of \$94.50 this year). Obviously, if more people donate – and the individual gift remains at its current average – our donation total will rise. This year, the national participation rate was 5.8%, up slightly from 5.4% in 2004/05. The rate in 2003/04 was 6.6%. We continue to strive for a national participation rate of 10%."

The top five Valleys are:

Central Alberta	20.00%
Kamloops	16.67%
Chatham	15.38%
Fort William	12.59%
Summerside	12.38%

Largest Increase in Donation

This award recognizes the Valley whose total year-over-year increase is greatest. Given their huge per member average (Highest Average Donation) it should come as no surprise that Halifax is this year's winner with a year-over-year increase in total donation of \$114,698.47.

The top five are:

Halifax	\$144,698.47
Barrie	\$ 4,872.75
Fort William	\$ 4,658.50
Peterborough	\$ 1,694.70
Central Alberta	\$ 1,345.00

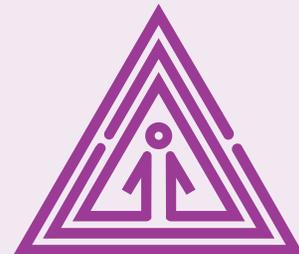
During the Foundation luncheon in Halifax, President John Lawer added a cautionary note among the celebrations: "While we are delighted to see the donations rise (\$492,000 from \$400,000) I am concerned that the amount being donated for medical research is declining (\$110,682 from \$138,972). How can one figure be rising while the other is falling? The answer is simple: an increasing percentage of donations is being allocated to the Learning Centres.

"While I'm happy to see the strong support for the Learning Centres, I hope we don't forget that we also support basic medical research through grants to University researchers and graduate students. This has been central to our purpose from the first day and I hope it will continue. As important as it is to support the Learning Centres, it is equally important that we fund research into the possible causes and cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's."

2005- Financial

Statement of capital revenue

	2006	2005
Revenue		
Donations		
Individuals, Lodges and Masonic organizations	\$110,682	\$138,972
London Learning Centre donations	59,687	96,685
Other Learning Centre donations	191,573	52,085
Requests	129,726	112,320
Capital revenue	<u>\$491,668</u>	<u>\$400,062</u>



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New perceptions of dyslexia



At the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, Dr. Marc Joanisse is a young researcher heading a young lab doing research to benefit young people – children with dyslexia, a widely misunderstood problem. Originally from Ottawa, he came back to Canada in 2000 from University of Southern California. Why? “Western is the place to do this.

It’s a major centre for this kind of research.”

He’s talking about exciting research, funded by the Scottish Rite Foundation and supported by the Scottish Rite Learning Centre in London, to actually look into the brains of dyslexic children to discover what is different about them, in order to one day provide them more learning help, sooner. His new funding will pay for high-tech imaging of children’s brains as they work with letters and words.

One method of imaging called Event Related Potentials, or ERP, uses an electroencephalogram (EEG), the widely used diagnostic tool that can measure the tiny voltages that come and go in a person’s scalp reflecting brain activity. ERP creates an image of what’s happening as children respond to a sound or recognize something on a printed page. They wear a set of electrodes like a hair net; computer software deciphers the signals. It’s an advanced technique. To complement the ERP scans, Dr. Joanisse will use another method, Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) which looks into the brain in a different way, but with the same goal: To see which areas become active while a patient does a certain task, such as hearing words and seeing words and letters.

“In adults we know that there is a certain way people process the sound of a word, and this is very important in understanding dyslexia because we think these children have difficulty relating printed words to what they should sound like.” Dr. Joanisse will work with children being tutored at the Scottish Rite Learning Centre in London. “We’ll look at them both before the tutoring, to understand what makes them different from typically-developing children who are good readers, and also later on in their tutoring as they are starting to respond to it.”

Dyslexic children are normal in most respects, Dr. Joanisse said. “They are clearly not delayed with respect to intelligence, and don’t seem very different from typically-developing kids. What happens is that from the first to the third grades their ability to learn to read is quite delayed.” Such children have difficulty associating the appearance of a word with the sound it makes. There seems to be a difficulty in distinguishing some sounds from similar sounds, which helps explain why they find it harder to associate sounds with the letters on a printed page. The problem becomes more obvious as children go through school trying to keep up with their peers in reading classes. “By the third grade, it’s usually quite obvious to parents that something is very wrong; that these children are simply not learning how to read.”

Teachers don’t always pick up on this right away – partly because it’s normal for some children to develop skills at different rates than others, partly because teachers are not anxious to seem judgmental in a school system that aggressively drills both students and teachers in ideals of ‘tolerance’ and partly because schools are more geared to intervene where a child’s learning deficit is much broader, such as mental retardation. By comparison, dyslexia seems small. Yet it isn’t small. “To this day I get parents telling me, ‘I don’t mind my kid participating in your study, but I’m pretty sure kids don’t really become dyslexic; they’re just a little bit lazy.’”

Wrong. The problem is real and serious, but decades of treating it lightly in popular culture have left false impressions.

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2006 Highlights

Statement of financial position

	2006	2005
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 276,282	\$ 472,573
Accrued interest	244,253	307,000
GST receivable	5,774	1,843
Advances to Learning Centres	61,280	20,000
Prepays	3,759	14,503
	591,348	815,919
Capital assets	65,960	6,901
Investments (market value \$13,902,377; 2005 - \$12,923,967)	13,097,124	11,815,036
	\$13,754,432	\$12,637,856
Liabilities		
Payables and accruals	\$34,517	\$15,487
Deferred contributions	50,000	—
	84,517	15,487
Net assets		
Net assets invested in capital assets	65,960	6,901
Unrestricted net assets - Income retained for charitable and benevolent purposes	1,004,898	1,127,855
Internally restricted net assets - Capital	12,599,057	11,487,613
	13,669,915	12,622,369
	\$13,754,432	\$12,637,856

Dyslexia

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People tell jokes ('the dyslexic priests argued about the existence of Dog') and seem to think the problem if it exists at all, causes people to see things mirrored or upside-down. "That's completely untrue. It's a misconception that comes from outdated theories from the 1950s and 1960s," he said. "In fact, they can see the words on the page, they are not seeing things upside down, and they are not confused about what the word means. They're just confused about how to get from those letters to the sounds, to the meaning of the word."

The best writers have long known that people 'read with their ears;' they hear the words as they see them, which is why professional writers use a style that comes across as the sound of a voice. Yet the ability to see letters and words and associate them with sounds is a skill learned as a child – and what gives dyslexics a problem. Their brains are dealing differently with those words and sounds, and the research of Dr. Joannis will eventually make it possible to identify children who need intervention earlier by seeing just how differently they work. "If you could identi-

fy them in kindergarten, then they wouldn't get to grade three and be unable to read."

The UWO lab will be the only one in Canada to employ both ERP and fMRI techniques with dyslexic children. They'll work with children from the Scottish Rite's London Learning Centre, and he's aiming for 12-15 at first, plus a control group of non-dyslexic children. "It's tough to get enough kids to do this, because not all kids can remain still for the length of time it takes to do the MRI scan," he said. Moving or fidgeting ruins the MRI data – although ERP is less sensitive to this problem – but asking children to remain fidget-free for 30 minutes or more is difficult.

Funding foundations also tend to fidget when asked to support dyslexia research. "It falls between the cracks with other foundations that don't see dyslexia as serious enough, so we end up competing with autism and basic health problems like cancer," Dr. Joannis said. "Scottish Rite is very generous about it, and that's because they see dyslexia as a real concern and an area where they can have a big impact."

Learning Centres web site attracting many visitors

A new web site, developed and maintained by the Foundation's new Learning Centres Advisory Council is already attracting an average of eight visits per day from across Canada. Bob Barnett, Chairperson of the Council, says the site was created for parents of dyslexic children who are searching for help for their children, and so there are links to the established Canadian Learning Centres. The site is at www.learningcentres-forchildren.ca and can be Googled.

New treasurer appointed

Doug Nichols of New Hamburg, Ontario, has been named the new Treasurer of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation. Mr. Nichols replaces Ed Standish, who served as Treasurer for 19 years and will continue to act as the Assistant Treasurer. Mr. Nichols also joins the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Mr. Nichols is a chartered accountant who spent most of his professional career practising in Toronto. "I'm looking forward to the challenge and hope I can contribute to the success of the Foundation," he said after his appointment.

Awards committee grants \$520,000

The Awards Committee received 21 new applications for Major Research Grants and 19 new applications for Graduate Student Awards for 2006/07. Major Grants are worth \$35,000 per year for up to three years and Graduate Student Awards are worth \$10,000 per year for up to two years.

Total Major Grants in support of research into the physical-biological aspects of intellectual impairment for 2006-2007 will be approximately \$420,000. Funding to assist Doctoral students in their research will be \$100,000.

The Committee recommended funding four new Research Grants and six new Graduate Student Awards. In addition, the Foundation continues its support of four Major Grant recipients for a second year and four Graduate recipients for a third year.

The new recipients of Major Grants are:

Dr. Benedict Albensi

St. Boniface Research Centre, University of Manitoba, Pharmacology & Therapeutics, Division of Neurodegenerative Disorders

Dr. Guy Doucet

Universite de Montreal, Department de pathologie et biologie cellulaire

Dr. Marc Joannis

University of Western Ontario, Department of Psychology

Dr. David Vocadlo

Simon Fraser University, Chemistry and Molecular Biology and Biochemistry