

The Reading Center

Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota

www.TheReadingCenter.org



Winter 2016

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DYSLEXIA INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA
"Toward Literacy for All"

Jack Horner

Dinosaurs and Dyslexia

The Reading Center welcomed Jack Horner to our Bright Stars event on November 8th. Jack was chosen to headline the event because of his perseverance and success as an adult dyslexic. He is best known to the public as the scientific adviser to Steven Spielberg on all four Jurassic Park films, even boasting a cameo in the latest installment.

Jack is also a respected paleontologist, having been the Curator of paleontology at the Museum of the Rockies at Montana State University since 1982. **He is responsible for finding the first dinosaur eggs in the western hemisphere, the first dinosaur embryo, and supporting evidence suggesting that dinosaurs were colonial nesters.**

Having found his first dinosaur bone at 8 years old during a hunting trip with his dad, paleontology has been a life-long interest.

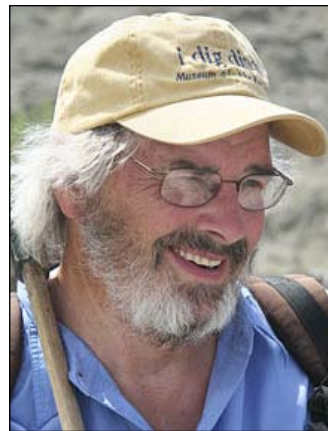
Growing up an undiagnosed dyslexic

Jack grew up in Shelby, Montana. He found kindergarten through 8th grade difficult because his progress in reading, writing and math was slow. He was able to graduate from high school - barely - and only because his English teacher gave him a "D minus minus" because he "never wanted to see me again."

He did, as you might expect, excel in science. While in high school he won several regional science fairs. And for his senior project on dinosaurs his work caught the eye of judges at Montana State University in Missoula (now the University of Montana). He was able to enroll at the school after high school because at that time all you needed was a diploma. But Jack's struggles with school continued, and he flunked out the next year. He was drafted by the US Marine Corps in 1965 and served in Vietnam, returning in 1968.

After Vietnam he recommitted himself to his education and re-entered the University of Montana. He was fortunate to have an advisor

who believed he was not lazy, and despite his poor grades, wrote 5 letters to keep him in school. Jack left the University in 1973 without a diploma, but with a lot of knowledge about paleontology.



After driving an 18-wheeler and working with his brother in his father's business, he returned to his passion - dinosaurs. Jack applied to every English speaking museum that had any open jobs. He heard from three, and chose to work for Princeton University's Natural History Museum as a technician because it was a paleontology position.

Jack excelled at Princeton. His supervisor, Dr. Donald Baird, saw his potential and within two years he was a research

assistant. Two years later he was in charge of his own research projects. While back in Montana in 1978, doing summer field work, he found parts of 15 baby dinosaurs and the first evidence that dinosaurs cared for their young. His finding was published in *Nature*.

In the early 1980s Jack was recruited by Montana State University Museum of the Rockies back home where he has remained since.

Jack struggled through school being considered lazy and dumb...and had flunked out of college seven times"

Dyslexia - finally an answer

While working at Princeton, Jack was diagnosed with dyslexia - well into his adulthood.

He says "to this day I struggle with dyslexia. It takes me a long time to read things, so it's an ongoing endeavor to

become as well-read as I would ideally like to be."

Dyslexia affected his ability to get a college degree, but Jack has found ways to be successful in the field of paleontology - as a professor, published author, and movie adviser.

On his 40th birthday, Jack received an honorary doctorate of science from the University of Montana.

Greetings from the Chair

Inspiring Dyslexia Awareness

October was Dyslexia Awareness month and as in years past, The Reading Center held a series of events to increase public awareness of dyslexia and celebrate the gifts that children, like my daughter, possess.

We held the 2nd annual Dyslexia Dash on October 11th where more than 100 people came to race or walk and celebrate someone they knew with dyslexia. This has been a fun event that families can participate in together while helping to support The Reading Center.

It was in the more intimate event the following day that **left me moved and inspired**. Four young adults with dyslexia shared their stories with an audience at the public library. I attended with my daughter and we were both reminded that **we are not on this journey alone**. There are many that struggled before us, survived and have come out stronger because of it. It was important for my daughter to hear directly from these other youth who have experienced and survived the same struggles she is actively living through.

The stories highlighted the frustrations of young people themselves. But they also shared **stories demonstrating their great ability to be adaptable, work hard, persevere and look to the future**. The four young people - Nick Keller, Amanina Rashid, Ben Tilson and Adam Watson were honest, insightful and optimistic about their future and the future of others with dyslexia. Thank you to them, and everyone who came to listen.

Thinking back on this event, I took this away. It is up to us, as members of the community, to help our kids get the supports and services they need. We know that. But it is equally important that we continue to **share with them their strengths and gifts** as we encourage them to become the best people they can be.

As Cindy mentions in her column, our message is getting out there to people who have the power to make far reaching changes beyond us in Rochester. Here's to a great 2016 filled with hope and optimism for the future of our kids.

Nicole Blegen
Chair, Board of Directors



From the Executive Director's Desk



Cindy Russell
Executive Director

Ten Minnesota State Senators, their staff and following media converged on the Reading Center facility on October 28, 2015, while they were in SE Minnesota for the state bonding tour. All told, we had almost thirty visitors to our building.

First, we toured them through the building. That was a very short tour, as our facility is rather small! Our guests were polite and inquisitive, as we showed them how

three staff are cramped into a space meant for one, and they were slightly aghast at seeing Jan's little stairwell "office." Next, we showed them our three (count them!) small tutoring/testing/practicum rooms where our testers conducted 95 assessments in 2014. They further heard that due to space, only a handful of our 40 Orton-Gillingham tutors were able to utilize the rooms for tutoring our 169 students in 2014. **There simply are not enough tutoring rooms**. These tutoring rooms, intended for one tutor and one student, also must accommodate 6 or 7 adults during the practicum portion of our Basic and Advanced Orton-Gillingham Institute trainings.

When 30 adults squeezed into the conference room, they experienced the dilemma of our space issues. This one room **can no longer accommodate our tutoring staff for monthly continuing education, much less a full Orton-Gillingham Training** for more than about 12 trainees. In every way, the space is restricting our ability to meet the growing need for this highly sought-after service.

We made a presentation to the Senators, about dyslexia and the critical services that the Reading Center offers. They heard about our strategic plan to increase the number of students we serve, and options to expand our space. **Joe Powers shared his story of growing up with dyslexia, and receiving life-changing tutoring at the Reading Center by his tutor, Jean Walters**. Even though the group needed to load back onto their bus and head out to Oronoco, their next stop, they stayed on, asking probing questions about the science of reading instruction and practices in schools.

One senator noted, **"it seems that we have good science about dyslexia. What we lack is action."** We agree wholeheartedly. It was a tremendous opportunity to have ten prominent senators visit our facility and learn about the 1:5 families affected by dyslexia.

Our local Senators, David Senjem and Carla Nelson attended the event, and expressed appreciation for the work of the Reading Center in the community. We hope to continue these discussions with MN legislators in the coming 2016 session.

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The Reading Center Bright Stars Event 2015



(all photos this page by Tracey McGuire Photography)

Dyslexia and Dinosaurs

A Reading Center Event, featuring Jack Horner

More than **600 guests** attended our **Bright Stars Event** at the Rochester International Event center on November 8 to hear from famed paleontologist Jack Horner. Guests enjoyed complimentary appetizers and drinks, courtesy of Powers Ventures and Pepsi of Rochester.

Our annual Bright Stars event brings dyslexia awareness and inspirational dialogue with a successful adult dyslexic to the general public. At this **FREE** family friendly event, Jack Horner spoke about his **struggles with dyslexia**, and how his **out-of-the box thinking propelled his success as a paleontologist**. We learned some fascinating things too. **Did you know that dinosaurs were warm-blooded?**

Generous matching fund challenges were issued by the Mayo Clinic (\$5,000), Thrivent Financial (\$1,000), and Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation (\$10,000). Our donors were up to the challenges and we had our most financially successful event in years. Between our Bright Stars event and Give to the Max Day, our donors (with matching funds) raised more than \$42,000 for The Reading Center programs and scholarships. We knew that our faithful donors would come through and meet this wonderful challenge!

With help from Al Koenig, our nonprofit partner, Quarry Hill, brought Stan the T-Rex to the event center for photo ops with kids (and a few adults – we saw you!!) Quarry Hill also had staff available for questions and to run some fabulous kid-friendly activities before the program.

Robin Wolfram of K TTC was warmly welcomed as our energetic event emcee.

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Post-Bulletin
IF IT MATTERS TO YOU, IT MATTERS TO US

Mayo Pediatric Neuropsychologist Joins the Reading Center Board of Directors



Earlier this year, Dr. Michael Zaccariello joined our Board of Directors. Seven years ago Mike, his wife Lexi, and their fur babies (2 dogs and 2 cats) moved to Rochester for his job at the Mayo Clinic. Their family recently expanded when Mike and Lexi opened their home to two teenage girls.

While spending most of his life in the Midwest, Mike grew up in a US Army family so he traveled a lot, including living in parts of Europe and Asia. As if that were not exciting enough for one family, Mike's wife Lexi grew up in England and Ohio before spending three years in the Peace Corp assigned to Africa as a teacher.

In Rochester, Lexi is a high school teacher at the Alternative Learning Center in Rochester. She has worked as **a reading specialist and is Orton-Gillingham trained!!**

Mike earned his Bachelor's degree from DePaul and his Master's and Ph.D. from Case Western Reserve University. He completed a fellowship in Pediatric Neuropsychology at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

At Mayo, Mike is a Pediatric Neuropsychologist in the Department of Psychiatry and Psychology. He conducts comprehensive testing of a child's cognitive/thinking and academic skills as well as behavioral/emotional functioning. Based on these test results and what he knows of the child's medical condition, he comes up with a "plan that addresses their areas of weakness and maximizes their potential". He also uses his education and skills as a psychologist in the Army Reserves.

When he does have free time, Mike is a self-proclaimed avid health enthusiast and believer in CrossFit. And he is currently undergoing training to become a deacon, and is also an avid reader.

Several years ago, Mike was approached by Reading Center Executive Director Cindy Russell to speak to staff about medical assessments for dyslexia. The connection was made, and Mike learned about the Reading Center's mission.

Mike says "learning disabilities assessment is my passion. On a daily basis I see children who struggle with learning. Their parents are desperate to help them, but lack the knowledge of what is a good scientifically based treatment."

"Fortunately, we in the Rochester community have the benefit of The Reading Center to provide very effective intervention for dyslexia at an affordable cost compared to unproven and much more expensive programs."

New Board Member Paul Bucher

We are pleased to welcome attorney Paul Bucher to our Board of Directors. Paul is a Zumbrota native who has spent the last 35 years in Rochester. He and his wife have one daughter, Jordan, who is attending the University of Iowa.

Paul attended Rochester Technical and Community College receiving an associate's degree in 1974. He graduated from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in 1976 and cum laude from the law school in 1980. Paul currently works at the local firm Dunlap & Seeger specializing in general commercial law. He has extensive experience in bankruptcy law and has been appointed as a chapter 7 bankruptcy trustee by the U.S. Department of Justice and a SBA Closing Attorney by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

In his free time Paul loves all sports, but especially golfing. He just came back from a golfing trip to Phoenix in early November.

Paul learned about The Reading Center from a prior board member and colleague, Bill Ryan. **He recently sat in on a teacher training session and was fascinated.** He says he appreciates The Reading Center's goal to **help those who struggle to "learn to love reading"** like he does. He notes that he has "taken for granted" how easy it was for him to learn to read.

Paul has been serving the community in Rochester throughout his professional life. He continues to be involved in his church as president of Resurrection and Life Evangelical Lutheran Church. He has also been a member of the Rochester Zoning Board of Appeals and has served on the board of other nonprofits and businesses in Rochester such as Eastwood Bank, Rochester Area Economic Development, and PossAbilities of Southern Minnesota.



Welcome Paul and Mike!

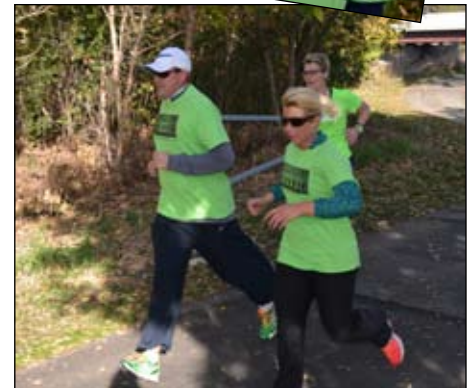
Dyslexia Dash a Success

100 runners and walkers enjoy camaraderie and support for the cause

On the best Saturday we could have hoped for, 100 runners and walkers joined us on October 10th at our 2nd Annual Dyslexia Dash. At 9:00 am, an enthusiastic group of kids ran the 1 mile fun run. At 9:30 adults and many kids walked or ran the 5K course that started and finished at Soldier's Field Park. Thanks to our sponsors for providing healthy food and water.

This family friendly event is one we hope to see you at next year!

In all, more than \$5,000 was raised to support scholarships and programs that benefit students with dyslexia. Thank you to our sponsors, volunteers and participants!



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January 1 - October 31, 2015

We would like to acknowledge and thank all of you who have so generously pledged or donated to the Reading Center in 2015. We strive to list our donors accurately, but occasionally we make a mistake. If your donation has been omitted, your entry is misspelled or put in a wrong giving level, please contact Sarah Carlson-Wallrath (scarlsonwallrath@thereadingcenter.org).

If you would like to make a contribution, please use our secure online server at www.TheReadingCenter.org, contact us at 507-288-5271, or use the enclosed envelope. **Please remember the mission of the Reading Center in your will. Thank you!**

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life-changing training
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Reading Center donors provide 385 tutoring sessions during Statewide Online Giving Event Supporters logged on and gave November 12th

49 donors* logged on November 12 and donated on Give to the Max Day, raising \$12,395 for the mission of the Reading Center! With the matching grant, you helped raise nearly \$17,500 for scholarships and programs at the Reading Center in only one day! This equals 385 tutoring sessions for children in need. Thank you!

The Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation offered a generous matching fund in the amount of \$5,000 for donations to the Reading Center through GiveMN.org. The entire amount of the match was utilized!

Thank you for helping us reach 52 on the statewide Leaderboard for mid-sized nonprofits, but even more importantly thank you for making a difference to children who struggle to read. Our supporters are instrumental in making Reading Center programs and scholarships possible for students. Every little bit adds up to big progress for struggling students. **Thank you!**



*Give to the Max Day donors will be listed in the next newsletter, due to publication deadlines.



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The Reading Center

Save the Date!

Winter Study Skills Class
January 28 - March 31
Thursdays 3:45 - 5:15 pm

Winter Writing Class
January 26 - March 29
Tuesdays 3:30 - 5:00 pm

**Winter Basic Orton-Gillingham
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*Learn to be a tutor for people with dyslexia.
Ask us about tuition reimbursements!*
January 15 - March 12, 2015

Best of Basics Summer Program
July 11 - August 5, 2015

**Summer Basic Orton-Gillingham
Training Institute**
July 14 - August 4, 2015

**Advanced Orton-Gillingham
Training Institute**
June 16 - June 30, 2015

*Jack Horner believes his
parents would be pleased
that he “inspired some
young people with
learning differences
by showing them
what can be achieved
by someone with a
learning difference
if one is persistent,
cherishes the high
expectations that
measure success, and
has the proper support and
encouragement.”*



Jack and Emily took a selfie at our event.