



*Providing adults who live in or near Ottawa County with an opportunity to improve and transform their lives by strengthening their reading and language fluency.*

## February 2026 Newsletter

**Change a Life! Give Today!**



*Honoring  
**Zelio Ferrarini**  
for his service to  
READ Ottawa's  
Board of Directors*

Zelio Ferrarini grew up in Italy where he was educated as a mechanical engineer. He married his American wife in 2002 and their daughter came along in 2003. A few years later the family moved to the United States.

When Zelio was ready to obtain his citizenship in the U.S., he contacted READ Ottawa and Marisol was able to provide him a tutor. His tutor, Barry Kram, supported him through the citizenship process and helped him study for the test. "It was a blessing to find READ," says Zelio.

After passing the test, Zelio was quick to offer service to READ. "I just wanted to give back a little," he stated. Zelio was given a seat on the board and it was in that role where he offered both a learner's perspective as well as that of an engineer and a father of a special needs child. Zelio played a unique and vital role in READ Ottawa's growth and structure. Current Board President, Jeff Parrott, asserts, "We are so grateful for Zelio's service to the READ Board in a key time of expansion to Holland!"

Thank you, Zelio. Your imprint on READ Ottawa has surely made it stronger!

## Celebrating our Tutors and their Years of Service



**5 YEARS**

Marguarete Fochtman

**10 YEARS**

Gayle Parmelee

**15 YEARS**

Robin Myers

Tiny Training is Efficient and Engaging



The Herrick North Branch Library was the site of READ's latest tutor training. This small but mighty group participated in an accelerated version of the traditional training with grand results. The small study room was "just right" for the work.

The creativity in training new folks for the work of tutoring comes as a result of working to maintain our current number of pairs in Holland but also working to meet the needs of incoming learners. All 3 trainees were instantly matched!

As we seek to meet the needs of learners in our communities we are working to develop new training methods that are efficient and effective. READ Ottawa hopes to develop and implement an online module to replace a day in the traditional training model. More trainings for early 2026 are slotted for February and April.

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**TURN WORDS INTO IMPACT.**



**9TH ANNUAL SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT**  
Thursday, April 23 at the Grand Haven Eagles

**SPONSOR TODAY**

\$2,500 - GAME SPONSOR - provides funding for 5 learners for one full year  
\$1,000 - WORD SPONSOR - provides funding for 2 learners for one full year  
\$ 500 - LETTER SPONSOR - provides funding for 1 learners for one full year  
\$ 250 - TEAM SPONSOR- provides funding for 1 learners for 6 months

CONTACT VICKI ELLIS AT [VICKI@READOTTAWA.ORG](mailto:VICKI@READOTTAWA.ORG) FOR DETAILS

Join Pivot Group and become one of our Corporate Sponsors!



Interested in becoming a tutor? RSVP through one of the following:

Filling out the form at <https://readottawa.org/volunteer>

Email Lynn Groothuis at [lynn@readottawa.org](mailto:lynn@readottawa.org)

Call Lynn at 616-414-0295

*"The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference."*  
Elie Wiesel



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