



*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.*

## December 2025 Newsletter

**Change a Life! Give Today!**



*Celebrating  
the Life and Service of  
**Bruce Baker***  
6/28/1949  
to  
10/14/2025

Many of us who knew Bruce Baker appreciated his heart for the people and culture around him. Sadly, Bruce passed away this past October and will be genuinely missed by the Grand Haven community. In addition to owning Baker Lumber, from which he retired, Bruce served on local advisory boards, acted in the local theater, coached many sports, and invested in his family.

Bruce was a member of the first READ Ottawa tutor training class in 2009. He went on to tutor many learners both as a full time tutor and a substitute when needed. Bruce only recently stepped down from tutoring in January 2025. He was committed to the success and dignity of each learner.

"It was our privilege to have Bruce Baker as a READ Ottawa tutor. He helped launch this program by becoming one of our very first tutor volunteers. We are grateful for the time and talent he chose to share with us and the Grand Haven community. He will be dearly missed." -- Marisol Stork, READ Ottawa Pair Coordinator, Grand Haven/NW Ottawa Co.





What a wonderful evening in a simply gorgeous place! The Lilley Mansion served as the most appropriate setting for the Great Gatsby Gala put on by The Bookman. The jazz music, the hum of conversation and the delicious food created an energy to match that of the Roaring 20s. Susan Lowe, with the help of owner and chef Patrick Roggenbau, even wrangled a green light outside to welcome guests.

The event was an effort by The Bookman to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the novel [The Great Gatsby](#), written by F. Scott Fitzgerald. READ Ottawa was the financial beneficiary of the event. The celebration also served to raise awareness of the efforts of READ Ottawa and to the need for literacy tutors in Ottawa County.

Guests clearly had a smashing good time dressing up for the occasion and coming out to support the ongoing efforts of READ Ottawa. Learner Sarah and her tutor Julie Hoelscher gave testimony to the work of READ, culminating in a Sarah reading a passage from Fitzgerald's novel.

A great night was truly had by all.

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## SAVE THE DATE!

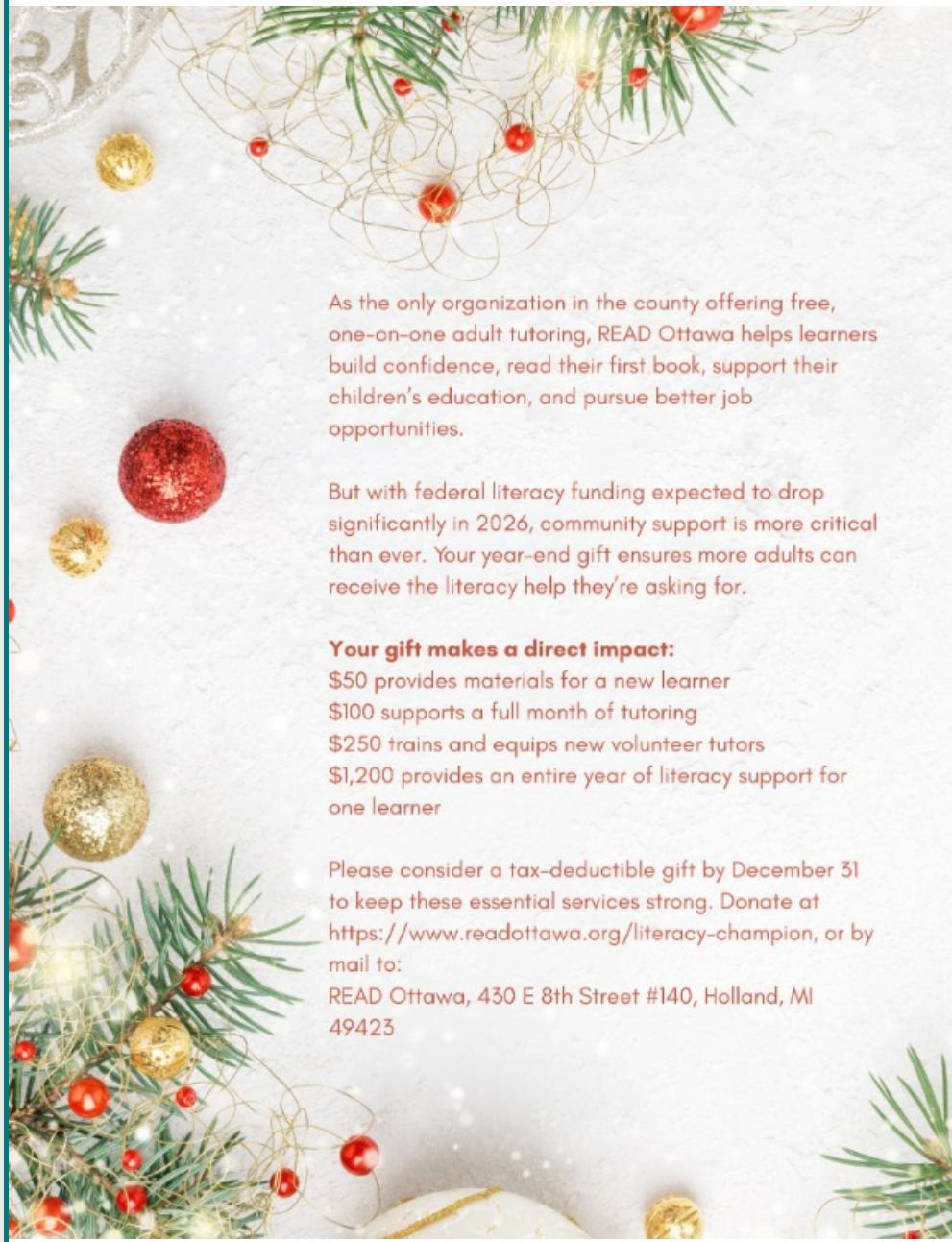


### 9TH ANNUAL SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT

Thursday, April 23 at the Grand Haven Eagles

MORE DETAILS TO COME!

All proceeds will support READ's efforts  
to strengthen reading and language skills of adults in Ottawa County!



As the only organization in the county offering free, one-on-one adult tutoring, READ Ottawa helps learners build confidence, read their first book, support their children's education, and pursue better job opportunities.

But with federal literacy funding expected to drop significantly in 2026, community support is more critical than ever. Your year-end gift ensures more adults can receive the literacy help they're asking for.

**Your gift makes a direct impact:**

\$50 provides materials for a new learner  
\$100 supports a full month of tutoring  
\$250 trains and equips new volunteer tutors  
\$1,200 provides an entire year of literacy support for one learner

Please consider a tax-deductible gift by December 31 to keep these essential services strong. Donate at <https://www.readottawa.org/literacy-champion>, or by mail to:  
READ Ottawa, 430 E 8th Street #140, Holland, MI 49423

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 love we give away is the only love we keep."*  
Elbert Hubbard



Website: [www.readottawa.org](http://www.readottawa.org)  
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