

Literacy Council of Jo County celebrates a first

Man graduates from program designed to help those with dyslexia

By Kathleen Alaks
of the Daily Courier

Today is a big day for Randy Turashoff. And for the Literacy Council for Josephine County.

Today, Turashoff becomes the first Literacy Council student to graduate from the Barton Reading and Spelling System, a tutoring program designed for people struggling with dyslexia.

"I think it was one of the biggest Achilles heels in my life," Turashoff says of his learning disability. "I walked away from jobs because it got too difficult. That led to depression and anxiety. The expectations were overwhelming."

A learning disorder that muddles a person's ability to read, write and spell, dyslexia affects people of all ages.

It has nothing to do with intelligence. But it can make it difficult to get through school or to hold down a job.

Now in his early 40s, Turashoff grew up in and out of foster homes and in and out of schools. He was in the ninth grade before he properly learned to read.

He's worked dozens of jobs — delivery driver, shuttle driver, school bus driver, warehouse worker. But none ever lasted very long.

"I would get deep in my depression and that affected my work performance," Turashoff



KATHLEEN ALAKS/Daily Courier

Maureen McCarthy, left, a tutor with the Literacy Council for Josephine County, works with her student Randy Turashoff using the Barton Reading and Spelling System, designed for those struggling with dyslexia. Turashoff, who has completed all 10 levels of the program, is the first Literacy Council student to graduate from Barton since the council obtained a grant to purchase the system in 2012.

says.

In 2010, a private sponsor paid for him to get tutoring from Maureen McCarthy who runs 3R's Tutoring out of her home in Grants Pass. But after just six months, the funding ran out.

That's where the Literacy Council came in.

The Literacy Council for

Josephine County is a nonprofit, all-volunteer group that offers free one-on-one tutoring for adults in reading and writing, in English as a second language and in math, GED and citizenship.

In 2012, the Literacy Council received a grant allowing it to purchase the Barton System, a

multi-sensory phonics program that helps dyslexic students break down the sounds within a word.

Turashoff's foster mother read about the grant in the newspaper and approached the Literacy Council about getting tutoring for her son. McCarthy, who volunteers with the council

Signs of dyslexia

The characteristics of dyslexics are many and varied and often inconsistent. But some common traits include:

- struggling with reading and spelling
- struggling in school
- inability to make sense of the written word
- limited vocabulary
- poor written expression
- poor handwriting
- large discrepancy between spoken and written language skills
- difficulty remembering verbal instructions or directions
- difficulty reading maps
- may lose track of time and is frequently late
- low self-esteem

If you or someone you know has dyslexia or shows a number of the above signs, contact the Literacy Council for Josephine County to get help. Contact 541-472-0355, 541-955-5185 or jocoliteracy@yahoo.com.

as well as doing private tutoring took him on again as a student.

They worked together for about two years, one hour per session, two or three sessions per week.

"It's helped me a lot," Turashoff says. "I can read much more confidently and when I go online, I'm able to catch misspelled words and to use the vocabulary that I use to talk with."

Turashoff moderates an online chat on the Twitch TV gaming site.

"I get to commiserate with others who are dealing with the same issues," he says.

The Barton system has 10 levels, each one building on the other.

"Dyslexics need things presented in a logical order," McCarthy says. "They need to learn each rule and it has to be firm before going on to the next one. And they get tested at each level."

Now that he has completed Level 10, Turashoff will receive

a graduation certificate signed by Susan Barton, who developed the program.

"Barton has been in use since around 2000," McCarthy says. "And there have been fewer than 700 graduates so far, at least who got a certificate. That puts Randy in a pretty elite group."

After a celebratory dinner with his family and McCarthy, Turashoff has his sights set on more education.

"My No. 1 goal is to get my GED," he says. "That's been something my family has been wanting me to do."

He also wants to go to college for a business degree and something in electronics.

"Randy is a great guy, a big heart, lots of common sense," says McCarthy. "Lack of skill has kept him down and I look forward to him meeting and exceeding his goals in the future."

Reach reporter Kathleen Alaks at 541-474-3815 or kalaks@thedailycourier.com.

Obituaries

Poul John Nielsen

Poul John Nielsen, 75, of Grants Pass died Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2015, at his home. A celebration of life will be held Friday at 11 a.m. at Calvary Lutheran Church with Pastor David Johnsen officiating.

Elizabeth M. Coots

Elizabeth M. Coots, 84, of Grants Pass died Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015, at Three Rivers Medical Center. A celebration of life will be held Saturday at 1 p.m. at The Suites Assisted Living. Arrangements by Stephens Family Chapel.

Gregory Donald McLean

Gregory Donald McLean, 65, of Grants Pass died Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2015. A memorial service is set for Friday, Dec. 11, at 11 a.m. at St. Anne Catholic Church. A reception will follow. Chapel of the Valley-L.B. Hall Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Eleanor A. Fitzsimmons

Eleanor Ann Fitzsimmons,

81, of Rogue River died Monday, Nov. 30, 2015, at Three Rivers Medical Center. Arrangements are pending at Stephens Family Chapel.

Mary M. Steward

Mary M. Steward, 77, of Grants Pass died Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015, at Three Rivers Medical Center. Arrangements are pending with Hull & Hull Funeral Directors.

Phyllis White

Phyllis White, 91, of Grants Pass died Saturday Nov. 28, 2015, at Three Rivers Medical Center. Grants Pass Funeral Alternatives is in charge of arrangements.

Billie Gene Loffer

Billie Gene Loffer, 68, of Grants Pass died Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015, at his home. Arrangements are pending at Hull & Hull Funeral Directors.

Pat Kling

Former Grants Pass resident Pat Kling, 69, died at her home

Thursday, Nov. 19, 2015, in Spokane, Wash.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 23, at 1 p.m. at St. Leo's Church in Tacoma, Wash.

Glen E. Wilson

Glen E. Wilson, 76, of Grants Pass died Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2015, at his home. Arrangements are pending with Stephens Family Chapel.

William A. "Bill" Cort

On August 13, 2015, William A. "Bill" Cort passed away peacefully at his home, in Medford, OR, with family and hospice at his side.

Bill was born in Glendale, California, on April 21, 1924, to William E. and Ruth A. Cort. Bill grew up enjoying fishing, hunting and shooting slingshots he would build himself.

As a teenager of 18 years, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps

as WWII was underway. He trained in California and Arizona to fly fighters and Bombers and was transferred to North Africa to transport aircraft into Southern Europe and made many flights across the Mediterranean Ocean into Italy.

After the war ended, he came home and worked on family owned cattle ranches in Northern California. Later he relocated back to Southern California to help run the family mortgage company, along with his father and brother. In Southern Cali-

fornia, he met and married his wife, Barbara L. Cort, who survives him and is now living in Ontario, Oregon.

He is also survived by their three children, son Randy (Sharon) Cort of Grants Pass, OR; daughter, Cathy (Deen) Charters of Ontario, OR; and daughter Kim (Walt) Gerback of Pocatello, ID; five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

In later years he moved his family north making several stops in California before settling in Grants Pass in the

1960's. They ventured to Boise, Idaho, for several years before spending the last 30 years in Medford, OR.

Bill enjoyed family, his fishing, hunting and playing golf, and especially enjoyed shooting and reloading ammunition for his big bore rifles. He will be missed by both family and friends.

To place an obituary, call Tamara Stuebing or Caroline Pitts at 541-471-7702 or email obits@thedailycourier.com

Blake Edward Hardwick

May 23, 1937 - November 1, 2015

Blake Edward Hardwick was born May 23, 1937 in Oakland, California where he was raised and died November 1, 2015 at home in Hugo, Oregon. He lived in Hugo from 1977 to 1990; Brookings, Oregon from 1991 to 1998 and back to Hugo from 1999 to 2015.

Blake attended Fremont High School. Then sold used cars for a few years. On December 24, 1960 in Oakland, California he married Jacqueline Roxanne Belle-Oudry. From 1960 to 1962 he served in the United States Army as a cook. Blake served one year at Fort Ord, California and one year in France.

Thanks to dear Uncle Robert ten Bosch, Blake began his career in hardware. He started at Laurel True Value Hardware in Oakland, California then to Rogue River Hardware in Grants Pass, Oregon; Coast-To-Coast Hardware in Rogue River, Oregon; Harry's Early Ford Parts in Wimer, Oregon and Square Deal Building & Supply in Brookings, Oregon. In 1996 he retired and then moved back home to Hugo in 1999.

Blake was a member of the Cadillac-LaSalle Club, Contemporary Autos of Southern Oregon and the Hugo Historical Society.

From the age of 11, Blake loved cars. In his lifetime he owned 127 cars. Number 127 is a 1972 Cadillac Sedan deVille and is still in his garage, a car he searched for — for 10 years.

Blake is predeceased by his parents, Blake Payson Hardwick & Vera Greenman Hardwick, brother-in-law, Norman Edouard Belle-Oudry and his son, Edouard Valiant Belle-Oudry; father-in-law & mother-in-law, Edouard Valiant & Mary Anna Belle-Oudry.

He is survived by his wife, Jacqueline Hardwick; a sister-in-law, Ann Comer and children, Bill, Michele, Tracy and Bobby; sister & brother-in-law, Jeanne & Ray Ervin and their children, Connie, Debbie and Patty; cousin, Janice Madding; nephew, Steven Belle-Oudry and wife Christine and their sons Beau & Dane. Best friends, Patrick Neylan, Richard Lowell, Ray & Nansee Melby, Carl & Eunice Olson, Wayne & Janet McKy, Mona Erickson, Barbara Soderstrom, Jud Morgan, Elva Hinshaw, Mike & Cindy Walker and all our Hugo friends.

Services will be announced in the spring of 2016.

Please visit the obituary and sign Blake's tribute wall at <http://www.since1928hull.com>

Farewell my wonderful, loving husband and partner Blake Edward Hardwick. The one and only love of my life for 55 years. I will love and miss you always. Your loving wife, Jacqueline Roxanne Hardwick and your loving kitty, Sassy Cat.



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