

RO HALTON HERALD

District 15

April 2011

CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN...

Physically

* Relay For Life - 8

* Take Zumba Lessons - 28

Mentally

* Write - 26

* Volunteer - 24

Socially

* Travel - 9

* Teach in China - 32

* Stay Connected - 31

Guilin by Nancy Sorensen

STAYING CONNECTED

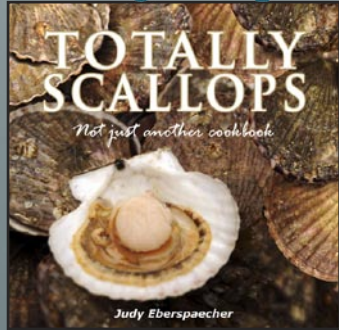


Breakfast

*at Troy's Diner , Milton
(owned by former students)
for retired teachers from
E.C. Drury High School*



*Writing and Sharing Insights
...with Judy Eberspaecher*



Entertainment with a Message ...

attending a Famous Players Production



President's Report

By Linda Jones



It seems that this year has just flown by. Our Spring meeting will be held before we know it just as we get used to some welcome warmer weather. Winter has been long and if you were not able to travel to warmer climes, I hope you enjoyed the benefits that a solid snow base had to offer to Winter sports enthusiasts. Look for the enclosed sign-up sheets for our **May 10th Annual General Meeting** luncheon and post-business entertainment.

I am pleased to announce that the project of the **Canadians in Support of Afghan Women** group to equip a library in a school for girls in Afghanistan, which was given a Project Service to Others grant by our Provincial Office, is now complete. The girls are now reading the books in their well-furnished library. We will soon receive photos which will be displayed at our Spring Annual General Meeting as well as at the Spring Senate. Locally, District 15 donated \$1500 to the Salvation Army to assist the less fortunate in all communities in Halton.

This has been a very eventful year with many exciting excursions, socials and workshops organized by your Board. Many of our Board Members will also have attended Provincial Workshops in communications, goodwill, health, membership and leadership to assist them in delivering the best possible services to you, our members. We are, however, experiencing a shortage of volunteers in several areas. **Mary Lyons** has served us exceptionally well on our Executive and Board as Vice-President, President, Past President and most recently as acting Membership Secretary. She is rightfully retiring to pursue other activities. But, this leaves us with a vacancy for a member who could help organize our annual **Wine & Cheese** party for new retirees and the **To Hell with the Bell Breakfast** for new members. I have been juggling the Presidency with chairing the Political Advocacy Committee. I would love to hear from some of you who are politically aware and have a particular interest in the conduct of our health care system or in other policy matters affecting seniors and who might be able to assist in this area.

Our Program Committee is always grateful for new members with new ideas and enthusiasm. This also applies to other committees. If you can help organize activities for our members please contact me or the appropriate committee chair. We also have positions on our Board for a Member without Portfolio. This position allows that individual to see how our Board functions and to prepare themselves to participate as a committee chair or Executive Member. Our Board meets four

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times a year, leaving lots of time for your own favourite activities. If this opportunity piques your interest or you would like to run for a position on our Executive, now is the time to act. Please contact me or **Cecile Leach** to take advantage of these opportunities and become an active member of District 15.

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I have enjoyed a wellness workshop, a laughter seminar and a humorous **Famous People Players** show with many of you. I just danced myself to a standstill in great company to the music of **Havana Express**. It has been a pleasure to meet new friends in such enjoyable circumstances. Finally, I would like to thank all of our current Board members for their dedication to the needs of our members. They have fulfilled, with grace and generosity, all of the tasks needed to make District 15 an outstanding one to belong to.

Seniors' Discounts: Web Contest
By George MacRae

Thank you to members who submitted information concerning where seniors can get discounts to help them stretch their income.

The names of all members who submitted information were entered into a draw for a \$50 prize and we are pleased to announce that the winner of the draw was **Judy Sloan**.

The list of merchants offering seniors' discounts is now available on our District website (www.rtohalton.org). Visit us regularly and save a few bucks!

We would like to add to this list - if you have any additions or updates, please e-mail them to me at RTO.district15@gmail.com.

We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



What a wonderful response we had from you over the past few months. It's always a delight to read your letters, e-mails and to receive your telephone calls and to pass the news on to the membership. This time we have a bumper crop of news to share that came as a result of a number of our District activities.

Enclosed With Submitted Volunteer Surveys

Irma Coulson wrote to congratulate us on the newsletter. She said, "The local organization has come a long way since the Peel and Halton units were divided and we kept the designation of District 15." Those of you who have been around for a while may remember that Irma became the first President of our District. "It has been gratifying to note the progress over the years and the involvement of so many competent people in positions of responsibility," she continued. Thank you Irma for your comments and your presence at many of our functions.

Verne O'Neil wrote to thank those involved in volunteering with District 15. He says, "It is great to be able to keep informed about retirees and their activities."

John Marshall as well sent a message thanking us all for "all the wonderful work" we do for the District 15 publication.

In Response to the Out-of-Region Christmas Letter

Donna Mae Fleet telephoned to say that she appreciates the thought and the message in the Christmas Letter. She is living in Cambridge but returns to Georgetown (where she taught) a couple of times a year to join fellow retirees for fellowship gatherings.

Vera Robinson sent her own Christmas letter in which she says that she has "... now been retired for 32 years, but nonetheless, time seems to go by so quickly." She indicated that she is living happily with her niece and family, "...where life is busy and normal" even at her age – Vera turned 98 on December 30, 2010. Congratulations Vera on reaching this wonderful milestone and may you have many more.

Herman Star telephoned to say that he appreciates the thought and the message in the Christmas letter.

Don Warren sent an e-mail to say, "Merry Christmas Peter, and thank you for the seasonal letter."

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(We Get Letters... continued from Page 5)

In Response To Birthday Cards Sent To Those Over 90!

Earl Leard wrote to let us know how much his wife Elinor appreciated receiving the birthday cards every year. However, that would be her last as she had passed away recently. He says he is in good health and is continuing to live in the condo they bought in 2004.

Marjorie Sampson sent a card that read “Thank you so very much for continuing to remember me at RTO/ERO. Yes, I am now 96 and doing quite well – eating 3 meals a day, getting out for walks when the weather permits and I have a friend to come along. I do enjoy bridge still – 2 to 3 nights a week. Yes, the diamonds do sometimes get on the hearts but my opponents are understanding. I really loved your “Memories” (in the Christmas Letter sent to all out-of-region members) and always enjoy knowing of events in District 15.”

Others Sent Christmas Cards

Bob Bigelow and wife, Jessie just to “keep in touch.”

Ian Downie sent a card in which he said that he was just back from Santiago, Chile where he was on a TV shoot. He wondered if the article about him in a previous issue of the Halton Herald had generated a “public outcry.” No, it didn’t Ian so keep up the good work.

George Munro wrote this message in his card: “Cathy and I had a great cruise Jan.- Feb. 2010. Then in Aug. I received a new Rt. Hip replacement – doing well. Cathy thought she had retired from nursing.”

Helen Van Sickle wrote in her card that she is living in a nursing home where “the program is great.” She says her health is good although she fell and broke her arm in June. It was in a cast until mid-August and she is still wearing a splint on and off. She went to Ohio in September for her eldest granddaughter’s wedding and will be going to another in the summer for her eldest grandson.

Still Others Just Wrote To Keep In Touch!

Judy Eberspaecher sent an e-mail to say that since retiring from teaching eight years ago, she has been working with her husband as a travel photographer. They write travel articles for several magazines and newspapers, including the Toronto Star. After being awarded Best Fish and Seafood Cookbook in Canada by the Gourmand International World Cookbook Awards, her book **TOTALLY SCALLOPS, not just another cookbook!** was selected as the Best English Language

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(We Get Letters... continued from Page 6)

Cookbook in its category in the world. It made the short list (4 entries) for the World's Best Fish and Seafood Cookbook and will compete against one from Chile in Spanish, one from France in French and one from Austria written in German. She says, "Of the 4, I can do no worse than 4th in the world. I'm happy with that! I will find out in March." You can find out more about Judy and the book at www.totallyscallops.com. Also, see the photos of Judy on Page 2.

Lynn Gapes wrote to say, "I have been going to send you an e-mail for the Halton Herald for so long. Wouldn't you know that it would take Bob's sudden death to move me to action. We have loved living on the Crowe River with all the advantages of small village activities. Always busy with church, curling, on the executive of several associations, golf, and hosting the visits of many friends from Burlington as well as our grandchildren from Chicoutimi.

We were blessed with more Trumpeter swans this year as they eagerly came to our dock to eat corn from our hands. One family of 2 adults and 4 immatures, one other pair, and one lonesome outsider who was always trying to earn his way in with the others. Our son, Ryan called the family, "Sly and the Family Swans."

It was while Bob was putting corn in the feeding boxes just after midnight that he suffered a massive heart attack. At first we thought he had slipped on the icy dock, hit his head and drowned, but there was no water in his lungs. The support from our Burlington, and beyond, friends has been overwhelming. I continue to receive cards from teaching colleagues of Bob's. His big smile, hearty and loud laugh and zest for life and teaching have been remembered by many. I thank all of you who have been in touch. The photo is from a Raptors' game last year. He spent 30 years coaching with HDSB in both elementary and secondary school.



For those of you who are interested, Lynn has booked Appleby United Church, 4407 Spruce Ave. in Burlington for a visitation (no service) from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 15.

Nancy Sorensen responded to me after my saying in the last issue that news was scarce. She says, "We have to remedy that." Please read her detailed experience about **Teaching in China** which begins on Page 32.

Relay For Life - What Makes It So Special?

Submitted By Linda Jones



I would like to share my personal journey with the big 'C.' My father at 59, my mother at 80, my daughter at 19 and three first cousins have all died from one of the myriad forms of cancer. A grandmother, a grandfather, another first cousin and I were and are survivors. This history likely mirrors some of your own experiences with family or close friends. It has

prompted me to participate as a survivor at a **Relay for Life** event for the last three years.

This year with the backing of the Board, RTO/ERO District 15 plans to enter a team of 10 - 15 people in this year's Relay for Life to be held in Bronte Creek Provincial Park on June 10 - 11 from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

At Relay for Life, you will:

- Be inspired by cancer survivors - or provide inspiration yourself!
- Take turns to walk, run or stroll around a track in a non-competitive relay.
- Stay up all night - and feel great about it. Actually we can bring cots or mattresses for those who need a rest or a snooze.
- Give 12 hours to the fight against cancer and add years to the lives of others.
- Relax and have fun off the track, enjoying food, activities and entertainment in a tent village.
- Learn about cancer issues and how to reduce your risk of the disease.

Tent village: On Relay night our team will pitch a tent decorated in our theme that will serve as our team headquarters.

Survivors' Victory Lap: Cancer survivors are individually introduced during the Opening Ceremony and invited to walk the first Relay lap. The Survivors' Victory Lap acknowledges and celebrates their courage in their struggle with the disease. Once the Survivors' Victory Lap is completed all Relay participants join in.

Luminary Ceremony: Luminaries are candles placed in paper bags that line both sides of the track. Each bears the name of a loved one who has either survived cancer (In Honor) or lost their life to the disease (In Memory). At dusk, the candles are lit, providing light and inspiration as participants walk through the night.

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Visit us on the Internet at www.rtohalton.org

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Activities and entertainment: Throughout the evening and into the next day, participants enjoy a variety of lively entertainment and activities. Many will even be able to catch a few winks!

I have registered RTO/ERO District 15 as a team with the Canadian Cancer Society and I will act as team captain, but I cannot do this alone. I invite you to become a part of our team, help raise that minimum \$1000 per team and join with thousands of others across Canada in the fight against cancer. Please call me at 905-336-5785 (preferably after noon) or e-mail me at ljroux13@hotmail.com for information about how to register as part of our Relay for Life team. Let's show our community what retired teachers are still capable of!

Tri-District Travel Group Update

By Jan Murdoch

The Tri-District Travel Group was the initiative of 3 District Presidents and 3 District Vice-Presidents (Halton, Peel and Durham). It has proven to meet the travel interests of many retired teachers. Our first excursion to **Chicago** in May, 2010 was very successful as we found ourselves with a great group of travellers. The group is now off to **Boston** (May 31 - June 3) for some whale watching, lobster feasting and general R&R. Sorry we are fully booked.

However, plans are now underway for a **San Francisco** visit Sept. 15 - 21, 2011. The bus will do a pick up in Mississauga and Burlington and then head off to the Buffalo airport. We fly just after 11:00 a.m. arriving in the late afternoon at the hotel Adagio in Union Square. While in San Francisco we'll have a guided tour of the city, a cruise to Alcatraz, and a bus tour of the Napa Valley with some wine sampling. We'll enjoy daily breakfasts and share a welcome dinner in a local restaurant. There will be plenty of time to do your own browsing and take advantage of your 7 day transit pass.

A \$400US per person deposit is required by April 6, 2011 to secure your spot. The total cost of the trip is \$1700US (based on double occupancy). All transfers to and from the airports are included as well as return air with Southwest Airlines. If you are a single traveller give us a call, we may be able to help to connect with other single travellers. Please see the flyer insert in this mailing for additional details or contact **Jan Murdoch** by e-mail (jmurdoch@cogeco.ca) or by phone (905-691-8407), **Linda Jones** (ljroux13@hotmail.com) or **Cecile Leach** (cecileleach@sympatico.ca).

SHAW - BY BUS: Come and Enjoy



Play - *My Fair Lady*

Place - Festival Theatre-Niagara-On-The-Lake

Date -Thursday, October 20, 2011

Matinee - 2:00 p.m.

The bus will pick us up in Burlington at 10:00 a.m. and drop us off in Niagara-On-The-Lake for shopping and lunch. Then walk or take the shuttle to the theatre. After the show, the bus will pick us up for the return trip to Burlington.

If the bus is filled, the cost will be approximately \$77.00 and will include the ticket, bus, taxes and gratuities. If the bus is not filled by June 1st only tickets to the show will be sold for \$47.00 each. You will have to provide your own transportation.

If you are interested, please contact Janet Carter Wright by JUNE 1, 2011 by phone at 905-336-5328 or by e-mail at jcwright@xplornet.com.

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

District 15 membership is now more than 2225. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members between December, 2010 & February, 2011. Please welcome and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Leslie Allen

John Cowan

Lynn Gapes

Edith MacPhail

Brenda Mayes

Patricia Norris

Marion Schaffer

Kathleen Claassen

Sheila Dionne

Linda Hignett

Valerie Mahon

Anne Mitchell

Anne-Marie Pongetti

Leona Skanes

Moira Wallace

Gary Closson

John Faulkner

Diane Kemp

Elizabeth McCutcheon

Elizabeth Mohr

Lillian Saar

Anne Stewart

Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



Since my last report I have added only one newspaper photo to our Archives' scrapbook. The Hamilton Spectator featured two photos of member **Linda Cowan** and her husband **John**. The couple celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on December 19th. The first photo was taken on their wedding day and the second was a recent photo of them on vacation. Congratulations

Linda and John and many more anniversaries to come.

Sadly, I've also added four obituaries of recently deceased members to that section of our Halton RTO/ERO District 15 scrapbook. **John (Jack) Wallace** slipped away peacefully at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington on Monday, December 6, 2010 in his 82nd year. He had been married for 52 years to his soul mate, Moira. Jack was a respected and popular principal in many Burlington Public schools and will be warmly remembered by all who worked with him.

Robert Gapes passed away on Sunday, December 19, 2010 at Campbellford Memorial Hospital in his 67th year. Bob began his teaching career with the Halton District Public School Board at the elementary level at Maplehurst, which he had attended from grade one to eight. From Maplehurst he went to Tecumseh where he met the love of his life and future wife Lynn, who was also a teacher there. Bob then went to Pineland, from there to J.T. Tuck and then into the secondary level. He spent many years working at Lord Elgin High School and retired from teaching while at E.C. Drury High School. After retirement, he and his wife Lynn moved to Marmora, Ontario. During his extensive teaching career Bob's great personality endeared him to his many peers and students.

Another of our members, **Joan Irish (nee Crawford)** passed away at the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto on Wednesday, January 12, 2011 at the age of 75. She had been married to her beloved husband Reg for 54 years. Joan was a passionate elementary teacher with the Halton District Public School Board for which she received much recognition. Throughout her life Joan was an active community volunteer. She was a prolific expert knitter, trivia whiz and dedicated to business news and watching the stock market. Joan's wit, strength and insight will be dearly missed.

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(Archives ... continued from Page 11)

Lastly, member **Doreen Brown (nee Hanusiak)** passed away peacefully at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington on Friday, January 28, 2011 at the age of 66. Doreen was a retired French teacher with the Halton District Public School Board and dearly missed wife of **Peter Brown**, who was also a former teacher with the same board and a Halton District 15 member. She ended her successful career at C.H. Norton elementary school and will be fondly remembered by all who knew her.

On behalf of all our members I would like to extend our sincerest sympathy and condolences to the families of all of these deceased members. Remember that they have left this earth a better place because they were all teachers.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our Archives' scrapbook these past few years and please keep those newspaper photos and articles coming! My address is 1446 Brenner Court, Burlington On. L7P 2Z2. You may also contact me by e-mail at judym Sloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538.

Political Advocacy Committee

By Linda Jones



Lately, our Provincial Committee has been concentrating on the Community Care Access Centres throughout the province. We have been asked to share stories of our contact with C.C.A.C. personnel, whether positive or negative, with the Political Advocacy Committee. I would be pleased to be your conduit.

If there is any truth to the very strong rumours, by the time you read this we may be immersed in a Federal Election campaign. Since seniors' concerns are our mandate, there are several areas where we might want some answers from the candidates e.g. protecting the Canada Health Care Act and the expansion of the pension system. We will rely on our website to communicate with you during any campaign. Keep an eye on it.

Finally, we do know that there will be a Provincial election on October 6th. Currently, the direction we should be taking in communicating with candidates is being approved by our Provincial Executive. I will post any information we get on our District 15 website www.rtohalton.org as soon as it is available.

Visit us on the Internet at www.rtohalton.org

Health Services Committee

By Paul Durnan



There has been discussion recently regarding defining the 62 days maximum per trip that you can be covered for when travelling outside the country. When flying, if you and your spouse keep your boarding passes both when leaving the country and returning there will be no problem proving you stay outside Ontario. If you travel by car to the USA you have no proof. Border crossing receipts are not automatically given. So, a duty free purchase in Canada using a credit card with a date and a signature will verify your departure date. As well, the receipt could be matched with the credit card bill sent to you. A bank withdrawal in Canada or other transaction signed and dated will do as well. Similarly, the duty free purchase coming back from the USA defines the date of return.

Recently, the government of Cuba began asking for proof of health care coverage coming into their country. For RTO/ERO members that means RTO/ERO and OHIP cards. You can phone Johnson Inc. before you leave for a letter as further proof (1-877-406-9007). If you have any questions or comments please phone me at 905-630-2285.

Stride to Turn the Tide

Submitted by Marilyn Ortwein

On Saturday, June 12, 2010, the individuals who participated in the Halton Walk to raise funds for the Stephen Lewis Foundation raised \$67,100 and not \$6781 as reported in the September Halton Herald. Of the 2720 walkers from 93 grandmother groups from across Canada, \$367,000 was raised. The walk was so very successful that a second one has been planned.

The Halton Walk Committee has already met and we will participate with other grandmothers from across Canada on Saturday, June 11, 2011. The Heritage Place Retirement Residence on Kilmer in Burlington will partner with us and the walk will commence and end there. We will also be holding our Launch Party on May 11, 2011 at Heritage Place. If you are interested in assisting as a volunteer and/or walker, please contact me (mortwein@cogeco.ca) for further details.

She Did --- What ?!!!

Submitted by Dave Wright

When Diane Dupuy spoke to us at our annual meeting last year we decided to put her **Famous PEOPLE Players** on our list of events. In February, 22 of us made the trip to Etobicoke and came away just as entertained as we were last May.

Famous PEOPLE Players

d r e a m s c a n c o m e t r u e

The stage story in Diane's children's book, *"The Little Girl Who Did ... What?!!!"* is told by a black light theatre group. The company is comprised of developmentally challenged people assembled by her to produce a remarkable show. The characters and their antics were so hilarious I had tears running down my face. The show is hosted by a mouse who appears in most of the scenes. Watching the mouse was a show in itself. The story is about a baby girl born into a narrow town inhabited by narrow people who live in narrow houses and sleep in narrow beds. As the baby was being rocked by a nurse in the hospital she farted and produced a butterfly. The nurse was astounded, called the doctor and the baby produced butterflies for him. Out came the butterfly nets and more butterflies and the stage was a riot of butterflies, nets, with the doctor and nurse running around trying to catch them. Two of our group, **Lore Mehta** and **Gail Reeves**, had front row seats and they became targets for the nets and other antics.

When the parents came to pick up their baby and were told about the butterflies their response was *"She Did --- What?!!!"* From that point on the story is about parents trying to get acceptance for a little girl who was different in a narrow town. At school the little girl experienced the agony of being different and not being accepted. She told her narrow teacher, who taught children to be narrow, *"I'm not narrow!"* One day she produced a large colourful butterfly that delighted the other children so much so that they started farting butterflies too. Everyone in the town started farting butterflies and the town became *"Wide and Open."*



The story certainly conveyed the message that children are special no matter what their differences are. Diane has earned world wide awards for spreading this message through books and blacklight theatre. The show, the meal, the dining room decor and service is well worth the admission. See the picture of the group at the event on Page 2. This was a good one.

Visit us on the Internet at www.rtohalton.org

Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



Much is going on between now and the end of the summer and it isn't too late to book seats. I have 20 seats for the May 6th Alder-shot Players dinner and Norm Foster comedy, "**Bedtime Stories**" and can get more. We always advertise the Burlington Footnotes "**Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance**" production in June and continue to do so as some of our mem-

bers are in the cast. And they put on a top notch show. We don't have pipers in the **International Military Tattoo** at Copps Coliseum on June 26th but one of our members, **Terry Ryan**, is one of the backstage organizers. The show is well worth a visit and it supports our troops.



We will have another bicycle trip May 18th. **Jan Murdoch** is hosting a **Nordic Pole Walking** clinic on May 2nd. The details were in the January 2011 Herald. Good fun with the welcome addition of physical activity. The **Blue Jays** have asked RTO/ERO back again for a game in August and we plan to attend as a District 15 group as we have for the past two summers. The Jays have made some changes to the lineup and hope to get the team closer to the lead in their division. It was a good game and a sunny day last summer and should be the same this year. Our attendance also supports the visibility of RTO/ERO.

In September, we will go back to Niagara for a **Wine Tour**. You can do it on a bike as we have in the past. However, this year I am proposing a new wrinkle. Do the tour in a car if you don't bike. It is still lots of fun. However, I would suggest a designated driver. I have never suggested a designated bike rider but perhaps I should. Last year I had a crash which resulted in a scraped knee. Just poor judgement not wine tasting.

In October, **Janet Carter-Wright** is organizing a bus trip to the **Shaw Festival**. Janet has included an article in this issue that details the plans. Have a look at the calendar and plan to come to some of our events. We will keep you up to date on the website and in the monthly e-letter. And lastly, a plea for help. I need someone to organize an afternoon of five pin bowling. If you can help please contact me at 905-639-5093 or by e-mail: wandave@sympatico.ca.

Awards Committee

By Phyllis Kingsley



The motto of RTO/ERO is “*Service to Others.*” We all know that. In addition to volunteering their time and efforts in local churches, hospitals and schools, many of our members work tirelessly to provide programs and services for retired educators so that our members can benefit from comprehensive and affordable health plans, a social network, travel programs, political advocacy and communication among other things.

One of the mandates of the Awards Committee is to recognize District 15 Halton members who have made a significant and/or long term contribution to the work of RTO/ERO in our district and/or provincially. This recognition comes in the form of **Distinguished Service Awards** to be presented at our Annual General Meeting on May 5, 2011.

To find members that we can recognize for their service, we are asking for nominations for these awards. Any District 15 member may nominate another District 15 member. A nomination form is included with this issue of the Herald and is also available on the District 15 website. Please fill in the form and either mail or e-mail it as directed on the form. The deadline for nominations is April 21, so that the Awards Committee has time to decide on the final selection.

The deadline for submission of applications for the local and provincial **Project Service to Others (STO)** grants for 2011 was December 31, 2010. Unfortunately, we received no applications. This Provincial RTO/ERO program provides grants to Districts for educational and/or community initiatives at the local, provincial or international level that support the concept of “*Service to Others.*” If you are involved in initiatives which would qualify for this grant in 2012, please consider applying for it towards the end of this year. More background information and application forms will be available then.

Fitness Time!

I felt like my body has gotten totally out of shape. So I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List

Executive 2010 – 2011

Past President	Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
President	Linda Jones	905-336-5785
1st Vice President	Janice Murdoch	289-956-0163
2nd Vice President	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
Secretary	Janet Carter-Wright	905-336-5328
Treasurer	Chub Baxter	905-643-3732
	Assistant: Daliah Brown	905-825-8470
Member-at-Large	Jim Baker	905-639-1292

Committees

Archives	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538
Awards	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
Communications Chair	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
Website	George MacRae	905-315-8581
Newsletter	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628

Assistants: Chub Baxter, Octavia Dutzak, Cecile Leach, Carrie Mayeur, Eleanor McCulloch, Marilyn MacRae, Cate Roberts (Design), Ray Smith & Dave Trueman.

Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
West Convenor	Gloria Simchuk	905-637-7340
East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
North Convenor	Marg Megalink	905-877-7135
Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628

Health Services	Paul Durnan	905-630-2285
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Membership/Recruitment Chair	Mary Lyons (Interim)	905-336-5744
	Committee Member: Judy Sloan	905-336-5538

Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	Linda Jones (Interim)	905-336-5785
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Program	Jan Murdoch (Interim)	289-956-0163
Member-at-Large	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193

Calendar of Events - Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011

- Apr. 15 Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts, Navy Street.
Comedy, **“Nurse Jane Goes To Hawaii.”** 8:00 p.m.
- Apr. 28 Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant, Hopedale Mall, Oakville. 9:00 a.m.
Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- May 6 Dinner Theatre: Aldershot Players, West Plains U.C., Burl.. 6:30 p.m.
A Norm Foster Comedy, **“Bedtime Stories.”** \$35.00. Contact
Dave Wright: 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by April 6.
- May 10 Annual General Meeting, Burlington Convention Centre. 9:15 a.m.
Business, luncheon and entertainment by **Comedian Gordon Paynter.**
Cost - \$25. See enclosed flyer to register and for more information.
- May 18 Bicycle Trip. Cambridge to Paris rail trail. 10:00 a.m. Contact
Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 11.
- May 30 Stratford Musical. Avon Theatre, 2:00 p.m. **“Jesus Christ Superstar.”**
- May 26 Breakfast at Cora’s, 3455 Fairview Street, Burlington. 9:00 a.m.
Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- June 26 **“Canadian International Military Tattoo.”** Connecting Canadians
to their Military. Copps Coliseum, Hamilton. 2:30 p.m. Massed bands,
pipes and drums, dancers, drill teams from Canada, USA and overseas.
Cost: Seniors \$30.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or
wandave@sympatico.ca by May 1.
- June 28 Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts. 2:00 p.m. \$23.00.
“Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance” with the Burlington Footnotes. Contact
Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 6.
- Aug. TBA RTO/ERO **Blue Jays Day.** 1:00 p.m. Details to follow. Contact
Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- Sept. 20 **Wine Tour of Niagara** by Bike or Car. Enjoy the fall in Niagara
and visit local wineries. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093
or wandave@sympatico.ca by September 1.

Calendar of Events - Oct. 2011 to Nov. 2011

- Oct. 20 Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Musical, **“My Fair Lady”** at the Festival Theatre. 2:00 p.m. Cost ticket/bus package: \$77.00. Contact Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328 or jcwright@explornet.com by June 1.
- Oct. TBA Dinner Theatre, Aldershot Players. Play TBA. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Sept. 1.
- Oct. 27 Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant, Hopedale Mall, Oakville. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Nov. 24 Breakfast in Burlington. 9:00 a.m. Location TBA.

Communications Committee

By Peter Gnish



We are always trying to get as many people as possible to send in material for publication in the newsletter. And we use a variety of tactics to have this happen. This time round we got a bumper crop of letters, e-mails and articles. Thanks to all those who sent in items over the past three months. You are helping to make this publication a dynamic and meaningful means of communication. Now let's hear from some of the rest of you. Here's how you can get involved.

Contribute to the Herald!

The next ***Halton Herald*** will be distributed in September, 2011.

- **Share a line** with our readers and let them know what you are up to.
- **Send a Letter to the Editor** on any topic that concerns you.
- **Write an article** on any topic that may interest your retired colleagues. Please try to limit your article to a maximum of 1000 words. The full version of longer articles will be published on the District website.
- **Share a funny story** with our many readers.
- **Provide us with pictures** to share with our members.

Send your article or correspondence to the Editor, Peter Gnish by e-mail: pgnish@cogeco.ca, by mail to 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton L8M 2K4 or telephone: 905-547-1628. Deadline - June 15, 2011.

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Program Committee

By Jan Murdoch



Please make sure that you have May 10 marked on your calendar as we look forward to seeing you at the **Annual General Meeting** in Burlington. We have a special treat for all those attending. The entertainment following the meeting and before lunch will be the highly-regarded comedian **Gord Paynter, "Leave" em Laffin.** If you want to know more about Gord you can find him on the internet at www.gordpaynter.ca. "Gord Paynter is a stand-up comic and he is different. Losing his eyesight in his early twenties as a result of diabetes, Gord thought his lifelong dream of becoming a comedian was gone forever. In truth, blindness opened his eyes to a whole new world of opportunity, humour and motivation." We are lucky to have secured Gord and hope you are up for some hearty laughter!

The **Wellness Series** is coming to a conclusion in April. We thank all members of the committee who made these events possible. We hope that those who had the opportunity to attend found them useful and stimulating.

The **Nordic Pole Walking** on May 2 in Burlington is almost filled. If you are interested in joining the group please e-mail (janmurdoch@cogeco.ca) or phone (289-956-0163) me before sending your \$5 registration fee to make sure that space is still available. I had the opportunity to try this activity and was thoroughly impressed with how poles improve the impact of the walk on your body. I love using the computer. But as a balance, when I want to exercise, I like going outdoors so, am looking forward to learning the proper method of using the poles.

Editorial Policy

The Halton Herald is a non-partisan newsletter published by RTO/ERO Halton District 15 and is distributed to members and prospective members 3 times a year. Material from members, charitable or volunteer organizations submitted for inclusion in the newsletter or website, in full or in part, must be approved by the editor or website manager. We reserve the right to edit all submissions and advertisements.

Advertisements may be accepted at the discretion of the editor if accompanied by a pre-determined donation to RTO/ERO District 15 based on the size of the ad. They are to be submitted electronically. Publication of any advertisement in the Halton Herald or Website does not constitute endorsement of the product or service by RTO/ERO Halton District 15. This issue of the Herald was printed and supported by **Astra Graphics**.

Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Mary Lyons



Our District is looking forward to welcoming those who will be retiring this year at our annual **Wine and Cheese** event to be held at the Quality Hotel in Bronte on Tuesday, April 19. This invitation has been sent to each Halton school and is extended to any education worker who will be retiring this June or to those who have already retired since September, 2010. As well, those who have retired but who are not members of RTO/ERO are welcome to come and learn more about the organization. If you know of anyone who would qualify, please encourage them to attend. Or you can call me (905-336-5744) or e-mail me (mlyons3@cogeco.ca) the name and address and I will send them a personal invitation.

Membership and Recruitment Chair has been an Interim position for me. As of the end of April, I will no longer be on the District 15 Board of Directors. I have enjoyed the last eight years on the Board. I have learned so much about RTO/ERO and I have made some good friends along the way.

Until the new Chair is announced, any change of address, phone number or e-mail address can be sent to me. It is important that we have accurate contact information for you so that you can continue to receive information and newsletters from the District and from the Provincial Office.

Until we have a new Chair, I will also be available if you have any questions or concerns about membership. You can reach me by phone or e-mail as noted above. I look forward to seeing many of you at our Annual Meeting on May 10th.

Advertising and Promotion Policy

It is the policy of RTO/ERO Halton District 15 that all advertising and promotion to or by its members must have prior approval by the District Board of Directors. Publication of any advertisement by an outside group in the Halton Herald or other District 15 printed material, on the District 15 website or at any District function or event does not constitute endorsement of the product or service by RTO/ERO Halton District 15 and must have Board of Directors prior approval. In this context "Advertising and Promotion" includes signage, verbal presentations, handouts, distributed material and display table material.

Warren McBurney- A Man For Others

By Marina Lloyd - Chair of Goodwill Committee



In 1993, having just retired from teaching, Warren McBurney accepted the volunteer position of East Area Coordinator for District 15's Goodwill Committee. Eighteen years later, he still welcomes the opportunity to visit retired teachers living in Oakville. It's time you get to meet this man whom I call a "man for others."

Warren began his teaching career in Collingwood and came to Oakville in 1962 to teach English at Purdue HS. For several years after 1968, he headed the English Department at White Oaks Secondary School. Imagine the number of young people who discovered the joys of literature and learned to love language during the years of his leadership. In 1980, Warren was responsible for adapting the Revised Canadian Edition of McGraw Hill Ryerson's textbook *The Uses of Language*. Even though his days are now more often spent with seniors, he continues to care deeply about young people. On many an early Tuesday morning, he and others from Central Baptist Church, prepare and serve a healthy breakfast for students at WH Morden PS through the Food For Thought program.

Warren and June (for the two have been an inseparable team for over fifty-two years) are connected to their community in many other ways. They have provided musical entertainment for residents living in Seniors' homes, they sing in their church choir and canvass for several charities, but their compassion



for others extends beyond Oakville. They've travelled to the Dominican Republic to volunteer with Medical Missions International, an organization which sets up mobile clinics in areas which have little or no access to medical care.

Warren was born in Walkerton, the youngest of four children. He majored in Journalism and English at the University of Western Ontario where he met June. Five couples who, like themselves, married the person they met during their Western years, have kept in touch at Homecoming for fifty years. The McBurneys have three daughters and seven grandchildren. A cottage on Bruce Beach on Lake Huron (the whole of Bruce County was mapped by Warren's grandfather, Warren) has

(Warren McBurney... continues on Page 23)

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(Warren McBurney... continued from Page 22)

been a summer gathering place for five generations of his family. How deep go the roots, how precious the memories!

Warren and June live in a “house of books”- floor to ceiling shelves on almost every wall. The shelves on one wall contain a very special collection of over 400 autographed books. The book which began the collection, titled *The Fall Of A Titan* is autographed by Igor Gouzenko! Agatha Christie’s signature is there, as is Lucy Maud Montgomery’s. Warren and June are patrons of Oakville Theatre and Oakville Symphony. Because of their sense of adventure and curiosity about people and places, they have gone exploring on almost every continent. In 1991, they flew around the world, stopping in a number of countries to visit friends and relatives. Significant wedding anniversaries have been celebrated by travelling the Inside Passage to Alaska, by cruising through the Panama Canal and by retracing The Voyage of the Vikings. Because of their interest in genealogy, they’ve visited many graveyards in Northern Scotland, England and New Zealand, looking for the names of ancestors. As they are avid photographers, family, friends and students have been appreciative audiences for slide shows following these trips. June’s Grandpa Duncan came to Canada in 1912 a few weeks after the sinking of the Titanic. That took courage! He brought with him the name Bennachie (pronounced ben a hee’) - the mountain behind his farm in Scotland - which the McBurneys now use as their e-mail address.

When he talks about his visits with the more senior retirees who live in Oakville, Warren’s face just lights up. He loves to hear their stories and they surely have shared many of his teaching and travelling experiences. I’m so glad that, after his initial reluctance to be interviewed, he relented and now readers will read his story and will recognize what a wonderful service Warren continues to render to members of our District. Please read the story that follows in Warren’s own words.

**IF YOU ARE MOVING or
IF YOUR ADDRESS INFORMATION IS INCORRECT**

Contact Dianne Vezeau at the Provincial RTO/ERO office

In Writing: 18 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7

By Telephone: 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or 1-416-962-9463 Ext 223

or by e-mail at dvezeau@rto-ero.org

or **Contact Mary Lyons** by telephone 905-336-5744

or by e-mail at mlyons3@cogeco.ca

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Flower Power of Some Oakville Over-90 Members

Submitted by Warren McBurney

Would you be embarrassed if friends sang “Happy Birthday” to you in an Oakville shopping mall? **Jean Hamilton** wasn't in December. My wife and I had just bought her flowers from RTO - they had taught together at Speers PS - when we met her at Hopedale Mall on her way to what was to be a surprise party with church friends at El Spero Restaurant. She stood and smiled - rather red-faced, probably - thanked us warmly and went on to her second party. This is just one of many happy experiences I have had delivering flowers to our 90+ members. **Mildred Sweetman** had fallen just days before her birthday so I took flowers to her in OTMH and was glad to hear of her encouraging recuperation. She is back home now with a walker but determined to get out on her own in the spring.

Conrad Poole, with whom I had taught at White Oaks, brought out books he had been reading recently - in several languages - to keep his grey cells active. He sent me home with two volumes with thoughts underlined, pages turned down, brilliant nuggets waiting to be mined. One very short poem by Rumi, an Afghanistan-born writer from the thirteenth century, is especially cogent these days:

*The ground's generosity takes in our compost
and grows beauty. Try to be more
like the ground.*

Conrad's wife **Marie** served tea - as did several other ladies - and we appreciated that as we traded teaching experiences.

Joe Hocking, retired from maths at MM Robinson, reminisced about helping to choose the organ for St. Paul's United Church in Oakville. He remembered the crowd gathering around while the organist tried out several that were on display at the CNE, saying that he thought they should pass the hat to help with the purchase! **Bernie Murphy** greeted me in his cheery room at Sunrise Assisted Living surrounded by his books. He had started in a one-room school of forty students near North Bay teaching bilingually - but not in Irish - and retired as Superintendent of Special Services in Toronto.

Dorothy Jefferies and I chatted in her condo looking over Oakville harbour after she came in from her Tea with Opera afternoon. **Joyce Burnell**, who saved Oakville's oak tree on Bronte Road, took me to tea in the bistro at her Chartwell Classic Residence then showed me her room where she is still busy writing. We

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(Flower Power... continued from Page 24)

laughed together as she read her ninetieth birthday poem, composed just days before:

*Today Lord I'm 90 - a new decade has just begun;
I hope dear Lord You'll let me live until I'm 91.
With unfinished jobs, there's much I still want to do;
Would You let me stay awhile longer until I'm 92?
Blessed with sight in a beautiful world there is so much to see;
Do you think that you could extend it until I'm 93?
With the economy ever changing, each day more and more,
I'd like to leave a legacy of helpfulness until I'm 94.
If by then I'm healthy and still alive,
I'd like to stay around until I'm 95.
Still feeling mischievous and playing childish tricks,
Could I please enjoy the fun in life until I'm 96?
I know dear Lord, living on earth I've had a taste of heaven,
Therefore I'm willing to stay until I'm 97.
By now I move slowly and am often late;
If it is Your will Lord, let me live to 98.
A decade's passed and I've had a wonderful time;
I'll be happy to join you, maybe! at 99.
A century of living, and unexpected too,
Excitedly I'm coming, singing praises to you. Amen*

Finding their homes took me to various spots in Oakville, new to me, who arrived in 1962. What changes these ninety-plusers have seen in their environment, yet how determinedly they hold on to their optimistic outlook on life. All of these people were surprised by and most appreciative of the flowers and the visits. They send their sincere thanks to all of you fellow members of District 15.

Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness

Doreen Brown

Robert Gapes

Brian Leech

Kay Peak

Lorene Thompson

Brenda Burke

Joan Irish

Norman MacPhail

Eileen Porter

Ronald Dionne

Lois Johnson

Alfreda Martin

Grant Puttock

Jack Wallace



1961: Back in the Day

Submitted By Jim Diell

Within days of the year-end prom at H.T.C., I accepted a “Call Out” with the Canadian Forces and was under canvas at Blackdown in Camp Borden. As an officer I had my own tent with a floor, a desk, a dresser, an issue bed and a 100 watt electric light. There was a little confusion as to my job description but things settled and I became the sports officer for a group of summer cadets and taught map reading and orienteering to other (older) officers. During the first week the “Bowmanville Boys” were in camp. Some of you will remember the Reform School in Bowmanville. The summer of ‘61 went quickly, my teams won 8 of 9 sports tournaments and I felt that the summer call out would become something permanent. Near the end of August, however, I had to sign some papers ending the call out. The papers returned me to “civvy” street with no teaching job lined up.

Another H.T.C grad, Donny Dewar from Form 3, called the week before school started and told me of a job that he had to turn down. “Was I interested?” A few phone calls later I had a job at SS#6 Hagarty and Richards with \$3000.00 for 1961-1962. Killaloe had a private phone company and although I could hear them they couldn’t hear me and several operators relayed my questions to Florence Reskoskie, Board Secretary in Round Lake Centre near Algonquin Park.

SS#6 was a newer building with two classrooms, a hall cupboard and a staff room. On the ground floor, Mabel Rice taught grades one, two and three. The principal, Miss Margaret H. had grades eight through ten. Across the playground Mrs. Murray taught grades four and five in the original one room school. My classroom was a storage room in the basement under the boys’ washroom and beside the furnace. Mel, Evelyn and Judy Nass helped to carry desks down to the dungeon lit by two 40 watt bulbs. A large piece of green linoleum was tacked to the stairwell wall for a blackboard and we were in business. I had twenty-three students in grades six and seven. Twenty-one spoke Polish at home.

I was an outsider and some of the locals would not let me forget it. Times were rough for a while but I visited with Father Coulas. Bridget Laginski, my landlady, told me that the Sunday English sermon was about tolerance and acceptance but the 11.00 am Polish sermon was not so gentle and she knew just exactly why the congregation was receiving some hell that morning.

In late winter after the -40F temperatures had left us, Pete Shires a trustee, came to see me. Pete chewed tobacco and spit left. I had found this out the hard way

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(Back in the Day... continued from Page 26)

earlier and made sure that I was standing to his right. He asked me just what did his school need? He explained that we were out of the mainstream in Round Lake Centre and, as I was from the big city, I might have some ideas. Gently, I told him that if money was available then the school could use a telephone and a duplicating machine. The need for a phone was obvious but the duplicator was needed to replace the hectograph pads, the indelible pencil and the purple teacher's tongue on Monday morning. Pete asked for clarification and with the help of a Jack Hood catalogue, I explained how this would benefit the students. There were three models pictured and I asked for the cheapest one. Not too many weeks later a wooden wall mounted crank phone was installed. Miss H. was surprised that it had arrived and remarked that she did not request it. "My, my, what is going on around here?"

I was a smoker then and would watch my class out at recess from an open window in the staff room while I puffed away. The other children already had had recess and were back in class. Miss H. didn't think my class should mix with the others in her opinion. All of a sudden the telephone rang. Two longs and a short. It's us! Our first call! Of course I answered, and was pleased to speak to Ricky Neitzel's mother. Ricky was in my grade seven class. While we chatted I could hear loud, firm, thick heels marching ominously out of Miss H's class into the staff room. Without a pause she grabbed the receiver from my ear and said into the trumpet "Round Lake School Miss Margaret H. PRINCIPAL speaking." Ricky's mom said "Oh Margaret, I was already speaking to Jim, give the phone back to him." Miss H. later gave me lecture 29. She was the Principal and I was not to answer the phone again. Throughout the year I had already heard lectures 1 through 28.

In April the duplicator arrived. It was the top of the line automatic electric Haier duplicator. Two bundles of paper, some masters and a gallon of methyl hydrate arrived also. Again Margaret asked out loud, "What is going on around here?" Her squinting eyes were focussed on me. My response was that maybe the school board has been generous. Immediately both the duplicator and the supplies were locked in the hall cupboard. Margaret had the only key.

My boarding house fed me well. The outdoor facility was out by the garage and the skunks liked to patrol there. Baths soon became a stand up affair at the school on a week end. After the usual scrubbing I used the time to dry my wet hair investigating the hall cupboard. A sharp compass gave me access to the unused machine. Now we were really in business!

(Back in the Day... continues on Page 28)

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For a few weeks all was well right into a sunny May. For the first time that year Margaret H. was out on duty as the taxi arrived to take 5 or 6 children north to the Bonnechere. George Eno was rushing out to the taxi, math dittoes in hand and fell at Miss H's feet scattering his papers.

Miss H. "George, HAND me those papers."

Miss H. "Where did you get these, George?"

George "They are my math homework."

Miss H. "George...."

George "Mr. Diell gave them to us."

Later, I received another lecture after being grilled as to how I was able to use the equipment in the locked cupboard. By this time I had another job for September of 1962 and felt free to speak my mind. I don't think that my outspoken opinions affected our friendship in any way.

In June of '95, at Percy Merry School, George Eno came by to say hello. He didn't remember his dusty encounter with Miss H. by the taxi 33 years earlier. Judy Nass from gr. 6 later became principal of St. Casimir's School (SS#6's new name). She is now Mrs. Clarence Shires and a member of R.W.T.O.

Exercise Can Be A Beautiful Thing. Try Zumba!!!

Submitted By Paul Lightfoot

Feeling listless? Tired? Run down? Bothered by arthritic pain? Overweight? Balance off? Looking after your heart? I am acquainted with all of the above, and then some! About a year ago I discovered **Zumba** and my life changed for the better. After months of hearing the seductive strains of Latin American music filtering into the gym where I worked out periodically, I decided to stick my head in the door and see, up close, what was going on. There were many women, of all ages, moving to the Latin beat. Where were the men? They were nowhere to be seen. That was about to change. I enquired at the desk, and learned that there were no gender restrictions. After obtaining a schedule and noting the class times, I showed up a few days later with light weight gym pants, a colourful, wick away T shirt, and new running shoes.



ZUMBA®
FITNESS

(Zumba... continues on Page 29)

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(Zumba... continued from Page 28)

Upon entering the general purpose room I realized that I was one of perhaps fifty lined up and ready to go. Three instructors spaced themselves so as to provide as clear a view to as many of the students as possible. In the short introduction one is advised to put as much effort into the moves as one is comfortable with, to drink plenty of water, and above all, to have fun.

In the course of one hour we would experience dance steps such as salsa, merenque, cumbia, reggaeton, samba, and other international music styles and forms. Moves to new pieces were explained and the rest one just picked up as one went along. The music is truly inspirational and the dances are lively. There is a real sense of joy, even of abandon, as the class progresses. No one cares about mis-steps. You're pretty much in your own, little world. The energy expended is reflected in the beads of perspiration forming on faces and the damp marks appearing on the wearing apparel of the participants. Large grins and spontaneous primal shouts attest to the euphoric occasion.

This is an aerobic workout in every sense of the word. Dancers, on average, burn 500 or more calories during the one-hour session. After a year I have gone from 190 lbs to 180 lbs. Those aches and pains, commonly felt when I got up in the morning, have disappeared. I feel invigorated which has led to more creativity and being better able to take care of physical chores and to engage in more activities.

There are four classes offered per week at the "Y" of which I am a member. I try to attend all of them. Zumba is offered at many community centers and private clubs and, as mentioned, the "Y." Zumba Gold is a popular class held at the "Y" at 410 Rebecca Street, Oakville. By Googling Zumba and following the links, one can learn where the closest classes are held.

Puns!

How Do You Get Holy Water?

You Boil The Hell Out Of It.

What Do You Call Santa's Helpers?

Subordinate Clauses.

What Lies At The Bottom Of The Ocean And Twitches?

A Nervous Wreck.

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Winter General Meeting - February 24, 2011

By Jan Murdoch

Ole! Ole! in Milton The afternoon began with a sumptuous Mexican Fiesta and ended with some Salsa on the dance floor. WOW! It was great to see so many shake their booties and sustain such great rhythm to the music of "The Havana Express" and Latin Dancers. Be sure not to miss the next special event that we host. See the happy faces below and many of the dancers on the back page. What great fun!



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Teaching in China!

By Nancy Sorensen

I have logged seven teaching stints in China since retirement and loved every one of them. Since my assignments have been in different places, I have seen a great deal of China, areas and special places that the average tourist never sees. I am looking for another position in 2011 - going for a nice round number...like ten! It has been a labour of love and a marvellous adventure.

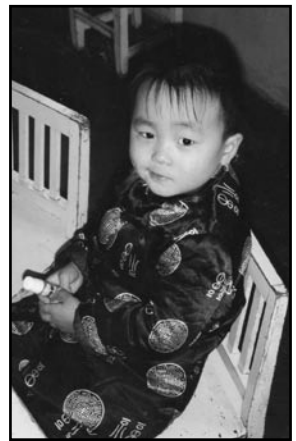
Most of my placements have been in private boarding schools except for one stint in Tongzhou, Jiangsu where I taught Junior High level teachers program development and strategies. It was wonderful and extremely successful, but hard work. My airfare



over and back was paid for and we were housed in a hotel where meals were provided. However, we were not paid any salary. Because of the H1N1 scare, we were quarantined for a week before teaching duties began. I was also teaching in China during SARS! That was an 8 week quarantine!

The other assignments involved airfare paid if one taught for a full year but only one way paid if doing one semester. We had a free apartment and were paid a salary but we were sometimes billed for electricity and drinking water machines.

Some of these schools were licensed by the Ministry of Education so the Ontario curriculum was used. I was not interested in teaching ankle biters so my work was exclusively with seniors, especially those planning to come to Canada. Since I am an art specialist, I also set up and taught art programs.



(Teaching in China... continues on Page 33)

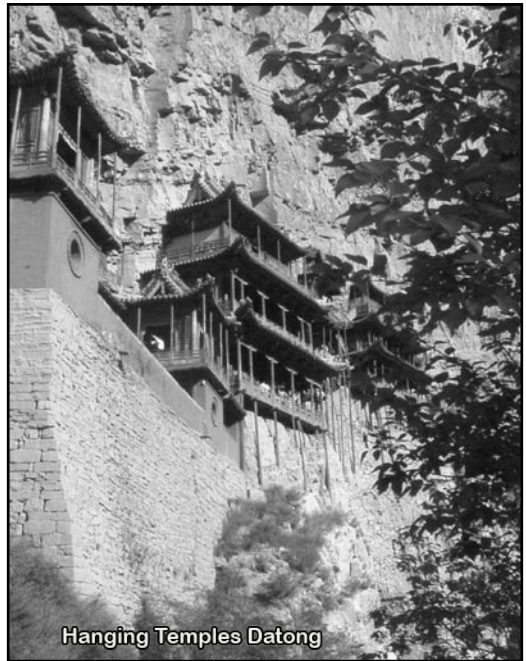
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(Teaching in China... continued from Page 32)



I love China! At age 74, my teaching days may be numbered. However, I have wonderful energy and drive and worry about what I can do with my life when China is no longer a possibility. Age has not been a problem yet, except for an assignment in Tianjin where the VIPs refused to give me a work visa because I was a foreigner over 65. I was to teach the Grade 12 curriculum and set up a grade 11 art program... on the Ontario curriculum. It left a huge hole and there was a terrible scramble to replace me.

Teaching for a semester or longer requires a work permit but summer jobs are short enough that one can teach with a tourist permit. There are a host of educational bodies that send educators to China and the job market will soon become saturated. Already, one cannot just be a native speaker of English and go over to China and expect to get a job. As with Japan, there are enough interested teachers who want to teach overseas that educational bodies are becoming more selective. Now, they want a degree, ESL qualifications, and experience. The new frontier is Vietnam but Korea, Cambodia and Thailand are possibilities. The sky is the limit and I can see more adventures on the horizon. My cousin, with a Ph.D. in linguistics, has a 10-week assignment teaching language specifics in Peru, at the University of Lima. He wants me to visit. So, I have signed up for a Spanish class. There is so much to do and see I can hardly fathom it!



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(Teaching in China... continued from Page 33)

I am having a truly productive and wonderful time with retirement. It was not always so. My first year was deadly because I had made the mistake of retiring “from” instead of retiring “to” something. A job offer to



Nancy at the Stone Forest



Swinging Bridge in Dujiangyan

teach in China saved me. Once again, I was productive, necessary, important and completely rejuvenated. I had found a super outlet for this drive and energy that I am so lucky to have.

Back in Burlington, I keep busy by giving tours at the Art Gallery of Hamilton and occasionally at

the McMichael in Kleinburg. And, I am still judging figure skating, a special interest of mine all these years from the days when I was a competitor. I even judged the China Nationals in Qiqihar, a city in the north, close to the Mongolian border and home to the great Chinese cranes that nest there.



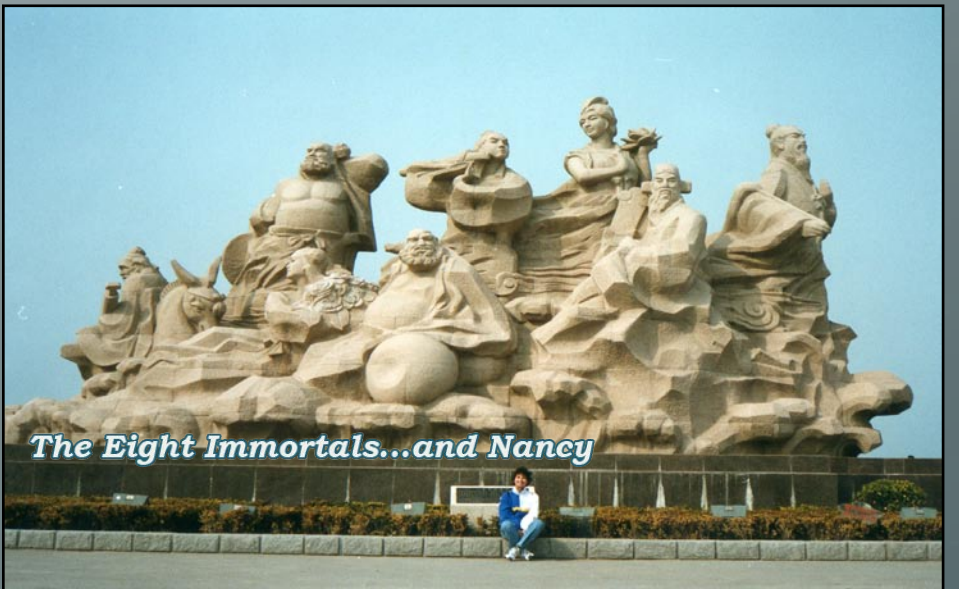
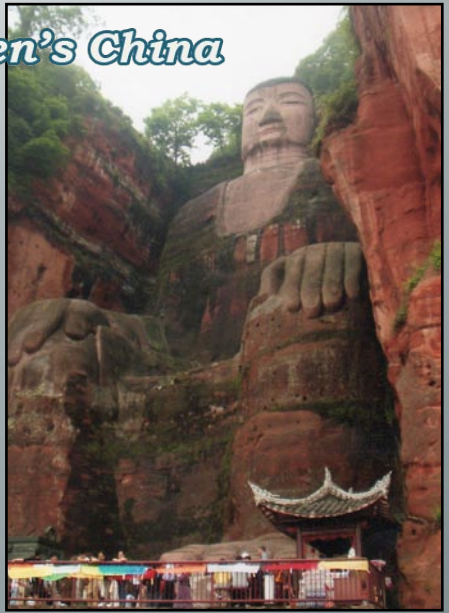
Students at Exercise Park

So, I am having a great time. Age is just a number. Attitude is everything.

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Nancy Sorensen's China

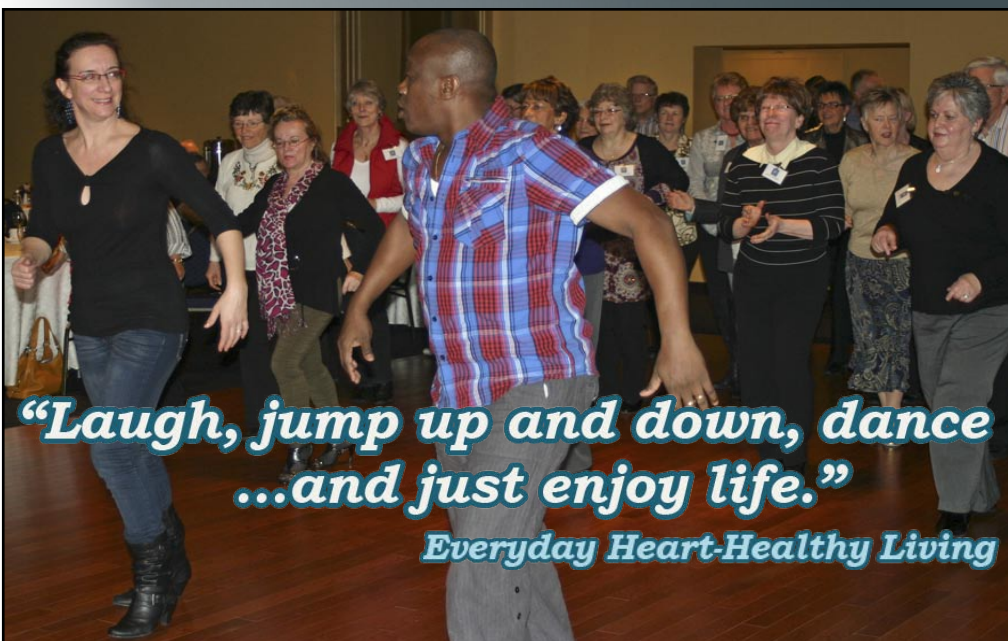


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