

ROTHALTON HERALD

District 15

April, 2013



Living Your Passion!



The Bird Lady of Sanibel - Halton's own Libby Baird

“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”

-Howard Thurman



*Celebrating Libby Baird
pictured in the Award Winning
watercolour by J. Ostrowski*

***In this issue
Celebrating
Passion!***



*Celebrating the Life of
Edna McMillan*



*Chub and Estelle Baxter
Celebrating Valentine’s Day*

*Celebrating Our
RTO/ERO District 15 Past
(see enclosed pamphlet)*



President's Report

By Jan Murdoch



In examining the history of our organization I became aware of how difficult things were for teachers when they didn't have a viable support structure. The RTO/ERO was initially developed to ensure that pensions were adequate before moving on to offer a plethora of services to its members. I am grateful that I joined the organization and had an opportunity to participate at the local level on the executive and at the provincial level as a Senator.

Our organization is made up of some very talented and informed people who work long hours in their retirement years on behalf of members. You can rest assured that you have a strong network monitoring the local and national government bodies, examining every relevant issue and keeping you informed.

An organization like RTO/ERO is effective because of the people who volunteer their time. There are many ways for you to be involved in a rewarding way and your contribution will be greatly appreciated:

1. Our Communication Committee could use help with editing, advertising and physically transporting the completed documents to the mailer.
2. The Tours Committee always looks for interesting destinations or travel tips.
3. Sometimes we are in need of an individual to receive information from the Provincial Office, decipher it and share the key elements with the membership. The information could be political or pertain specifically to the Foundation.
4. The Program Committee helps organize our meetings and requires creative people and photographers.

Often these jobs can be done from home: all you need is access to the internet. Alternatively, if you are interested in becoming involved with the Board, there are often roles which become available at the end of each term. Please consider getting involved! Contact any member of the board and express your interest.

Enjoy reading the historic insert included in this mailing about the four men who were instrumental in helping RTO/ERO District 15 get started in 1973. Each had a remarkable past and showed a huge commitment to their colleagues and their community. Remarkably, three of our members who joined our or-

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ganization in 1973 remain with us; Mary Rose of Kinburn will be 103 in December, Edith Bielby of Burlington will be 103 in October and Annis Munro of Burlington will be 100 in July. They are still enjoying their retirement years - congratulations to all three women!!

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If you know of someone who is considering retirement in the near future let them know that we will be sponsoring a Retirement Planning Work Shop on Oct. 2, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. at St. Volodymyr Cultural Center in Oakville. Please encourage them to attend and join our organization to assist them in staying informed and connected in their years of retirement.

This concludes my term as President but I will continue participating in organizational events and helping out where I can. If you see someone pole walking look closely, it might be me so shout "Hello!"

RTO/ERO District 15

We strive to live up to our motto!

Here for you now...

...Here for your future!

**You can help
by getting involved!**

We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



Normally I receive a whole raft of mail after the Christmas season. There was less mail this year but what I did receive was much appreciated. Why not drop me a line and let your former colleagues and friends catch up with your activities.

Gary Bateman: emailed a Happy New Year wish and attached a PowerPoint presentation “Trains of Winter” that was beautiful to watch and hear. Although it’s a little out

of season now you may want to catch it anyway. Be sure to turn on your sound.

You can view it online at

<http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/waramoni-1286701-thetrainsofwinter/>.

George Chisholm: wrote to point out an error in a photo caption on page 8 of the last Halton Herald. He said “That’s an Elmer Award, rather than Alymer. Elmer the Safety Elephant (on the flag) was the emblem for a long-standing safety program in elementary schools that included bicycle, pedestrian and household safety training. That’s Constable Alf Hooks of the Oakville Police Department overseeing the presentation. Schools received plaques depending on the number of years they had gone without an accident. I clearly remember the whole school sitting on the lawn in front of Brantwood School and getting our annual safety talk from Constable Hooks. He was a very forbidding figure. I also vividly remember the assembly when I was in Grade 3 when he took down our flag because my friend, on his way to my house to play, stepped out from behind a bus on Reynolds Street and got hit by a car, breaking his arm. The flag was gone for a significant period of time.”

(Editor’s note: Thanks George for the correction and for the reminiscence.)

Lynn Gapes: sent several emails. Two of them included a number of pictures, one of which appears here. She said “Today I had the pleasure of seeing 12 Trumpeter swans around my dock - down from the 22 who have been around this winter. The funny thing was that only 2 were there until I filled the feeders with corn. Then a family of 3 ‘teenagers’ and 2 adults arrived. As you can see in the photos,



(We Get Letters... continues on Page 6)

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

the family was not interested in eating, just protecting the corn from the other 2 adults. Once they decided to leave, after a few 'beaksful,' another family of 5 arrived. They were much more aggressive but still did not eat much, just played "dog in the manger" and protected the food from any others who might like to indulge. It is truly an adventure every day. Watching their antics as they chase each other on the ice is quite amusing."

She also sent an email to commend all those involved in putting the Halton Herald together. She said "I really enjoy reading the articles and seeing photos of people I know. I must admit that the new retirees are not nearly as familiar to me as they were in the past. Do you think I am getting older?" She also agreed to assist with further issues – thanks Lynn for volunteering.

Sue Gibbons: also sent her compliments - "What a lovely inspirational newsletter you sent out. Thank you for this – lovely!"

Dave Wright: emailed the following note – "Speaking of communications, I



went to RMC and now belong to the RMC Club of Canada along with many famous and accomplished Canadians. It's just like any university alumni association. We have a communication e-letter called eVeritas and magazine like the Herald called Veritas. You have seen that name on Lee Valley products. The guy that started and owns Lee Valley is an ex-cadet. His name is Lee and he uses the same name, Veritas... These two communication tools keep us all together. The guy and his wife who are in charge of it all just got a Jubilee medal for their work.

As luck would have it, two first year cadets and I made the front cover of the fall issue of Veritas. I wrote a story about the picture for eVeritas and it was published. Quite something for an old fart and two recruits to share space with Peter Mackay and his brigadier-generals."

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MY FRIEND MARG!

Submitted by Dale Parker

I don't believe a person can accurately summarize another's feelings regarding retirement from a life-long job. If I tried to put such a complex thing into a nutshell, it is likely to come out a little nutty and what would be gained by hearing about my view of such a personal thing? Instead, I'd like to write about a colleague who, in her role as a teacher, did an excellent job in a different way.

It seems Marg and I worked together for a very long time but, when I count the actual years, it was only six or seven. In 1968 I had been teaching in Toronto for five years when my wife and I decided to move to Burlington because we could better afford to buy a home there. Marg was head of the science department for which I was hired by the principal (**Mr. Don Gentleman**). She knew another teacher was needed and had wanted to be involved in the hiring process. She wasn't all that thrilled to meet me on my first day and I never knew the reason until sometime later. I presumed she was kind of a cool customer who didn't have much time for a younger teacher. Boy, was I wrong!

Marg lived in a small, well-kept house in the older part of Burlington. I wondered why someone would spend life alone but she was quite happy and, as the years passed, I could see that her life style suited her. Each fall Marg would seek out teachers who were new to our school and have them all over to her house for dinner. She would also invite a few longer-term teachers so that new friendships could develop. The conversations were lively, the food delicious and, after dinner, it was cigars and more talk. I didn't smoke, but Marg liked cigars so that was that.

There were about ten of us in the department. Some were better at their jobs than others but we all got along and Marg was very good at focusing on people's strengths rather than their weaknesses. When the chips were down she stood her ground against anyone. In one incident one of our principals informed Marg that he wanted her to patrol the girls' washroom during the lunch hour. Marg refused and reminded him that, if push came to shove, it would be a lot easier to find a new principal than it would be to find a highly qualified biologist! My fondest memory of Marg's relationship to authority figures relates to a speech presented by an 'expert' at a professional development meeting. The expert claimed that all students could be successful if only teachers could design the right program for that student. During this speech Marg and I were sitting

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(My Friend Marg... continued from Page 7)

near the middle of a capacity crowd in the school auditorium. She became more agitated as the speech progressed, squeezing the arms of her chair in anger. Finally, when the speaker pronounced that “there are no duds in education,” Marg stood up and said “Oh, bull...I’m going to lunch.” She walked out of the stunned gathering. I followed meekly.

Marg was well known as an excellent teacher. She understood children. Other teachers might describe a certain student as a class clown. Marg would see that student’s keen sense of humour. Some might say “That student asks too many questions.” Marg would describe the student as being curious. I won’t attempt to define good teaching but we all recognize it when it happens.

Marg retired from teaching over thirty-five years ago. We stayed in touch for a short while but friendships take work and I’m sorry I did not work hard enough at it. When I heard that Marg had developed digestive problems, which turned into terminal cancer, I knew that if I wanted to see her I’d best get to the hospital soon. I was shocked to see that there wasn’t much left of this once strong woman. She was heavily sedated and sleeping in the fetal position. I sat with her and held her hand. When it was time to leave I kissed her hand and was surprised when she tried to kiss mine.

Since Marg’s death, I’ve thought of that hospital visit often. When she tried to kiss my hand, I thought she was trying to let me know that she knew I was there. I now understand she was saying good-bye.

	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">RETIRED WOMEN TEACHERS OF ONTARIO BURLINGTON</p>
<p>Moira Plexman President 905-845-1977 www.rwto.org</p>	<p>Mary McCully Membership 905-333-0826</p>
<p>CARING, SHARING AND HAVING FUN!</p> 	

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Goodwill Committee

By Marina Lloyd with additions by Judy Sloan



Dr. Edna McMillan was to be the subject of the Goodwill report this month. Unfortunately, Edna passed away suddenly on December 14, 2012 at the age of 75.

Edna received her Doctorate of Education from the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. She spent many years working in the gifted children's program with the Halton District School Board including acting as the Board's Consultant for the Gifted. She also was very involved with the Council for Exceptional Children and was the chair for the Provincial CEC conference on at least two occasions. Edna started the Ontario Branch of the Association for the Gifted and was one of three Canadians on the Board of the World Council for the Gifted.

Edna helped plan conferences around the world including those in Australia, Istanbul and elsewhere in Turkey. In Turkey she visited a gifted school, Yeni Ufuklar, several times to do presentations for teachers and taught a class there for one semester.

Edna served on the RTO/ERO District 15 Travel Committee for seven years from 2004 until 2011. Having taught in Istanbul, Edna planned and led a 13 day trip to Turkey in 2006 for a group of Halton members and their friends. This tour, which included meeting and being hosted by Edna's former colleagues in Istanbul, took the group to places such as Ankara, Cappadocia, Pamukkale, Kusadasi, Ephesus and Izmir and has left lasting memories of Edna and her beloved Turkey in the minds of all who were involved. Edna was a truly exceptional person. Her international reputation for being a champion of the gifted will continue to live on.

Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness



Elizabeth Carter
Angela Judd

Irma Coulson
Donald Lawless

Evelyn Dale
Edna McMillan

District 15 Activities

Submitted by Jan Murdoch

Relay For Life

There has never been a better time to get involved with your organization, RTO/ERO District 15, and the Relay For Life team. This is such a worthy cause! For the past four years, Past-President **Linda Jones** was our Relay for Life leader. I have taken over the role for this year. Since Linda passed away in November our team will be walking in Linda's memory. On June 7, 2013 our team needs walkers on the track from 7:00 p.m. until 7:00 am at our location in Bronte Creek Provincial Park in Burlington. You can join us for any length of time you can give and, if you are unable to participate, the team will appreciate donations to the cause. A donation can be made by completing the form on the **Relay for Life** website under our team name, RTOdistrict15. If you would like to join us in the relay please contact me at janmurdoch8@gmail.com or call 905-691-8407 (cell).

Nordic Pole Walking

Introductory Clinics for Nordic Pole Walking are still available as follows:

Wednesday, April 3 and April 10, 10:00 a.m., Guelph Line and New St. Plaza, (NE corner) in Burlington.

Wednesday, April 17 and April 24, 10:00 a.m., Waterfront Trail at Eastport Rd. just south of the lift bridge, parking on east side.

The Introductory Clinic is free and takes about 20 minutes. If you want to complete the 40 minute walk with the poles you may rent them for \$15. Poles will also be available for purchase starting at \$64.95 + HST. Each month it is in your best interests to complete an endurance walk and I offer a 4.2 km walk in Beamsville on the last Sunday of the month (April 28, May 26, June 23, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, and Nov. 24) combined with Wine Tasting. You can come every Sunday or as frequently as you want, alone or with family and friends. Many RTO/ERO District 15 members joined me last year and we had a blast. The cost for the walk is a \$5 donation to a charity; this year all funds raised will go to Relay For Life. People new to Nordic Pole Walking should arrive by 12:00 noon for their Introductory Clinic; the Wine Tour Walk starts at 1:00 p.m. and is generally completed at 4:00 p.m.

Contact me if you are interested in learning more about how Nordic Pole Walking can benefit you or if you want to join me on a walk. If you have a great place where you like to walk I'd love to join you. Jan Murdoch, 905-691-8407 or janmurdoch8@gmail.com.

Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



Unfortunately, the only items that I have to add to our scrapbook since the last edition of the Halton Herald are for the Obituary section.

After a courageous battle with cancer, **Angela Judd-O'Riordan** age 62, passed away on January 9, 2013. Angela was a retired teacher with the Halton District Catholic School Board. She started teaching in 1970 and during her career taught all grades up to seven and served as teacher librarian for a time. She enjoyed all athletics but golf, tennis, biking, skiing, and going to the gym were her favorites. Angela had a magnetic personality that allowed her to make friends everywhere she went, and she went everywhere. Angela loved to travel and she included Europe, California, Hawaii, Florida in winter, lots of cruises and a month in China. When she found out she had cancer, she didn't let it define who she was. She never complained about the pain or her fate but continued to travel and remain active in between her chemo treatments right to the end. Those who knew her will remember Angela not only as a great teacher but also as a very positive person with a fantastic smile and a wonderful zest for life. She was truly beautiful, both inside and out.

Irma Coulson passed away on January 11, 2013 at the age 91. Irma was a long-time educator with the Halton District Public School Board. Marina Lloyd the chair of our Goodwill Committee wrote a lovely article in the January 2012 Halton Herald on the interesting life of Irma, and Marina has generously allowed me to use some of the information from her article. Being from Bronte, Irma attended Oakville Trafalgar High School and was class valedictorian in Grade twelve. Her first five years of teaching were at the one-room Limestone school-house. Between the years of 1953 and her retirement in 1983 Irma was a teacher, vice-principal and principal in seven schools in Burlington and Oakville, and also spent two years at the Board office as administrative assistant. During that time she served as president of various Units of FWTAO, as Provincial Director, and was on the first negotiating committee. After retirement Irma joined RTO/ERO and was the first president of RTO/ERO District 15 after Peel separated from Halton District. For twenty-two years Irma was a devoted volunteer at Halton Recovery House. She was very active in the community and in 2007 was honoured with Milton's Lifetime Achievement Award. The plaque reads "You are

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truly an inspiration to all and the Milton community is a better place because of your dedication, generosity and service.” Irma, you have also been an inspiration to our educational community which is a better place for having known you.

Robert (Bob) Arnott Richardson passed away on February 10, 2013 after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. Bob graduated from U of T in Chemical Engineering in 1960. He worked for Shell Oil for a few years and then taught Science and Chemistry at Burlington Central High School as well as at Nelson and Oakville Trafalgar. Bob also had two teaching exchanges in England. At Oakville Trafalgar he was given the responsibility of communicating with the Town of Oakville and the Oakville Beaver. Bob was the author of Chemistry text books and wrote poetry and humorous articles for the Toronto Star and Cottage Life. Bob was a minor hockey coach in Burlington and a soccer coach at Nelson, he was also a train enthusiast and had a great knowledge of the history of railways in Ontario. Bob’s family will continue to enjoy the cottage on Francis Lake near Owen Sound. Bob will always be remembered for his keen intelligence and wit which was reflected in his writing. He was truly an icon of his time and will be missed by all who knew him.

PLEASE keep those articles and photos coming to me at 1446 Brenner Crt., Burlington, ON, L7P 2Z2 or contact me at judym Sloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538, my cell phone at 905-467-2362 or by text at that number.

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

Our membership is now over 2350. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members since December, 2012. Please welcome and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Mary Jane Hardy
Deborah Dunn
Valerie McLelan
Sharon Stookes

Lilian Pringle
Lorene Eisenhofer
Katherine McLeod
Phylis Trudeau
Virginia Williams

Bonnie Purkis
George Major
Lynne Page
Freda Webster

Tours Committee

By Jan Murdoch



South Africa

Meeting: April 24, 2013 7:00 p.m.

Location: North Burlington CruiseShipCenters Office,
2025 Guelph Line, Burlington (Fortino's Plaza, across from
Board Office)

Topic: South Africa Tour - March, 2014

Information, slides, and refreshments will be available.

Come and join us as we explore our options in South Africa,
you will pleasantly surprised at the excellent prices we will be offering.

San Antonio, Texas

October 22 - 26, 2013: \$779 (land only, based on double occupancy)

Day 1: Fly from Lester B. Pearson Airport to San Antonio, Texas. Transfer to Hotel La Quinta Inn & Suites Downtown. Located downtown among the area's Old Mission Trail, the hotel is within walking distance of many major attractions including Market Square. The spacious suites have WiFi and a well equipped exercise center. A Deluxe Continental Breakfast is included.

Day 2: A.M. "The Alamo." P.M. San Antonio River Cruise. Evening: Welcome Dinner at the "Iron Cactus Mexican Grill."

Day 3: A.M. Guided Coach Tour of San Antonio. Lunch on your own and browse Historic Arts Village. P.M. "Enchanted Springs Ranch" where they keep the old west alive. Evening, walk to Rivercenter and browse; meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Tower of the Americas and visit the observation deck for a spectacular view.

Day 4: Your day to explore the city or countryside.

Day 5: Leave for the airport following breakfast for the flight back to Toronto.

Interested: contact janmurdoch8@gmail.com or 905-691-8407.

**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 Phone: 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or 1-416-962-9463 Ext 223

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

or Contact **Hilary Barber** by telephone 905-637-7067

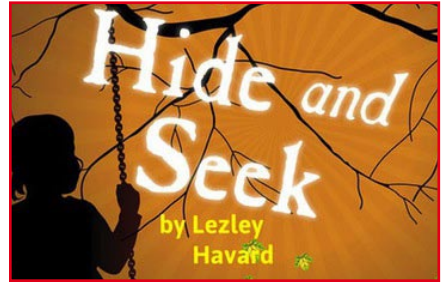
or by e-mail at hilaryjpbarber@cogeco.ca

Theatre Report

By Dave Wright

In January, 13 of our members enjoyed supper at O'Finn's in Oakville and then went to the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts to see *Hide and Seek*, a play presented by the Burl-Oak Theatre Group. Advertised as a fast paced thriller, it was truly that.

Briefly, the story is about a couple who has moved to an old country house and is expecting their first child. Renovations are a problem. Malfunctioning plumbing and electrical circuits are odd but not as creepy as the little girl the wife sees on the swing in the back yard. Each scene and each new character brings a new twist to the plot. In the third act the identity of the little girl comes out quickly. So quickly that a lot of questions seemed to be unanswered. Perhaps the writer intended it to be that way. Not a "lived happily ever after" story.



The next play, *The Kitchen Witches*, is at the Oakville Centre for The Performing Arts at the end of April. We haven't added it to our calendar but good tickets may still be available. The Burl-Oak Theatre Group puts on good theatre and District 15 is well represented. **Micki Clemens** is the president, **Jane Coryell** is the set designer and **Jim Clemens** looks after membership, is the treasurer, stage manager and producer.

In February we made our annual trip to the Drury Lane "Music Hall." Each year there is a different theme and new people are in the cast along with the veterans. It is always a good show and the singers have strong voices. We were front and centre this year and I warned **Margaret Daniels** who was closest to the stage, that she might have one of the cast on her lap. "Joe Canada" started off the Canadian medley followed by Canadian authored songs including Stompin' Tom's "The Hockey Song" and Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah." When they got to Paul Anka's "Diana," Marg was invited to the stage to be the boys' Diana. It was hilarious. I don't think they expected to have a seasoned performer on stage with them. If you have been to *Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance* in previous years you've seen Marg in action with the other District 15 ladies who dance in the Burlington Footnotes. If you haven't, get tickets for the performance in June.

Visit us on the Internet at www.rtohalton.org

Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



In my last report I mentioned a lecture series that was being offered by Wilfred Laurier University at the new Milton Centre for the Arts. The April presentation, *Optimization of the Balance Control System to Avoid Age-related Decline* by Dr. Stephen Perry, will take place Wednesday, April 10, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Admission is free. To register, go to www.miltoncentreforthearts.ca and click on What's Happening. Registration instructions are easy to follow but if you require assistance, please feel free to contact me (905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca). I will be attending and can arrange for group seating for those who wish to join me.

Other upcoming activities include: pole walking, starting April 28, contact **Jan Murdoch** (289-956-0613 or janmurdoch@gmail.com); a cycling bike trip in May, contact me if interested. June events include the Military Tattoo, a lunch cruise on Hamilton Harbour and the Burlington Footnotes presenting *Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance*. RTO/ERO District 15 is well represented in that group and will welcome new participants. Contact me as soon as possible if you wish to attend any of the above and I will arrange tickets. **Janet Carter-Wright** has to know by August 31st if you would like a ticket to see *Guys and Dolls* at the Shaw Festival on Oct 15th (905-336-5328 or jcwright@xplornet.com).

You are welcome to join us when you can. If you know of an event that you would like us to put on the calendar, please contact Janet or me. We value your input.

R.C.

Halton Catholic District School Board Retirement Club

A Social Club for ALL Board Retirees

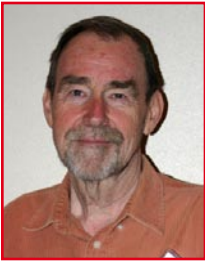
Contact: Penny Hambly, Chair
hamblyp@cogeco.ca

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Health Services Committee

By George MacRae



Often members incorrectly refer to our Health Insurance Plans as the Johnson Insurance Plan. Although Johnson is paid to administer our plans, the plans belong to RTO/ERO. We own our plans.

RTO/ERO appoints a Health Services and Insurance Committee (HSCI) which is responsible for the oversight of the operation, administration, interpretation and application of the RTO/ERO Health Plans on behalf of the RTO/ERO. The committee appoints insurance carriers, underwriters, administrators, claims payers, and consultants and also reviews and determines the design of the RTO/ERO Health Plans and premiums. The committee is composed of RTO/ERO members who volunteer a great deal of time to be trained for their roles. Clearly, all aspects of our plan are overseen by RTO/ERO. There is no middle man. The plans are designed with the best interests of RTO/ERO members and are operated on a not-for-profit basis.

One of the features of the plan is that it permits a Benefit Entitlement Review. All claims are processed based on the details of the insurance policies. In the rare case where there is a dispute, participants in the plan who contact RTO/ERO after a claim has been denied will be directed to a claims specialist from Johnson Inc. to discuss the rationale of the decision. If the participant is not in agreement with the reason given by Johnson Inc. and contacts RTO/ERO again, the participant will receive an application letter from RTO/ERO. This letter will describe the process and contain a form that the plan participant must complete and submit to RTO/ERO in order for the claim to be reviewed. The plan participants would be required to specifically indicate that their claims should be approved based upon the fact that at least one of the three criteria is applicable. Forms are returned when they do not clearly identify at least one of the three criteria. Upon receiving the form and any other pertinent information from the member, RTO/ERO will keep a copy and send the originals to Johnson Inc. Subsequently, Johnson Inc. will do an independent review of the claim. The adjudication of the benefit entitlement will be measured against the three criteria. Johnson Inc. will notify the member if the denial was upheld or overturned.

Johnson Inc. would report the individual reviews and outcomes to each HSIC meeting. If the HSIC determines that a review was not handled as it should have
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been and that any of the three criteria applied, then HSIC would provide Johnson Inc. with the direction, which would apply to all future claims.

Information about our health plans is available on the RTO/ERO provincial website (www.rto-ero.org). The Governance Manual for the RTO/ERO Health Services and Insurance Committee is available upon request by contacting Clara Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant, Health and Benefits at crodriguez@rto-ero.org.



Myths About Healthy Aging

From healthguide.org

MYTH: *Old age means poor health and disability.*

Fact: There are some diseases that are more common in older adults. However, getting old does not automatically mean poor health

or that you will be confined to a walker or wheelchair. Plenty of older adults enjoy vigorous health. Preventive measures like healthy eating, exercising and managing stress can help reduce the risk of chronic disease and fall risk later in life.

MYTH: *Memory loss is an inevitable part of aging.*

Fact: You may eventually notice you don't remember experiences as easily as in the past, and memories may take longer to retrieve. However, significant memory loss is not an inevitable result of aging. Brain training and new learning can occur at any age. And there are many things you can do to keep your memory sharp.

MYTH: *You can't teach an old dog new tricks.*

Fact: One of the more damaging myths of aging is that after a certain age, you just won't be able to try anything new or contribute things anymore. Quite the contrary. Older adults are just as capable of learning new things, thriving in new environments, and sharing their wisdom and experience with many generations. If you believe in yourself and have confidence in yourself, you are setting up a positive environment for change no matter what your age.

Calendar of Events - April 2013 to October 2013

- Apr. 10 Milton Centre for the Arts. **Wilfred Laurier Lecture Series.**
7:00 p.m. Optimization of the Balance Control System to Avoid Age-related Decline. Free. Register at miltoncentreforthearts.ca or contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- Apr. 25 Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant, Hopedale Mall, Oakville. 9:00 a.m.
Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Apr. 28 Nordic Pole Walking, Beamsville. 11:00 a.m. Cost \$5.00 charitable donation to RTO/ERO Charitable Foundation. Contact Jan Murdoch at janmurdoch@gmail.com or 289-956-0613.
- Apr. 29 **Annual General Meeting** and Lunch, Burlington Convention Centre
10:00 a.m. Guest Speaker **Lloyd Robertson**. See the enclosed flyer and registration form for more details and to register.
- May 13 Stratford Musical Matinee ***Fiddler on the Roof***, Festival Theatre.
2:00 p.m. Cost TBA. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- May 27 Bike Trip. Location, firm date and time to be determined by group.
Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- June 9 **“Canadian International Military Tattoo.”** Commemoration of the War of 1812 and the Battle of Stoney Creek. Copps Coliseum, 2:30 p.m. Massed pipes and drums, bands, drill teams and dancers from home and abroad. Seniors \$30.00, Veterans \$20.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 1.
- June 12 Lunch Cruise on Hamilton Harbour, Discovery Drive. 11:30 a.m.
Cost \$44.00 + gratuity. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by April 15.
- June 18 Burlington Performing Arts Theatre, ***Gotta Sing Gotta Dance*** with the Burlington Footnotes. 7:00 p.m. Cost \$25.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Apr. 15.
- Oct. 15 Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Musical ***Guys and Dolls***.
2:00 p.m. Cost \$52.50. Contact Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328 or jcwright@cogeco.ca. Cheques to be made out to Retired Teachers of Ontario District 15 and received by Janet at 4491 Appleby Line, Burlington ON L7M 0P3 by Aug. 31.

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RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List**Executive 2012 – 2013**

Past President	Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
President	Janice Murdoch	289-956-0163
1st Vice President	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
2nd Vice President	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
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	TBA	
Web Masters	George MacRae	905-315-8581
and Jeanne Woodcroft and John Gerrard		
Newsletter	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
Assistants: Pam Ahrens (Editing), Cate Roberts (Design)		
Proof-readers: Octavia Dutzak, Lynn Gapes, Cecile Leach, George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae, Eleanor McCulloch, Dave Trueman.		

Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
West Convenor	Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
North Convenor	Marg Megelink	905-877-7135
Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628

Health Services	George MacRae	905-315-8581
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Membership/Recruitment Chair	Hilary Barber	905-637-7067
Committee Member:	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538

Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	TBA	
Program	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Tours	Jan Murdoch	289-956-0163
Member Without Portfolio	Carolyn Hilton	905 844-2984

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Communications Committee

By Peter Gnish



This is my last report as I have resigned as Chair of the Communications Committee. I will continue as the Halton Herald newsletter editor for now. However, living in Florida for half the year means that attending Board meetings is an issue for me. If you have an interest in Communications and would like to have a say in this aspect of District 15 activities, contact me (pgnish@cogeco.ca or 905-547-1628) and I can fill you in on the commitment.

I would like to welcome **Pam Ahrens** to the Committee. She has kindly volunteered to assist me with the newsletter as the **Assistant Editor** and has already begun working on this issue. Before becoming a teacher Pam worked in business with both Bell Telephone and Massey Ferguson. She began her teaching career in Bramalea prior to coming to Halton where she has taught Business, English, Special Education and Guidance in several high schools. She and her husband **Clayt** are celebrating their 43rd wedding anniversary this summer. I met them at Lord Elgin High School where they both taught in the Business department. Thank you Pam for coming on board to work on the newsletter.

We also have a new webmaster. **Jeanne Woodcroft** has kindly agreed to introduce herself.



I am very happy to be a new member of RTO/ERO District 15 and to be participating in the coming months as the new Website Coordinator and co-Webmaster with **John Gerrard**. I look forward to working with John and under the tutelage of **George MacRae** we hope that the transition will be smooth and seamless as we move to a new system of managing the District 15 website using Drupal.

You might be interested in a little background. I taught Mathematics and Computer Science/Applications for 32 years in the Hamilton-Wentworth Separate School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board. I also served 4 years as Vice-Principal at Loyola and Notre Dame secondary schools. Some of you may know me by my surname, Rybacki. After retirement I reverted to my maiden name, Woodcroft.

(Communications... continues on Page 21)

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(Communications... continued from Page 20)

I retired from teaching the year following the turn of the millennium and am now contentedly following many new and old interests including travelling, hiking, golfing, tennis, x-country skiing, and bridge. I thoroughly enjoy tutoring mathematics to private students in my home. During tax season, March and April, you will find me working full-time in a very busy accountancy firm in Burlington doing T1s. I am a founding member of Appleby Women's Probus Club and am their monthly newsletter editor. Most importantly, I am the mother of two beautiful daughters and have three wonderful grandchildren with whom I love to spend time.

But more interestingly, I do have a few noteworthy connections to some of our own RTO/ERO District 15 members:

- I was a next-door neighbour to **George MacRae** in mid-1970.
- As a volunteer with The Arthritis Society, I was involved with **Cate Roberts** and her drama students in making presentations on 'disabilities' to various local schools.
- My daughters helped me raise a few litters of pups mothered by our beloved family dog, Snowflake; **Peter Gnish** became the proud owner of one of our pups.
- I spent four months in China after retirement teaching English to middle and high school students; **Barb Singleton** was instrumental in sending me there.

I look forward to making new friendships and renewing old ones with colleagues in RTO/ERO District 15.

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**.

Awards Committee

By Phyllis Kingsley



Each year RTO/ERO awards up to 25 individual scholarships of \$1,000 each through its Scholarship Program. Congratulations to **Heather Hamilton**, sponsored by District 15 RTO/ERO member **Carl Hamilton**, for receiving a 2012 scholarship for her final year in a teaching program at the University of Windsor.

I would like to remind you that a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, grandniece, grandnephew, son-in-law, daughter-in-law or step-child of an RTO/ERO member is eligible to apply for an RTO/ERO Scholarship, if enrolled in the final year of a teaching or related program. The 2012 Annual Senate approved the expansion of the eligibility and program criteria to include other degree or diploma programs, such as Early Childhood Education, Education Assistant and English as a Second Language (to name a few). For a complete list of the eligibility and program requirements, and the revised 2013 application form, please check out the RTO/ERO website at <https://www.ero-rto.org/scholarship-program>. The deadline for 2013 applications is July 15, 2013.

It is also that time of year to ask for your help in identifying RTO/ERO District 15 members who deserve recognition for their significant and/or long term contribution to the work of RTO/ERO locally and/or Provincially. **The Distinguished Service Awards** will be presented at the Annual General Meeting on April 29, 2013. A nomination form is included with this issue of the Herald and is also available to download on the District 15 website. It outlines criteria for nominations. Please fill in the form and either mail or email it as directed on the form. **The deadline for nominations is April 19, 2013.**

Annually, RTO/ERO provides funds of up to \$4000 to Districts for educational and/ or community initiatives at the local, provincial or international level that support the concept of "Service to Others" in the form of a **Service To Others (STO) Grant**. Unfortunately, District 15 did not receive any eligible applications this year, but it is never too early to start thinking about a 2014 grant! Sample applications are posted on the provincial website under the Programs and Services tab. The deadline for applications to District 15 for the 2014 grant is December 30, 2013. Application forms are available on the provincial website generally around June.

Visit us on the Internet at www.rtohalton.org

We Need Volunteers

15 Great Reasons to Volunteer with RTO/ERO

Many volunteers are needed to support the programs and activities we offer with RTO/ERO from becoming a member of our Board Directors to serving on one of our committees. At this time we need committee members in several areas. If you would like to join our wonderful group of volunteers please contact me at cecile.leach@sympatico.ca or by phone 905-634-8027.

We need volunteers to continue to bring you quality programs and events!

- * Find a purpose
- * Enjoy meaningful conversation
- * Feel involved
- * Connect with members of your District organization
- * Meet new people
- * Contribute to a cause that you care about
- * Make a difference
- * Use your skills in a productive way
- * Explore new areas of interest
- * Add interest to your day
- * Expand your horizons
- * Make new friends
- * Have input into programs offered
- * Have fun with colleagues
- * Find out about your Provincial Organization

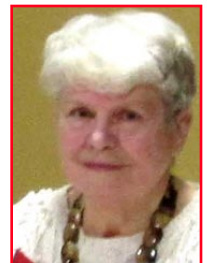
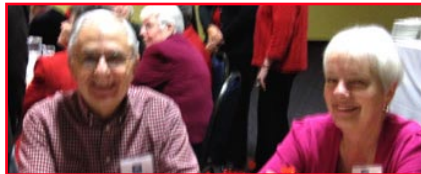
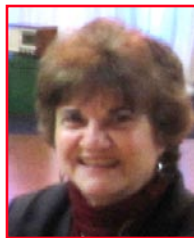
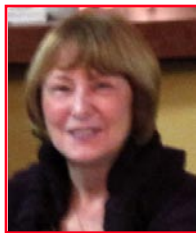
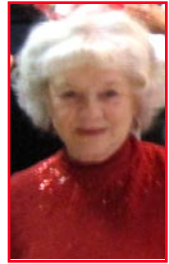
A new volunteer manager spends a week with the manager she is replacing. The departing volunteer tells her, "I have left three numbered envelopes in the desk drawer. Open an envelope if you encounter a crisis you can't solve."

Three months later everything goes wrong - people are complaining about lots of things - and the manager feels very threatened by it all. She remembers the parting words of her predecessor and opens the first envelope. The message inside says "Blame your predecessor!" She does this and gets off the hook.

A half a year later, there is a huge dip in volunteer recruitment numbers, combined with a lot of volunteers resigning. The manager quickly opens the second envelope. The message reads, "Reorganize, Recognise and Rebuild!" This she does, and the volunteering numbers quickly rebound and improve.

Three months later, at her next crisis, she opens the third envelope. The message inside says.... "Prepare three envelopes".

Living Your Passion!



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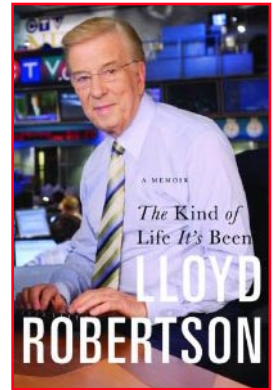
Program Committee

By Penny Hambly



Our Winter Lunch was held on Valentine's Day at the Teatro Conference and Event Centre in Milton. It was a fun afternoon with good food and great desserts. Leslie and Christopher Gray from the **KooGLE Theatre** of Chatham presented ***Couple of Swells*** a good musical revue of songs and dancing that were very appropriate for Valentine's Day. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time. Leslie is the daughter of retired principal **Len Kay**, who was in attendance. He must have been very proud of his daughter and son-in-law. Photos (by **Roberte Rivard**) of those in attendance are on Page 24.

Make sure that you mark your calendars now for our **40th Anniversary Annual General Meeting and Lunch** to be held on Monday, April 29, 10:00 a.m. at the Burlington Convention Centre. We had to switch the date to accommodate our very busy guest speaker, the longest running national television news anchor in North America, **Lloyd Robertson**, who will be talking at lunch about his book, ***The Kind of Life It's Been***. It promises to be a wonderful day with, among the invited guests, Provincial RTO/ERO President Leo Normandeau, as well as a few other former RTO/ERO District 15 Presidents. There will also be pictures and articles on display from past years offering opportunities to share memories with past and present colleagues - remember the strap? Look for the two-sided flyer in this issue of the Halton Herald to see information regarding the upcoming meeting. Your completed Registration Form, along with a cheque, must be received before the deadline. You will not want to miss this event!



Another date to mark is Thursday, October 24 for our **Fall Lunch and Meeting** with the well-known historian, **Ken Weber**. Ken will present his views on ***The Wives of the Prime Ministers***. More information on the venue and registration for this presentation will be in the Fall Halton Herald.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO RTO/ERO DISTRICT 15 MEMBERS: We have done a cost analysis of our Call-Out System and found that it is too expensive to continue. As a result, **YOU WILL NO LONGER RECEIVE PHONE MESSAGES** to remind you to register for events. Please make sure that you register for the above events as soon as you get your Halton Herald.

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WOW!!!
Early Bird Subscription - Three Plays for \$50.00
Let's reserve a seat for you!

The Burl-Oak Theatre Group (www.botg.ca) proudly presents three hilarious comedies for the forthcoming season 2013-2014 at the Oakville Center for the Performing Arts (Box Office: 905-815-2021 or oakvilledrama.ca).

The Sunshine Boys by Neil Simon – Wednesday, October 2 to Sunday, October 6, 2013

Our season opener is a “hats off” tribute to the past—a return of one of our most popular productions ever. Themes of friendship and nostalgia are explored in this touching comedy. Lewis and Clark are two washed up vaudevillians, former partners who grew to despise each other. When Clark's nephew attempts to bring them together for one final rendition of their famous “Doctor's Sketch” on television, he discovers that dealing with two crusty old men is indeed a daunting challenge. Wisecracks and insults are peppered with knee-slappers and the sparks fly at the grumpy reunion. **Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French Inc.**

Leading Ladies by Ken Ludwig – Wednesday, January 15 to Sunday, January 19, 2014

In this hilarious comedy, we meet an elderly lady on her deathbed, who is looking for two relatives, Max and Steve, whom she has not seen since she was a child. She plans to bestow her fortune upon them, to be shared with her one remaining niece, Meg. Enter Jack and Leo, two down-on-their-luck Shakespearean actors, who plot to pose as the missing nephews and claim their inheritance. Imagine their surprise when they discover that Max and Steve are really Maxine and Stephanie! The laughs increase as confusion runs amok, right to the ending when “All's well that ends well.” **Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French Inc.**

Real Estate by Allana Harkin – Wednesday, April 9 to Sunday, April 13, 2014

Joel Harper is a mystery writer dealing with writer's block, a marriage on the rocks, a tax collector, and a mortgage foreclosure. Forced to sell the family home quickly, he enlists the help of Emma, a local “realtor extraordinaire”, who perky and single, decides that both the house and its owner are “fixer- uppers” in need of tender loving care. To add to the fun, Joel's ex-wife makes an unexpected appearance with her new “man-purse toting” beau. The result is a heartwarming comedy that deals with deeper subjects such as love, loss, and aging parents while providing insight into the complexities of real estate. **Produced by special arrangement with Kensington Literary Representation.**

REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION

3 PLAYS / \$60 (save \$15 over single ticket prices)

EARLY BIRD SUBSCRIPTION

3 PLAYS / \$50 (save \$25 over single ticket prices) **EARLY BIRD DEADLINE:** April 30, 2013

WEDNESDAY PREVIEW SUBSCRIPTION

3 PLAYS / \$40 (save \$35 over single ticket prices)

SINGLE TICKETS: Wednesday / \$15; Thursday to Sunday / \$25

Groups of 10 or more receive a \$2 discount per ticket. Theatre handling fee and HST included in all prices. **CALL THE BOX OFFICE NUMBER ABOVE TO RESERVE YOUR SEATS NOW!**

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Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Hilary Barber



On April 4th we will be hosting a **Wine and Cheese** party for all staff involved in education. Teachers, secretarial staff, custodial staff, EAs and principals who are considering retiring in the next year or so are invited to attend. Flyers have been sent to all schools.

Please send any changes to your name, address, phone number or email address to me at 905-637-7067 or hilaryjpbarber@cogeco.ca. I will notify the Provincial Office and make changes on our database.

OUR RECORDS ARE INCOMPLETE! WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We have been trying to find some records from the beginnings of RTO/ERO District 15. We know that RTO/ERO District 15 began in 1973 but we are very concerned about the records from 1986 forward which is when Peel separated from Halton and became District 39.

I have gone through all the information I found and have noted everything I possibly could, but there are great gaping holes in my data. I found the names of all Presidents and most Past-Presidents. However, I have nothing that tells me who was First/Second Vice, Treasurer, Secretary and members of committees for the period between 1987 and 2000 .

If you have served with RTO/ERO District 15 during that period of time, or can shed some light on someone you know who did, would you kindly send me a note, an e-mail or call me on the telephone. I would be so happy to hear from you.

Hope to hear from you with helpful information,

Cecile Leach
Unit 4- 3115 New Street
Burlington, ON L7N 3T4
905-634-8027
cecile.leach@sympatico.ca

A Call For Submission!

“Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focussing on what excites you.”

Those who send in submissions that are used can earn a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Horton's - good enough for a coffee and a muffin to dig into with passion!

The details:

1. *Write a report* of no more than 500 words on your passion.
2. *Give some details* about how you discovered this passion.
3. *Explain* how it enhances your retired life.
4. Include pictures if possible.

One or more submissions will be chosen for publication in the next issue. All other submissions will be kept for future issues.

Send the entries

- By Canada Post to Peter Gnish, 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4 (All hard copies will be returned) **OR better still,**
- By computer, as an attachment to an e-mail message to pgnish@cogeco.ca.

There is no deadline for this project.

Each printed submission will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Hortons.

You will be notified if and when your submissions is used.

If you have questions please contact me at 905-547-1628 or pgnish@cogeco.ca.

Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in September, 2013.

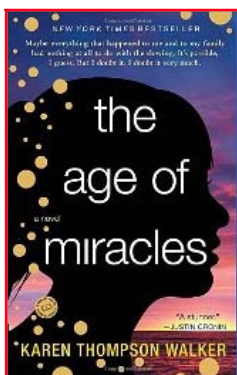
- **Share a line** with our readers and let them know what you are up to.
- **Send a Letter to the Editor** on any topic that concerns you.
- **Write an article** on any topic that may interest your retired colleagues. Please try to limit your article to a maximum of 1000 words. The full version of longer 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 - July 15, 2013

In the January, 2013 issue of the Halton Herald there was an appeal to the membership to become involved by submitting a short review of a book they had read that might interest others. The first submission received is printed below. Angela will receive a \$10.00 for sending it in. Why not be the next to have your Book Review printed and earn yourself a little token for your efforts. Please keep the submission to a maximum of 500 words and send it to Peter Gnish at 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, L8M 2K4 or by email to pgnish@cogeco.ca.

BOOK REVIEW: *The Age of Miracles*

Submitted by Angela Laing



The Age of Miracles is a first novel, written by Karen Thompson Walker. It is an intriguing tale of a period in time which coincides with our current century.

We are all aware of significant changes in society world-wide, and how natural forces, even those far distant, impact our lives. In addition, natural disasters, which recently appear to be increasing, are a source of great concern and as a result, many theories have been developed, questioning the reasons for them.

The Age of Miracles, an easy-read, is set in a small town in California and traces the effects of yet another “natural disaster” on the residents, young and old. It focuses on a particular group of teens, although the effects on those involved prove to be world-wide. The book examines how the subjects of the study in this small town adapt to the trauma of such an event and how the world in general is affected.

Without any specific recommendations or conclusions, the book is an interesting story. I enjoyed it because the events that are described seem, to me, to be quite possible in today’s world. The reactions of the different groups of people involved are very much what we might expect of such memorable occurrences in nature. Indeed, the progression of one young girl’s social development, despite bullying at school and on the school bus (!) adds a more personal and insightful glimpse into the turbulence of the teenage years.

I hope that this brief summary is enough to lead you to this novel!

Read it! You’ll like it!

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Changes To RTO/ERO District 15 Constitution

By Cecile Leach

The Constitution Committee met in January 2013. Although our Constitution will be reviewed in its entirety next year (2014), the committee felt that these proposed changes needed to be addressed immediately.

Article 6.01 Amendments to the Constitution

The constitution may be amended by the consent of two-thirds of the eligible members voting at the Annual General Meeting of the District provided that a Notice of Motion has been sent to the members at least two weeks before the meeting, OR, by a 90% vote of the eligible district members voting at the Annual General Meeting of the District, previous notice not having been given.

Proposed Changes to the Constitution

Change #1:

2.01 District Executive

(a) The Executive shall consist of at least five members : Past President, President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Member at Large.

Changed to:

2.01 District Executive

(a) The Executive shall consist of at least five members : Past President, President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Member at Large.

Change #2

2.22 Duties of the Secretary, Treasurer

Changed to

2.22 Duties of the Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant-Treasurer

Change #3:

2.22 (b) The Treasurer shall:

Changed to

2.22(b) The Treasurer and Assistant-Treasurer shall:

“They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq. Why don’t we just give them ours? It was written by a lot of really smart guys, it’s worked for over 200 years and we’re not using it anymore.”

...anonymous

Happy Hikers

Submitted by Dave Wright



Wednesday, February 12th was a beautiful winter day and the Halton District Catholic Retirement Club hikers were on the Burlington waterfront enjoying the exercise and the sun. At noon we went to Emma's Back Porch for lunch. The group hikes every Wednesday at different locations in Halton and surrounding counties. There is lots to see here and lots of good places to eat. And above all, the company is first rate. That is a guarantee.

To join us get in touch with Eileen and Reg Michie at reg_michie@yahoo.com.

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.



Libby – The Bird Lady of Sanibel Island

By Peter Gnish and Cate Roberts

What does a passion for teaching mean? To those outside the profession, it is frequently seen as a strong commitment to a specific subject area. While there's truth in that, we know that the dedication is really to forming bonds between students and colleagues based on receiving and passing on exciting new information that teaches us all more about ourselves and our place in the world. Libby Baird understood that completely as a teacher and pursues it through her retirement by following her passion. She devotes herself to working with parrots on Sanibel Island, Florida.

Libby began her Physical Education teaching career at M.M. Robinson H. S. in Burlington in Sept., 1965. Three days earlier she married her husband Dave, who joined the P. E. department at M.M.R. in 1967. They took a semester off in 1986, visited and fell in love with Sanibel Island, Periwinkle Park and the parrots nesting there. The birds had been abandoned by their owners and because they are flock animals they were physically and emotionally damaged. Libby got involved and formed a bond with them. Determined to prevent this kind of abuse, she knew she had to make people aware of the fact that birds should not be used as household pets. "Parrots are not good pets. They are noisy, messy, they bite and they live a long time. They are intelligent, demanding and emotionally needy, and most people have neither the time nor mental stamina to keep up with their demands." Thus began her new teaching career: doing shows at 10:00 a.m. five days a week while in Sanibel. She educated herself by reading books and magazines, consulting with vets, and going to conferences including the World Parrot Conference in the Canary Islands in 2004. Her combined studies convinced her that "Experience is the best teacher."

In 1995, Libby and Dave bought a Park Model trailer/home and decided to spend 6 months of the year in Periwinkle Park. Sanibel residents and visitors alike flock to that community with one interest in mind: "to see the Bird Lady shows." Some days the crowds reach 75 people. Libby talks to the parrots by name: Terri, the double yellow-headed Amazon; Dusty Rose, the rose-breasted cockatoo; Pumpkin, the scarlet/gold Catalina Macaw; JoJo, the affectionate Blue/Gold Macaw; his girlfriend, the jealous



(Libby... continues on Page 34)

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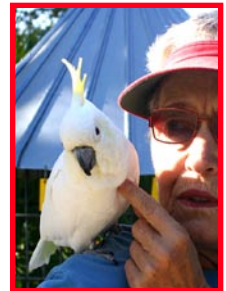
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and slightly temperamental Skipper; and Fred, the green winged Macaw who is 53 years old and loves women, especially young pretty ones.

The birds display intelligence and emotions. During the program one responds to Libby's gentle instruction to an outstretched wing. Some parrots are overt womanizers, another exhibits affection for men, especially any man with a moustache. Libby tells of one bird that openly demonstrates its grief over its owner, who recently passed away. She claims that attractions can be observed by how the parrot's pupils constrict into a tiny dot, a sign of excitement. Blushing of the cheek is further evidence of attraction. Sometimes, the parrots get a little carried away in their attempts to show fondness: Libby has lost her share of buttons and has gotten the bad end of a beak caused by a clamp on her lips requiring stitches. However, she shrugs it all off as proof of her claim.

Libby volunteers about five or six hours a day amusing the birds, making or repairing toys and paying the vet bills. To house her avian friends she has acquired a flight cage for the cockatiels and budgies, and another for the lovebirds. Other cages hold parrots: six cockatoos of four varieties, five Amazons, five conures, one eclectus, one African Gray and four macaws. When owners don't want, or can't look after their parrots any longer they look to Libby, but the park is short of cages and doesn't have the room.



A few years ago Libby was seriously ill. During that time and since, Dave has been a great help. Parrots often prefer certain people over others and Dave is the favourite of some of them. For seventeen years they have owned an Amazon parrot, Dooley. When they travel, friends with birds of their own, who love Dooley, look after him.



Libby's passion for teaching has led her, in retirement, to pass along new ideas and awareness of a species which may be endangered. She has devoted her life to learning and sharing her findings with others to help them better understand their relationship with nature. Catch one of her shows and you will see her demonstrating her passion and energy to the parrots on Sanibel Island, Florida. And you'll also see a true teacher in action! Thank you, Libby.

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Libby has a passion for relationships. She says something that is as true about parrots as it is about people. "You might walk over to just see how beautiful the birds are. But then, you can't help it... you fall in love with their personalities."



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“Passion rebuilds the world for the youth. It makes all things alive and significant.”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

