

RO HALTON HERALD

District 15

April, 2014



Staying Connected Retirement with a Purpose

"A Life Changing Trip" story and photos by Linda Middaugh

Connections...

By Volunteering (page 13)

By Aiding (page 8)



Dalton the Dog



Liam Parfitt

By Licking Beaters (page 11)



Dorothy Singleton, 95, with Great Grandson, 5



By Teaching Literacy Skills (page 39)



President's Report

By Phyllis Kingsley



As I write this report on Groundhog Day there is ice and snow everywhere and we are all weary of chipping and shovelling, especially after the prognostication of six more weeks of winter from Wiarton Willie! Hopefully, by the time you read this in early April, spring will have arrived and the tough winter of 2013-14 will be just an unpleasant memory.

Our District's Constitution is up for a cyclical review by the Provincial office this year and the Constitution Committee, chaired by former Past President **Cecile Leach**, has been working hard on reviewing the Constitution to ensure that it complies with the latest recommendations from RTO/ERO. Thank you to Cecile and the Committee for all their efforts. The proposed changes to the constitution are posted on the website and will remain there for your perusal during the month of April and the beginning of May. Please review the changes as the membership will be required to ratify the amended constitution at the Annual General Meeting.

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held on Thursday, May 8, 2014 at the Burlington Convention Centre. All District 15 members are invited to attend, at no cost, the business meeting beginning at 10 a.m. when elections for the 2014-2015 Executive will be held and the constitution ratified. The business meeting will be followed by lunch and entertainment for which pre-registration and payment are required. For more details about our entertainer, **Steve Brinder**, please check out the Program Committee report.

The new District 15 Website (district15.rto-ero.org) has been up and running since the beginning of December and it is both attractive and user-friendly. If you have not yet checked it out, please do. A special thank you to our Web-site Coordinator, **Jeannie Woodcroft**, for the many hours she spent setting up and perfecting the website to ensure that it meets all our needs.

For those of our members who visited the Oakville headquarters of the Dog Guides of Canada in January, you will be happy to know that our Board of Directors voted to nominate that charity for RTO/ERO's annual \$10,000 Charitable Donation in 2014. Many districts nominate their favourite charities for the annual donation so we will have to wait, fingers crossed, to hear what the decision is in May.

(President's Report... continues on Page 4)

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I would like to welcome **Moira-Jane Plexman** to our board as Member without Portfolio. Moira is the past President of RWTO Burlington and is, therefore, no stranger to our organization. We are always actively seeking "new blood"

on our board and we are particularly anxious to recruit some of our male members in an effort to correct the gender imbalance that currently exists. If you are interested in joining the Board please contact me or Past President **Jan Murdoch**. We promise to give you a year without specific duties before you decide whether this is something you wish to continue. The strength of our organization depends on the volunteer efforts of its members.

This is my final report as president as my term ends on May 31, 2014 and I will not be seeking re-election. It has been an honour to serve you over the last year. I will continue to be involved in our organization and work to further the interests of all retired education workers in District 15.

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RTO/ERO District15

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



The time between September and February always seems to bring out the pens and paper or cards for our members to write on and send to me. This time it has been the same. I received cards, letters and e-mails from a total of 13 members. How great it was to hear from all of them! Now it's your turn. I hope to hear from you soon.

However there may be cards and letters sitting in my mail at home in Canada. You should know that my wife Cate and I have bought a home in Fort Myers, Florida where we spent the better part of six months from November to the end of April. If you sent me a message by Canada Post and it has not been noted in this column please rest assured that I will retrieve it when we get back to Canada in May and it will appear in the September issue, although belatedly.

While in Florida we continue to work on the Halton Herald and we retrieve all of our e-mails. You are welcome to send your cards and letters here. Our address is 5260 South Landings Drive, #309, Fort Myers Florida, 33919. If you would like to call us our telephone number is 239-208-2860. Our contact information in Hamilton remains the same – 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4 and our telephone number is 905-547-1628 for the period May to the end of October.

Now to the messages that have been sent. Christmas and holiday season cards were received from **Gary and Donna Bateman**, and **George and Cathy Munro**.

Others cards were received which said “Thanks” for the Christmas letter that I send to all those living outside of Halton. These came from **Joan Augustine** and **Anne Townsend** (who added “I really like the message”). In addition I received the following from:

Luis Acero, whose article and pictures were in the January issue of the Halton Herald, wrote to say “Thank you for the very good presentation of the photos. I am back in Badajoz. The weather is mild but it rains some times.”

Gerry Blosser sent an e-mail to say “Thanks for the Halton Herald, I do appreciate you e-mailing it to me, every time. Marcia and I will be in Yuma from Nov.-Apr. We love the warmth and plenty of sunshine. Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy New Year.”

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

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

Vern Browne sent a Christmas card with the message “I miss a lot of the past; my work in City Mission goes on. A Merry Christmas to all.”

Lynn Gapes sent the following e-mail: “There was a joke in the last Halton Herald starting with the line, You know you are getting old, when..... Well I know that I am getting old when I count 81 new retirees and only recognize 3 names! That being said, I did just celebrate another birthday, but am healthy and happy in my small village in my house on the Crowe River. Summer brings grandchildren and children for visits in my vacation setting. I enjoy the boats that go by with people using the waterway for many different kinds of water sports. Fall and winter bring totally new vistas with coloured leaves, Trumpeter swans at my dock and birds at my feeders. Hello to all old friends and acquaintances who read this column. There are still many that I do recognize in photos in the magazine. If you are ever on your way to Ottawa, via # 7 highway, I live just 2 kilometres north of the village of Marmora, 45 minutes east of Peterborough. The only Gapes in the phone book is me and I would love to see you!”

John and Dorothy Horner sent a Christmas card that said “Thank you so much for keeping in touch with so many members. Many of us have many pleasant memories. Your efforts have been much appreciated.”

Ed Kirkpatrick sent a Christmas card with an enclosed letter. In it he mentions that he has now been retired for more than 23 years and has continued to enjoy receiving and reading the Halton Herald during that time. He goes on to say that he and his wife, Shirley are both well, enjoy the rural life at Blue Mountain and maintain an active lifestyle. He says, “During the winter I enjoy skiing with many retired teachers who have migrated to the Collingwood area, in particular with **Jim Kropf** (Lord Elgin).” And he tries to include two weeks skiing in the Rockies every year.

They bought a small cottage at Miller Lake in 2012 as a summer retreat which he is renovating into a four season home. He says, “Many of my neighbours are also retirees from various boards which include **Brenda Kearney** and **Lynn Marshall** as full time residents.”

Editor’s note: Thanks Ed for bringing us up to date on what is happening in your life. It is wonderful to hear from you. Keep in touch.

(We Get Letters... continues on Page 7)

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

Herman Star telephoned and left a message to say, “Thanks for the seasons greetings and have a Merry Xmas.”

Helen Van Sickle sent a holiday card with an enclosed letter. It mentioned that she had a wonderful time going to Akron, Ohio to meet two “adorable” babies. Thanks to Heather who had a boy, Benjamin and to Karen who had a girl, Alexandria, she is now a grandmother twice over. She says that she turned 90 in October and is “starting to feel old.”

Editor’s note: Congratulations Helen on reaching that wonderful milestone – 90 years young!

Trudy Wickens e-mailed me to say thank you, “... for your fine part in the recent Halton Herald.” She liked some of the photos and asked me to send them to her.

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

Our membership is now over 2400. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members since August, 2013. Please welcome them and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Linda Becken

Evelyn Chapman

Susan Holloway

Ruth Loreto

Laura Meneok

Robert Turner

JoAnn Brodey

Helen Cloutier

Jean Jones

Luciano Piovesan

George Sebastian

Lucille Williams

Margaret Cericola

Martin Goldstein

Linda Kittmer

Iain MacLaren

Susan Sedlezky

Mary Ziegal



Dog Guides Tour

By Dave Wright

A few years ago, we toured the Hamilton Warplane Museum and I was asked, "Are all tours this good?" Well, we just had another great tour! Our host at the Dog Guides training facility in Oakville was **Jessica Westwood-Smith**.

On the tour we met Dalton and Fenway, two future Dog Guides and referred to as "the boys." Dalton, a three-year-old Golden Retriever, and his trainer **Courtney Starr**, demonstrated the skills he has developed that allow him to assist someone who is visually impaired. She also talked about Dalton's training and described how the dogs are placed in foster homes to meet their clients in order to be "socialized." Even while showing us his skills as a working dog, Dalton exhibited the same kind of love one expects in a household pet. While Courtney talked about the training and placement of the dogs, Dalton either sat or lay at her feet and seemed to be listening to her as attentively as we were. When Courtney told him he could have some free time he was over to us in a shot and leaned on each of us for affectionate scratches behind the ears and petting that most pets crave.

Dalton has already been out working but was returned for additional training. He now lives with Courtney and it's obvious she will have a hard time letting him go when the time comes. Perhaps the kind of love and patience the dogs get in their training by people like Courtney is reflected in the love and patience they show those they work for. As former teachers we hope that is the legacy of our careers.

In one of the attached pictures you can see Courtney holding Dalton's harness at shoulder level. When she dropped it to his level Dalton stepped right into it. No hesitation. Once in his harness Dalton responded to her commands, took her around some pylons and to a door where he sat till she came to open it.



(Dog Guides Tour.. continues on Page 9)

(Dog Guides Tour.. continued from Page 8)



Jessica had arranged for us to have a delicious lunch of home made soup, sandwiches, croissants and cake prepared by the staff. During lunch we met Fenway (as in Boston Red Sox's home ball park). Fenway is a one year old black Labrador Retriever that is just starting his training. He will be placed in situations that include a wide range of people, an environment typical of his future work place. If you would like more information about the training of guide dogs, visit the website at www.dogguides.com.

The Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides was created by the Lions Club and has been providing trained dogs to people with disabilities since 1985. Sometimes things don't work out right for the dogs and they are ready for what is termed a "career change" at which time they are reassessed and placed appropriately. The building we toured is on the site of the old Westwood Public School. Some of you may remember that school or have even taught there. We are very fortunate to have this facility in our community. Dog Guides has a spring and fall open house so you can go there and experience the tour that we had. The Lions Foundation relies on donations from individuals, service groups, corporations and fund raising events. Visit the website for more information about the tour or how you can become a donor.



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A Trip Down Memory Lane

Share your experiences and photos

The photos of Luis Acero's home town in the January issue of the Halton Herald show the importance of seeing old places in a new way! Now the Herald is inviting you to complete this sentence "I remember..." by sharing an old photo, a picture of a past trip, the recounting of a memorable event, or anything from the past that you'd like to share.

Each participant will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Horton's – good enough for a hot chocolate and a cookie!

1. Write an article or an anecdote of no more than 500 words that others will find enjoyable.
2. Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words. So submit a photo - either colour or black and white. Include a brief description of how it relates to your special memory.
3. Send the entries
 - By Canada Post to Peter Gnish, 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4. (All hard copies received will be returned)
 - As an attachment to an email message to pgnish@cogeco.ca.
4. Entry deadline is July 15, 2014.

Dorothy Singleton Remembers

By Marina Lloyd, Chair of the Goodwill Committee



As you're travelling north on the Guelph Line, just before you reach Campbellville, at the bottom of a small hill, you come upon a beautifully restored limestone home called The Stonehouse. The original house was built in 1891 by the pioneer Easterbrook family. This winter, I was privileged to spend a few hours in that home with the owners, Dorothy Singleton, her son Paul and his wife, Barbara. With Paul at

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(Dorothy Singleton continued from Page 10)

her side, Dorothy graciously shared her memories of her life in Toronto and Burlington and I share some of them now with you.

Dorothy was born in Toronto on December 1, 1918. She contracted polio as an infant and although her mother wrapped her in “swaddling clothes” and laid her in the warm oven of the coal-fired stove (which was the treatment of choice at the time), she retained partial facial paralysis. She often returned from school crying, having been teased for what she calls her “droopy eye”. It was “the pits!” That she still remembers the name of her wonderful Grade 5 teacher, Mrs. Scott, is testament to the importance of the relationship between teacher and student. In another memory, she can still see herself and her brother dragging a toboggan for half an hour to the hills beside the Humber River, having a grand time and then crying with cold all the way home.

A family in the neighbourhood by the name of Singleton had a son Jim and when Dorothy and Jim were both students at York Memorial HS, he invited her to accompany him to a bowling party-the first of many dates. Chronic back pain prevented Dorothy from realizing her dream to become a nurse, but working as a stenographer at the American Consulate and meeting many famous people-Vivian Leigh to name just one- made up in part for her disappointment. Despite extensive surgery, her back continues to plague her to this day.



Dorothy and Jim were married in 1941 on the hottest day of the year. Not only were the flowers wilting, but Jim in his uniform and Dorothy in her bridal gown, were also wilting! Their daughter Elaine was born while Jim was overseas. When he returned from the war, he was a stranger to Elaine and it wasn't until he took her fishing (she loved fishing) that she warmed up to her father. Jim's first teaching assignment was in Innisfil near Barrie. Dorothy lived with her mother and Jim hitchhiked home on Friday and back on Sunday. He became very involved with OSSTF and supervised both the building of, and the staffing of Northview Heights School on Finch Ave. Elmer Iseler was hired to teach music and it was Jim who encouraged Elmer to form a choir. What Canadian has not heard of The Elmer Iseler Singers? The Singletons and Iselers became good friends.

Edna (Ted) Robinson encouraged her father to invite Jim to make the move to

(Dorothy Singleton continues on Page 12)

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(Dorothy Singleton continued from Page 11)



Burlington to serve as Director of Education. The Singletons built a house on Danforth Place across the Bay from Stelco where they often saw the sky seem to catch fire when the steelworkers “dumped the pot.” Jim had always admired limestone houses and when he saw an ad for a house on Guelph Line that was in dire need of repair, he bought it and for the next few years lovingly brought it back to beauty. His motto was: If you don’t know how to do something, there will always be a book to show you how. In 1991, one hundred years after the house was built,

Dorothy received the Architectural Award from the Milton Historical Society. The Stonehouse has become a destination place for tourists and locals alike. The antique shop opened in 1976 featuring oak and mahogany furniture from England and Quebec. As time went on, they began to specialize in antique stained glass windows. Up until 10 years ago, Dorothy spent her days in the shop. A friend of mine vividly remembers lingering there for a long time because she was so enjoying her conversation with Dorothy. The Singletons love Christmas and their Festival of Lights featuring music and animated boxes, is open to the public from mid-November to the end of December. Setting up requires 400 hours of labour and nearly 1000 extension cords! All donations go to Halton Women’s Place for its children’s programs. When I visited, they were preparing the House for the annual party they host for the residents of Halton Women’s Place.

Dorothy loves books, especially historical non-fiction, historical novels and biographies of persons she most admires. On my most recent visit, she was looking forward to delving into a beautifully illustrated book about Toronto which she’d received as a gift. But even greater than her love for books, is her devotion to family. Daughter Elaine lives in St. Catharines. Dorothy has 6 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Truman, one of the “greats”, lives in BC but Ethan (5) and Nicholas (3) are in Burlington and their visits bring Dorothy such joy. At one time there were 4 generations living in the Stonehouse - Dorothy’s mother and Paul and Barbara’s six children. Her pride in all members of the family is evident. Her only regret is that Jim, who died in 1985, is no longer at her side.

I can understand why my friend was loath to leave the shop years ago. The hours I spent listening to Dorothy and Paul as they shared remembrances of times past, flew by much too quickly. Thank you both for the generous gift of your time.

(Dorothy Singleton continues on Page 13)

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(Dorothy Singleton continued from Page 12)

Dorothy, your many friends in District 15 wish you:

Walls for the wind
A roof for the rain
A warm cup of tea by the fire
Laughter to cheer you
Those you love near you
And all that your heart may desire!

After Retirement

By Liam Parfitt

In 2001, one year after I retired as principal at Maplehurst School in Burlington, my wife Karen and I moved to Baysville. We bought a home on Lake of Bays, and I began the job of finishing the work the builder had started. The home still needed outbuildings and the upstairs was unfinished. I got to work, building a garage, a workshop and two bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs.



In our second week in our new home, we were invited to a christening at a neighbour's and that invitation led to another invitation - to join the volunteer Fire Department. Station 40 Baysville is a fire department of 17 people who service the south end of Lake of Bays. We respond to fire calls, everything from campfires gone awry to homes fully engulfed and assist the paramedics and OPP with 911 calls; we handle everything from car, snowmobile and boating accidents to people lost in the bush. It's a very rewarding job - we are often helping members of the community we know. It is a job that requires a lot of training, both medical and technical. I have learned how to be part of a first response medical team, to use the jaws of life to rescue a trapped motorist, to run the pumper and drive the fire truck! Always wanted to drive a fire truck.

Karen is teaching French Immersion at Bracebridge high school and we are off to Lyon France in April with a group of grade 11 students. This will be our third trip to France - nice work for a volunteer. Every summer I usually meet a few retired Halton teachers enjoying Muskoka and once in a while I get back to Burlington to see family and colleagues from the old days. Thanks to the Herald - it's nice to read about the good works and good times that retired teachers are involved in.

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MY FAMILY

I have been living in Oakville with my family for almost 20 years. My husband, Dr. Jeff Mungar is a local Optometrist. We have been blessed with 2 sons, Max is 12 and Nicholas is 11. Our 20 year old daughter is currently attending the University of Guelph.

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Program Committee

By Penny Hambly

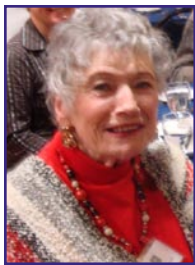


We had a successful **Winter Lunch on February 20** at the Teatro Conference Centre in Milton. The weather cooperated – no snowstorm – and everyone seemed to agree that it was a well spent afternoon. Instead of our usual buffet we decided to have a plated lunch (served lunch). The food was delicious and it was nice not to have the long wait at the buffet table. After lunch, **John Kuypers** spoke to us about “**The First Rule of Inner Peace**” and how to make things right. It was an interesting talk and described how we should live in the present and not dwell on the past. See the pictures of those in attendance at the bottom of this page and on the next page.

Mark your calendar now for our **Annual General Meeting and Lunch**. It will be held on **Thursday, May 8** at the **Burlington Convention Centre**. Our entertainment for the lunch will be **Steven Brinder**, a hilarious comedian who will have you laughing. We heard him at the Fall Senate and knew that we had to get him for our AGM.

By day, Steven Brinder is a substitute teacher who is loved by his students and by night he is a brilliant comedian. His material comes from the classroom and from the heart. He has toured with Jay Leno, Jim Carey and Howie Mandell. His job as a substitute teacher provides him with an endless stream of material. He knows what it is like to be in the classroom and all the trials and tribulations of the profession. You will not want to miss this comedian so get your Registrations in as soon as possible. See the **Registration flyer in the middle of this booklet**.

Thank you to the **Program Committee** members who give up their time so that we have successful events. They are: **Carolyn Hilton, Phyllis Kingsley, Ruth Ramanauskas, Gail Reeves, Roberte Rivard, and Colton Roberts**. We would like more people to join us as we are always looking for new ideas.



(Program ... continues on Page 16)

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Two of our Members with The Speaker, John Kuypers

Constitution Committee Report

Every 5 years, Provincial RTO/ERO requires Districts to review their constitution. District 15's came up this year. The Committee met early in the fall and several times since. Most of the changes were cosmetic. However some items were removed entirely and will be placed in a new document "Policies and Procedures" which will be appended to the document later in the year. Changes to the constitution were approved by the Board of directors in January and sent to Provincial office for review.

As per Article 6.01 the constitution changes will be posted on our website as of April 1, 2014 for members to view. The constitution will be presented for ratification at the Annual General Meeting in May. Please take time to review the proposed changes before then.

For Your Information:

ARTICLE 6 –CONSTITUTION SAFEGUARDS

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.

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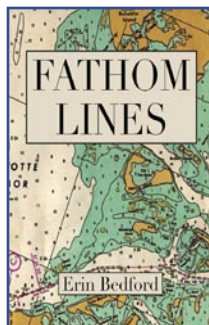
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Book Review

By Ken Ellis

The following is my review of a first book publication by my daughter-in-law. As a retired Halton teacher-librarian, and as a former member of the executive of the Ontario School Library Association, I feel qualified to make this submission - even for my own relative. The book, just published (Dec. 2012), is a first by Erin Bedford who attended the Humber College School for Writers where she received a certificate of Distinction for the original manuscript.



Review of **Fathom Lines** by Erin Bedford

Available as an e-book for Kindle and Kobo, and as hardcover from Amazon

Like the contour lines on topographic maps which join elevations of similar heights, fathom lines connect unseen regions of similar depth on nautical charts. The title of this complex and absorbing novel of family ties, especially amongst women, hints at hitherto unknown similarities, connections and drama underneath the surface which connect the central family: great grandparents, grandparents, mother and daughter. The novel is full of imagined insight into this complex web of relationships where deep secrets and family trauma are covered up and unspoken until they develop into a storm against emotional anchors. Vee, the mother of the young protagonist, Lise, speaks of her own complicated relationship with her mother, the grandparent of Lise:

*...I felt adrift, like she'd pushed me offshore and kept the paddle for herself.
How unfair, because what use did she have for a paddle anyway?*

Each generation of women in this family seems caught in some kind of emotional web, incapable of achieving a satisfactory relationship with one another and besieged by personal crises which seem to roil like stormy water.

This is Erin Bedford's first published novel. Her writing skill has long been recognized from her early school days to her experience at the Humber School for Writers where she won a Certificate of Distinction for her manuscript. She has an incredible mastery of language and character reminiscent of some of Margaret Atwood's style. When Vee comes face-to-face with her long absent and estranged father, she is incapable of understanding the reasons behind his apparent abandonment of his young family.

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(Book Review.. continued from Page 18)

She rails at him as he returns much later in life with an offer of help during a family crisis:

I fling words out in hopes they might catch him under the skin like a barbed hook, in hopes that part of him will tear away to reveal the raw...

Residing in downtown Toronto, Bedford captures the flavour of the city's neighborhoods as her various characters walk along streets familiar to many residents and visitors: places such as Bloor Street, Allen Gardens, College Street and Bathurst. Her experiences of many summers spent in Northern Ontario inform her descriptions of life in Wamish, the fictional northern town which lies at the root of the history of the novel's family.

On finishing the novel, which weaves in and out of present and past, the reader will continue thoughtful reflections about family relationships and the fragility of the human condition. There's an almost existential element in the realization that we may never really "know" another person, even those in our own family circle. Looking through old family albums, pictures, and digital images which provide only a limited visual image of our past, we may wonder what these people were really like and perhaps feel like Vee who mourns over old photos of her beloved Claude:

I don't want to remember him as he is in the photographs so static and disconnected. In twenty years when the pictures are brought out, his hair and unfashionable clothes cannot be laughed at. He will not have the chance to outgrow these fickle trends.

This is a highly recommended novel, the first of many, one hopes, for this talented writer.

Community Notices

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario - Burlington Branch – *Caring and Sharing and Having Fun*. Choose from euchre, golf, walking, book club, tea room tours, lunch and a movie, scrapbooking, line dancing, photography, travel club, delicious luncheons, interesting speakers, friends and fun. Call Carolynn 905-689-8329 or Mary 905-333-0826.

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario - Burlington Branch – *Caring and Sharing and Having Fun*. 40th Anniversary Celebration - May 26, 2014. Annual General Meeting is at 10:00 a.m. Coffee at 10:45 a.m. Luncheon starts at 11:30 a.m. Cost \$26.00
Call Carolynn 905-689-8329 or Mary 905 333-0826

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RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List

Executive 2013 – 2014

Past President	Janice Murdoch	289-956-0163
President	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
1st Vice President	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
2nd Vice President	Carolyn Hilton	905 844-2984
Secretary	Janet Carter-Wright	905-336-5328
Treasurer	Chub Baxter	905-643-3732
	<i>Assistant:</i> Daliah Brown	905-825-8470
Member-at-Large	Jim Baker	905-639-1292

Committees

Archives	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538
Awards	Carolyn Hilton	905 844-2984
	<i>Committee Member:</i> Phyllis Kingsley	
Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
Communications		
	<i>Website Coordinator</i> Jeannie Woodcroft	905-315-0581
	<i>Newsletter Coordinator</i> Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
	<i>Newsletter Editor:</i> Peter Gnish - <i>Design:</i> Cate Roberts	905-547-1628
	<i>Editing:</i> Pam Ahrens, Carolyn Hilton, Phyllis Kingsley, Cecile Leach	
	<i>Proofreaders:</i> Chub Baxter, Eleanor McCulloch, George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae, Ray Smith and Dave Trueman.	
Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
	<i>West Convenor</i> Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
	<i>East Convenor</i> Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
	<i>North Convenor</i> Marg Megelink	905-877-7135
	<i>Out-of-Region Convenor</i> Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
Health Services	George MacRae	905-315-8581
Membership/Recruitment Chair	Hilary Barber	905-637-7067
	<i>Committee Member:</i> George MacRae, Judy Sloan	
Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	Jan Murdoch	289-956-0163
	<i>Committee Member:</i> Darcea Hiltz	
Program	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
	<i>Committee Members:</i> Carolyn Hilton, Phyllis Kingsley, Ruth Ramanauskas, Gail Reeves, Roberte Rivard, and Colton Roberts	
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
	<i>Committee Member:</i> Janet Carter-Wright	
Tours	Jan Murdoch	289-956-0163
	<i>Committee Members:</i> Colton Roberts, Susan Hoicka, Leonard Rosmarin, Connie Goman, Darcea Hiltz	
Member Without Portfolio	TBA	

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

RTO/ERO Halton District 15 Monthly e-letter

During the last week of each month RTO/ERO District 15 sends out a monthly e-letter. It is another way that we try to maintain ongoing communication with our members. Our Calendar of Events is always updated in the e-letter along with our District 15 travel opportunities. We also include information that we feel might be relevant to our members. Sharing in this format may be best when something is time sensitive and the regular newsletter only comes out 3 times a year. If you are not receiving the monthly e-letter it may be due to one of the following reasons: you may not have submitted an e-mail address to member services when you joined RTO/ERO requesting e-mail updates; you may have changed e-mail services and forgot to notify RTO/ERO of your new e-mail address; or your firewall may be set very high and the e-letter may be in your garbage waiting for permission to be conveyed to you. If you submit a request to be added to the e-mailing list I will include you in the following month's mailing. Let me know by contacting me at janmurdoch8@gmail.com.

**IF YOU ARE MOVING or IF YOUR ADDRESS INFORMATION or
YOUR E-MAIL 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

Wise Guy

As a 7th grade biology teacher, I was teaching my class about the flow of blood in the body. After my lecture I asked the class the following: "Why is it that if I would turn upside down, my face would turn red since the blood would flow to my head, but when I stand upright my feet don't turn red?" I was taken aback when a boy blurted out, "that's cuz your feet aint empty!".

*You are invited to the***RTO/ERO Halton District 15 Annual General Meeting & Lunch****Thursday, May 8, 2014****Burlington Convention Centre****1120 Burloak Drive- just north of QEW****Burlington****Guest Speaker- Steve Brinder
Comedian/Motivational Speaker**

Steve Brinder is a person of many talents. As well as being one of Canada's finest stand-up comedians, Steve is a TV Host, a TV reporter, actor and teacher. His warm and engaging personality is reflected in his performing. He has a keen observational eye, impeccable timing and a devastating wit.

Steve Brinder, on stage, displays his insatiable curiosity, his sharp intelligence, and his genuine affection and respect for humanity. "He's bright, touching ... hilarious" says The Toronto Star.

Program

Coffee/Tea:	9:30 a.m.
Business Meeting:	10:00-11:30 a.m.
Registration:	11:30-Noon
Lunch:	12:00-1:30 p.m.
Guest Speaker:	1:30 p.m.
Cost:	\$30 for District 15 members
	\$35 for non-member spouses and guests

Please complete the registration form on the next page and mail it with your cheque. Deadline for Registration is April 28, 2014

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

Registration Form
Deadline is April 28, 2014

Please Print:

Name:..... Member Guest.....

Tel Number.....

E-mail:.....

Check if vegetarian meal is required or food allergy.....

Name:..... Member Guest.....

Tel Number.....

E-mail:.....

Check if vegetarian meal is required or food allergy.....

Name:..... Member Guest.....

Tel Number.....

E-mail:.....

Check if vegetarian meal is required..... or food allergy.....

Enclosed is a cheque in the amount of:.....

Payable to: RTO/ERO District 15

**Send to: Carolyn Hilton 18 Ridge Drive Oakville On. L6H1B6
905-844-2984**

Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in September, 2014.

- **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 Newsletter Coordinator, Cecile Leach by e-mail: cecile.leach@sympatico.ca, by mail to 4-3115 New St. Burlington ON L7N 3T4 or telephone: 905-634-8027. Deadline - July 15, 2014

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION POLICY

April 2013

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. In this context Advertising and Promotion includes signage, verbal presentations, handouts, distributed material and display table material. Publication of any advertisement by an outside group in the Halton Herald or other District 15 printed material, on the District website or e-letter or at any District function or event does not constitute endorsement of the product or service by RTO/ERO Halton District 15.

Staying healthy over 50: Tips for eating well as you age

- Load up on high-fiber fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Fiber is very important. It will help you feel more energetic and give you fuel to keep going.
- Put effort into making your food look and taste good. Your taste buds may not be as strong and your appetite may not be the same, but your nutritional needs are just as important as ever. Put a little more effort into your meals including the way you flavor, prepare, and present your food.
- Watch out for dehydration. Make sure you are drinking plenty of fluid even if you don't feel thirsty. If you're not getting enough water, you're not going to be as sharp and your energy will suffer.
- Make meals a social event. It's more enjoyable to eat with others than alone. Invite other people over. It's a great way to stay in touch with friends and you can share cooking and cleanup duties.

Calendar of Events - April 2014 to October 2014

- Apr. 24 Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant, Oakville South Mall. 9:00 a.m.
Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-285.
- May 8 Drury Lane Musical 2269 New Street, Burlington. *Anne of Green Gables*, 8:00 p.m. Cost \$25.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- May 8 District 15 Annual General Meeting and lunch 9:30 a.m. at the Burlington Convention Centre featuring guest speaker Steve Brinder. See the details and the registration form in the centre foldout.
- May 22 Stratford Musical Matinee. *Crazy for You* 2:00 p.m. Cost \$102.00
Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca.
- June 8 *Canadian International Military Tattoo*. Copps Coliseum. 2:30 p.m. Massed pipes and drums and international bands and performers. Cost: Adults \$48.95; Seniors \$ 37.65; Veterans \$26.35. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 1.
- June 10 Toronto Harbour Cruise. Two hour scenic cruise with lunch. 11:30 a.m. Cost: seniors \$53.37 (including tax). Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by April 10.
- June 17 Burlington Performing Arts Theatre. *Gotta Sing- Gotta Dance* with the Burlington Footnotes. 7:00 p.m. Cost \$26.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by 1 April.
- Oct. 17 Shaw Festival. Niagara-on-the-Lake. Musical *Cabaret* 2:00 p.m. Cost \$52.00. 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.
- Nov. 23 Clarkson Musical Theatre, *Young Frankenstein* 2:00 p.m. Cost \$ 25.00, Meadowvale Theatre, Montevideo Dr. Mississauga at Erin Mills Parkway and Britannia Road. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Sept. 1.

Tours Committee

By Jan Murdoch



Welcome to **Darcea Hiltz** who has recently joined the Tours Committee and to **Connie Goman** who was omitted from the list of members. We value your contributions. The Tours Committee has been very busy putting together some excellent trips that offer great travel opportunities at an excellent price. These prices are made available because of group travel purchases and offer excellent hotel locations with daily breakfast. Below you will find a brief outline of the trips. To get more details go to the Halton District 15's website.

New York City

June 10-13 \$839 (based on double occupancy and grp of 40)

Our Package Includes:

1. Transfers to and from our hotel in **Manhattan** (walk to Times Sq or many of the attractions, get the true flavor of the New York Culture)
2. Breakfasts Daily
3. Unlimited Hop-on & Hop-off Double Decker 72 hour pass which includes access to attractions and museums (details on web site)
4. Group Buffet Italian Dinner

Items NOT Included:

- 1) Transportation to and from the Toronto Airport.
- 2) Airline tickets.
- 3) Medical Insurance.

San Antonio, Texas

Sept. 29 - Oct. 3 \$799 (based on double occupancy & grp of 35)

Our Package Includes:

1. Transfers to hotel centrally located in San Antonio, Texas
2. Breakfast Daily
3. Group Welcome Dinner
4. Attractions: Guided Tour of City, The Alamo, San Antonio River Cruise, and more (details on website)

(Tours.. continues on Page 27)

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

(Tours.. continued from Page 26)

Items NOT Included:

- 1) Transportation to and from the Toronto Airport.
- 2) Airline tickets.
- 3) Medical Insurance

New Orleans

Dec. 8 - 12 \$849 (based on double occupancy & grp of 35)

Our Package Includes:

- 1. Transfers to hotel in French Quarter within walking distance of Christmas Markets & attractions
- 2. Breakfast Daily
- 3. Welcome Dinner aboard Jazz Cruise
- 4. Guided Coach tour of New Orleans (1850 Christmas Holiday Homes) and more (details on website)

Items NOT Included:

- 1) Transportation to and from the Toronto Airport.
- 2) Airline tickets.
- 3) Medical Insurance

South Africa

March/April 2015 \$4280 (based on double occupancy & grp of 20)

Our Package Includes:

- 1. Return economy class airfare Toronto to South Africa
- 2. Additional Airfare on South Africa Airways routings
- 3. Transfers to/from hotels or airports in South Africa
- 4. All hotel or lodge accommodations
- 5. Hotel & Airport portorage
- 6. Guided sightseeing Tours
- 7. Daily breakfasts and additional meals as indicated
- 8. Travel bag and neck pillow

Items NOT Included:

- 1) Transportation to and from the Toronto Airport.
- 2) Departure & fuel surcharges, currently \$898. CD Note: these are subject to change until the tickets are issued

(Tours.. continues on Page 28)

(Tours.. continued from Page 27)

- 3) Travel/Medical Insurance
- 4) Meals unless listed
- 5) Visa/passport handling fees
- 6) Tips & Gratuities

Optional Victoria Falls Extension: \$865

(based on double occupancy & grp of 10)

Our Package Includes:

1. Additional Airfare and transfers to and from Hotel/Airport
2. 2 nights accommodation with daily breakfast
3. Sundowner Cruise on Zambezi
4. Guided tour of Victoria Falls
5. Boma African Dinner at Safari Lodge including entertainment
6. Hotel & Airport portorage

Items NOT Included:

1. Additional departure & fuel surcharge, currently \$305 CD (subject to change until tickets issued)
2. Meals unless listed
3. Tips & Gratuities
4. Zimbabwe Visa/passport handling fees

Full details of the South Africa trip are on the Halton District website. Deposits for all trips above are \$200 CD per person and are fully refundable up until flights are secured. Special Note: We can accommodate up to 35 people on the South Africa trip, if more people join then the final price will be reduced per person.

If you check the website and see that you have missed the deposit date, email janmurdoch8@gmail.com or call 905-691-8407 as you may still be able to join the group.



Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

Awards Committee

By Carolyn Hilton



Each year RTO/ERO awards up to 25 individual scholarships of \$1,000 each through its Scholarship Program. Congratulations to **Samantha Barber**, sponsored by District 15 RTO/ERO member **Hilary Barber**, for receiving a 2013 RTO scholarship for her final year in a teaching program.

District 15 would once again like to recognize those of its members who have made a significant and/or long term contribution to the work of RTO/ERO locally and/or provincially by presenting them with **Distinguished Service Awards**. These awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting on May 8, 2014.

The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for these awards. The form is available to download on our District website: district15.rto-ero.org. It outlines the criteria and process for nominations. Please fill in the form and email it to chilton@cogeco.ca. The deadline for nominations is April 21, 2014.

If you do not have access to the website, or are unable to download the form, here is the nomination process for the award:

- Both the nominee and the nominator shall be members of District 15.
- Award recipients will be selected by the Awards Committee.
- Nominations are not held over from year to year, but may be resubmitted. You may submit your nomination on a plain piece of paper, including the following information: the nominator's name and contact information; the nominee's name and contact information; and the rationale for the nomination.
- Mail the form to Carolyn Hilton, 18 Ridge Dr. Oakville ON L6H 1B6

Teachers Gotta Be Smart!

There were four teenagers who played hooky one morning. Upon coming to class in the afternoon, they reported that their lateness was because their car got a flat tire. That's fine the teacher said much to the students relief. But there was an oral test this morning which you boys have to make up, so please have a seat and take out a piece of paper. "Now for the first question, which tire was flat!"

Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



Since my last report, I have been sent very few items to add to our Halton RTO scrapbook. One reason may be that many of our members have been lucky enough to escape the brutal winter by heading to warmer climates. The boy that I hired to shovel my driveway is becoming rich! He's out there shovelling now for the second time today while I'm writing this article and it's only the first week in February.

One of our members **Jean Somerville** sent me a clipping from the Jan./Feb. 2014 Esquesing Historical Society's newsletter regarding her latest book ***He Did It All With Dignity and Dispatch: A Biography of Andrew William Frank.*** The newsletter provided the following brief summary of the book. "The soft cover book provides a unique insight into the life and times of Andy Frank who overcame considerable obstacles and hardships and succeeded in many endeavours in business and entertainment. In spite of no formal education Andy became the Sheriff of Halton County and served in this position for 12 years. The book contains over 150 pages and is filled with wonderful photographs that help chronicle the life of a great humanitarian and devoted family man who was also very supportive of the Halton community." Jean stated in her enclosed note to me that she was going to speak at the Society's meeting in March not only about her book but also about her self-publishing efforts and problems. If you are interested in finding out more about her book Jean would be happy to hear from you. She can be reached at 519-853-1549 or actondale@sympatico.ca. Congratulations Jean and wishing you much success with your new book!

I have been sent two obituaries of our members to add to that section of our scrapbook.

Ronald George Chapman passed away suddenly early Christmas morning 2013, at the age of eighty. His family stated that Ron fought the good fight and seldom seemed at odds with the hand that life dealt him. Having contracted and subsequently beaten polio at age twelve, he taught himself how to achieve and to excel. In his later years, he began to suffer again from the ravages of both Post-Polio and Pick's disease. After a lengthy career in education, Ron retired from the Halton Board of Education as Superintendent of Schools. He never

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Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

(Archives.. continued from Page 30)

once let his handicap deter him from raising a family, building a career or playing and coaching his favourite sports. Ron was a great man who will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Margaret Simmonds (nee Pollard) passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Nov. 29, 2013. The following information about Margaret was provided by **Vera MacDonald**, her friend and fellow Halton RTO member. Thank you Vera.

Margaret Simmonds, nee Pollard, was born in Burnley, Lancashire, England on August 10 1927. Margaret was very proud to take teacher training at Homerton College, Cambridge from 1946 to 1948. She became a physical education teacher. Margaret came to Canada with her husband Charles and children David, Christopher and Fiona in 1965. She started teaching kindergarten in Oakville for the public board in 1968. She taught at Palermo and Chisholm Public Schools and became a speech teacher in the North Education Area in the early 1980's. Margaret enjoyed her work and was warmly regarded and loved by children and staff. Margaret retired in 1999 and enjoyed a full and happy retirement. She was a very social person and people who came in contact with her were taken by her sweet personality. Sadly she died November 29, 2013 after an unexpected and sudden illness. A celebration was held on Dec. 8 to honour Margaret's life. It was very well attended and tributes were paid in words, music and song to a person who will be very much missed.

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 email at judym Sloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538.



Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness

Eunice Irene Caulfield

Mary Ferguson

Margaret Murphy

Ronald Chapman

William Kimber

Jeannette Paquette

Kathleen Wall

Ruth Donaldson

Helen MacLaren

Margaret Simmonds

Political Advocacy Committee

By Jan Murdoch



The PAC committee welcomes **Darcea Hiltz** who has recently joined us. She brings a passion for the political arena.

Below you will find some links that take you to some interesting pieces of information illustrating some of the changes that will affect people over the age of 55. Internationally there is a trend towards encouraging greater physical fitness in the senior group. In the UK doctors are actually issuing prescriptions for a variety of activities including Zumba and/or swimming. Improved daily fitness equals less chronic problems later in life such as high blood pressure or type 2 diabetes. The UK is acting on the research that is coming out of Europe that clearly identified physical fitness and regular exercise as the only path to the fountain of youth.

Focusing on Improving Health through Active Living

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/active-living/physical-activity.asp>

Changes to Drivers Licence Renewal for 80+ Individuals

<http://news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2014/01/improving-drivers-licence-renewal-forseniors>.

Technical Advisory Grp. Focusing on Improving Retirement Income

<http://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2014/01/premier-announces-technical-advisorygroup>.

http://news.ontario.ca/mohlrc/en/2014/01/helping-seniors-get-the-care-theyneed-at-home.html?utm_source=digest&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=p

Pupil: I don't think I deserved zero on this test!

Teacher: I agree, but that's the lowest mark I could give you!

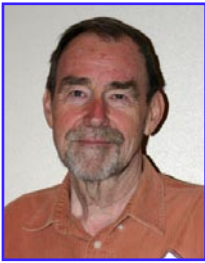
Pupil: Teacher, would you punish me for something I didn't do?

Teacher: Of course not

Pupil: Good, because I didn't do my homework

Health Services Committee

By George MacRae



By the time you read this report, all Health Plan members should have received the latest version of the Group Benefits Booklets mailed with the January Renaissance. To avoid any confusion, please discard the previous version of the booklets issued in 2011. If by any chance you have not received the updated booklets, they are available on the Provincial Website by going to the Members' Centre Tab, scrolling down to Publications and selecting the appropriate brochures (Group Benefits Program Booklet and Travel Booklet).

Our plans included 86,338 participants as of October 2013. Our Benefit Program documented nearly 2 million claims during the 2013 year up to October, an increase of 8% over last year.

Most members are aware that if applying to join the plan, one can do so without a medical evidence of insurability within 60 days of expiration of their board plan, spouse's group plan or any other group plan. But did you know that only 36.4% of late applicants requiring medical evidence of insurability are approved for entrance into our Group Benefits Program. This strongly supports the importance of prospective members applying for participation in the Semi-Private/Convalescent Home Care or Extended Health Care Plans within the 60 day limit. If you know of a prospective member to our plans, we ask you to ensure that they are aware of this fact.

Alert: From the RTO/ERO Provincial Office

If you have been retired for more than 12 years you may not be receiving some important information. Your email address is not on file with RTO/ERO and as a result you are not receiving the Liaison, an electronic Bulletin containing interesting and important information. For example, in the February edition there was an article with Important Tax Information that many found very helpful. You may not be receiving the Halton District 15 e-letter which comes out monthly with important updates. For example, beginning in April for those who are over 80 years of age and driving the process is changing. Both of these electronic news letters are great reading over a morning coffee and contain worthwhile information. Contact Dianne Vezeau at dvezeau@rto-ero.org to update your profile.

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Hilary Barber



I hope by the time you all read this edition of the Herald we will be enjoying much warmer weather. I am pleased to announce that we will be hosting our annual **Wine and Cheese**, to provide information to prospective members, on April 30th from 4:00-6:00. If you have friends or colleagues who are planning to retire this year please alert them to this event. Flyers will go out to schools the week after March Break and will also be posted on Chatt for Public Board employees. Anyone attending the Wine and Cheese is invited to bring a current member with them. Currently we have 2418 members registered in District 15.

To ensure the accuracy and privacy of information from members district membership chairs are no longer able to send in changes for you. Therefore, if you have any changes such as address, phone number, email address etc. please contact the membership office in Toronto at Dianne Vezeau, Membership Database Administrator, membership@rto-ero.org or 1-800-361-9888 Ext 223.

Please continue to contact me if you have other questions, concerns or information requests hilaryjpbarber@cogeco.ca or 905 637-7067

Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



You can see in this issue's calendar of events that the recreation committee has planned several activities for this spring and summer. They are also listed on our website district15.rto-ero.org. Should any changes occur, these will be posted there. Some events may be new and may not have been listed in the Herald. So visit the website frequently to see if there is something new or simply to remind yourself of dates to sign up to order tickets. These reminders will also be listed in the monthly e-letter.

If your only contact with us is the Herald, feel free to call me at 905-639-5093 or Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328 for the latest information about events.

(Recreation...continues on Page 35)

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

Newsletter Coordinator Report

By Cecile Leach



We should have the Olympics more frequently! Everyone deserves a “gold” medal for being so prompt in sending in their reports. I really think they wanted to get it done so they would be free to watch their favourite events at their ease and I don’t blame them.....so far Canada is doing very well.

I would like to thank the RTO/ERO members who sent in articles and photos for this issue. It is amazing to see what we all do “after retirement.” We love to hear about your new ventures and exploits! If you have an interesting article (maximum 1000 words) that you wish to share, please feel free to submit it to me via e-mail- cecile.leach@sympatico.ca We will endeavour to publish it in our newsletter. If the article is deemed too lengthy, we may choose to modify the content slightly or place it on our website instead. Our next newsletter will be delivered to you in early September. The deadline for submissions to the September newsletter is July 15, 2014.

My heartfelt appreciation goes out to all the folks who help us in the production of the newsletter. You can see the list of all our volunteers on the contact page. I particularly want to thank **Peter Gnish** and **Cate Roberts** who devote countless hours in the layout, design and production of such a professional newsletter.

(Recreation...continued from Page 34)

Last June, we had a very enjoyable cruise on Hamilton Harbour. This year, we are planning a cruise on Toronto Harbour on June 10. The deadline of April 10, 2014 will give me lots of time to make a booking with approximate numbers. If you can’t be sure by April 10, I can try to get you in at a later date.

Janet has booked seats to see ***Cabaret*** on October 17th at the Shaw Festival. Janet needs firm numbers before August 31st.

We will have seen two BurlOak Theatre Group plays this winter and spring and are planning to see more this fall and winter. We will advertise them on the website when we decide which of the three plays we will see.

Join us when you can. Janet and I welcome your ideas for new possible outings. Please contact us with any suggestions you may have.

Visit us on the Internet at district15.rto-ero.org

Webmaster's Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Well, it has been a few months since the new website was launched. I would like to thank those members who emailed me comments, suggestions and congratulations.

Several members are making use of the 'Members with Businesses' section where they have posted information about their private businesses: check out the 'Members with Businesses' section found under the 'Members to Members' tab. These postings will remain on the website for 3 months. If you wish to re-post please let me know through an email at jeanniewoodcroft@yahoo.ca.

If you are not making use of the calendar please have a look. It is easy to read and by clicking on a particular event you will find more information. Your District 15 Board encourages you to make use of the website for current and up-to-date information. There will be a cancellation notice posted on the home page if a meeting or event must be cancelled. The correct address for our website is district15.rto-ero.org. *Please change your bookmarks to reflect this address.*

Millers Inducted Into the National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame

By Diane Miller

Retirement can lead to opportunities you may never imagine. My husband, Jim decided to pick up his guitar again. He studied "Fingerstyle" guitar, where your thumb plays bass and your other fingers play the melody which was made popular by Chet Atkins. His teacher invited him to attend the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society Convention in Nashville, which attracts all genres of guitar-



ists from all over the world. We attended and were made to feel very welcome. Dr. Mark and Carol Pritcher organize the convention. While talking to Carol, Jim found out that she was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They chatted for a while and Carol mentioned that they needed help at the registration desk. Jim told her that I had worked in Public Relations and Publicity and volunteered me for the job. Before I knew it I was meeting the Country Gentleman, Chet Atkins

(Millers. continues on Page 37)

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(Millers, continued from Page 36)



himself, and his family. We were invited to breakfast with the performers and the rest is a remarkable seventeen year history.

After becoming part of the Nashville family, we met some wonderful people who organize the annual National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame celebration in Muhlenberg County Kentucky. It was in this area where this unique style of guitar playing was developed. Muhlenberg County Kentucky was home to Merle Travis, The Everly Brothers and many other significant artists. Our introduction to the Muhlenberg scene was when we were invited to attend Scotty Moore's (Elvis' original guitar player) induction into the NTPHF.

As voting members of the National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame, we were sent nomination sheets. While reading down the list of nominees... we noticed our names! I spoke to the President, Joe Hudson of NTPHF and said that even if we did not win it is an honour just to be nominated! A while later we were notified that we had won... and by a landslide!

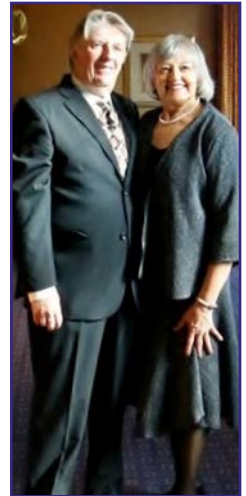
We were presented with our engraved trophy at the Merle Travis Music Centre in Powderly Kentucky, in September. Presidents Mark and Carol Pritcher were there to commend us on the work we do to mentor and to connect performers from all over the world and all genres of music - at the convention, at home and abroad. This is an amazing honour! To top it off our names were included on the T-Shirts!

Another achievement in 2013 was the celebration of our 50th Wedding Anniversary, October 5. It was quite a year. We continue to work with performers and fans from all over the Nation, loving every minute of it!

Information about the National Thumbpickers Hall of fame at... www.ntphf.com

Information about the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society at... www.chetsociety.com

Milton Champion Arts & Life Article can be found at... www.insidehalton.com/community-story/4235487-millers-inducted-into-thumbpickers-hall-of-fame/



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A Life Changing Trip

By Linda Middaugh

“Legs and arms covered, tops with high necklines and extending to mid calf, and head covered at all times.” These were my clothing instructions for my trip to Afghanistan. It was a challenge to find these in breathable, lightweight fabric like cotton since temperatures could be 35 degrees Celsius plus. With every conceivable inoculation known to Public Health, security training booklet in hand, Afghanistan Visa, many pounds of children’s books and \$1,000 in donations, I left on May 10, 2013 for Kabul, Afghanistan. After 15 years of volunteering for Canadians in Support of Afghan Women (CSAW) and Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan), I was finally going to experience the people, the projects and the country I had so passionately cared about.



Linda at the Herat Blue Mosque



Melissa Fung - CBC reporter

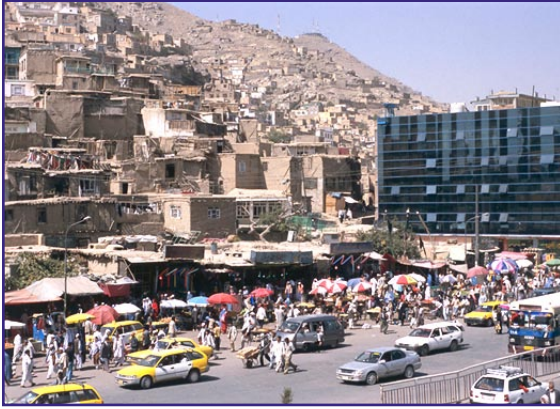
My group consisted of CW4WAfghan volunteers: Mariam Omar, Madeliene Tarasick, Marg Stewart, and Canadian War Artist and author Sharon McKay. CBC journalist, Mellissa Fung, also accompanied us. She was returning to Afghanistan 5 years after having been kidnapped while on assignment. She would be doing a story about CW4WAfghan’s projects and its volunteers for a CBC documentary. With our experienced Canadian project director, Dr. Lauryn Oates and our Afghan country director, Murwarid Ziyee we would experience the trip of a lifetime!

For the next two weeks we would be driven around by our Afghan driver with

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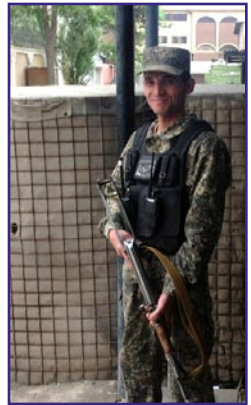
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little freedom to travel anywhere on our own. The scene while landing was dull, grey and without greenery. The city, built for about 500,000, presently houses 5 million. It has open sewers and pollution is a major problem. The streets of Kabul were chaotic. No lines to separate direction of traffic, few lights or traffic signs and everywhere

there were roads open despite construction. On any given day Toyotas or Hondas, without emission controls, shared the streets with donkeys, sheep, goats, trucks, pedestrians, wheelbarrows and carts, overcrowded buses, bicycles and motorcycles. Despite this chaos, the traffic seemed to work for the most part. Everywhere there were military, police and private guards with large weapons in sight. Our own hotel had four steel doors and security guards with weapons on each one. On the third day, just a few blocks from our hotel, the Taliban took responsibility for a suicide bomber who killed 15 people targeting a foreign military convoy. This was just one of five suicide bombers they had set loose in the country! While visiting Herat the following week, an IED went off



close to our hotel, killing 8 police and injuring others. In contrast, there were beautiful scenes of rose bushes on the side of wide, paved roads, high rise buildings, beautiful gardens, lovely courtyard restaurants, restored historical sites, beautiful mosques, incredible mountain views, bustling market places, modern stores and hundreds of large mansions dubbed ‘poppy houses.’

Although I viewed many photos and videos of burqa clad women during my 15

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(Life Changing Trip.. continued from Page 40)

years of volunteering, to actually see the many women who wore them, some begging with their children, was emotionally difficult. On the other hand it was wonderful to see the many Afghan schoolgirls on the streets going to school. Sadly, due to increased insurgency in the Jalalabad area, I was not able to visit the school that CSAW had built and was supporting. Our partner at the school, Nazaneen Majeed, travelled to Kabul to see me for an emotional visit. We exchanged gifts and she returned with books, toys and other donated school items.

After visiting CW4WAfghan's offices, meeting room and one bedroom guest suite, I was able to visit several of CW4WAfghan's projects. We visited Medica's adult literacy program in Kabul and later flew to Herat to see a new one in operation there. The average woman's literacy rate is 22.2%. One story really touched me. A burqa clad woman had been the third wife of a man who had died two years ago. She had three children and her in-laws took her two oldest children leaving her homeless with her baby. She has not seen them since and has no idea where her older children are. She makes a meagre living sewing and wants to better herself so that she can be a better provider. Her neighbours ridicule her for wanting to read and write at her age. She is 25. And all she asks is "Will there be another class?"

The House of Flowers orphanage was a delightful place with two major groups of children, one ages 2 to 8 and the other ages 9 to 14. The teachers were using the Montessori method and the classrooms were a colourful collection of learning materials and student projects. On the beautiful Afghan rugs, active learning in math and geography was taking place. Children were eager to display their school work and do presentations for their Canadian visitors. I was very impressed!



CW4WAfghan provides an excellent teacher training program and we accompanied the five master teachers as they visited their students (teachers who had just finished their five week course) in their classrooms implementing their newly acquired teaching skills. In Parvan province we visited a public high school and

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(Life Changing Trip.. continued from Page 41)

observed a boys' science class and a girls' literature class. There were benches and blackboards but not too much more, but a lesson on cell structure was being led by a student who had made a model out of found materials. In the girls' literature class a large television had been brought in for two classes of girls to view a professionally produced lesson.

We visited the Fatema Tul Zahra school in Kabul which has classes for over 200



students from grades 1-9 with some orphaned children living at the school. There was a sewing class for the older girls and the young students entertained us with their singing and dancing. We saw the Able Box Library Starter Kits made available by the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University (ACKU) which

works with Afghan professors to write, illustrate and publish high quality books for new readers. CW4WAfghan has distributed over 150 of these kits.

We also visited the Parsa site, a delightful location on the hills outside of Kabul and had a lovely lunch served by Afghan scouts as the Scout movement is being revitalized here. Parsa also trains and develops professional Afghan leaders by providing innovative and effective programs in education, economic development, psychosocial training and health care serving those truly in need.

I wish I could share more of what I saw and experienced on this trip. But for now, let me say that our efforts are making a difference and that our partners need us to continue these efforts in the foreseeable future. The rights that women and children have gained in the last decade are at risk. We must not turn away!

Presentations on this trip to Afghanistan and the work of our group within Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan are available on request .

CSAW raised and distributed over \$640,000 to our Afghan partners since the group was founded in 1998. The projects have been mainly for the education of children, with an emphasis on girls and literacy projects including libraries. District 15 RTO/ERO through Project Service To Others provided \$4000 a few years ago to provide a small library within a school that we funded and had built.

(Life Changing Trip.. additional pictures on Page 43)

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Afghanistan...

Photos by
Linda Middaugh



*"There is no tool for
development more
effective than
the empowerment
of women."* Kofi Annan



Favourite Spots...



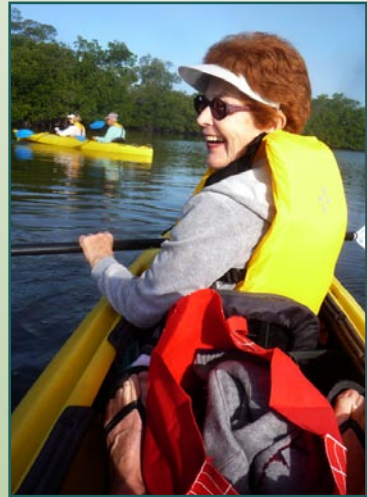
On Crowe River - Lynn Gapes and her Swans



In the Gila Mountains, New Mexico - Jerry Blosser



On the Golf Course in Florida - David Baird, MMR, 2 Friends, David Smith, Chair of OTPP Audit Committee, Peter Gnish, Bob Williams, Former Director HDSB



On Sanibel Island, Florida Joyce Frank, Kayaking

**Hilary Barker, Membership Chair
District 15 KTO/ERO Balkon
611 Barons Court
Burlington, ON L7E 4E4**

