

# REO HALTON HERALD

District 15

April, 2015



***"THIS is what turning 65 looks like!"***  
by Peggy Morrison

# Keeping in Touch...



**Rosebowl Parade**  
*photo by Jan Murdoch*



**Winter at Black River Manor**  
*photo by Pauline Weber*



**Gardens at the TDL Group**  
*photo by Dave Woodward*



**Summer at Black River Manor**  
*photo by Pauline Weber*

## President's Report

By Penny Hambly



This will be my last report as President. I have enjoyed working with our Board Members and thank them for being so committed to working hard for our organization. I am looking forward to continuing on the Board as Past President.

In February we were entertained with a murder mystery lunch put on by **Murders Tastefully Executed Inc.** It was such an enjoyable afternoon and had everyone guessing who the murderer was. See **Moira Plexman's** Program Committee Report for all the highlights and pictures. The Program Committee is hoping that more people will volunteer to join them.

We also hope that you will attend the **Annual General Meeting on May 4** at the Burlington Convention Centre. It is important that members come out to the meeting in the morning to elect your new Executive. That will be followed by the lunch. **Martin Higgs**, 1st Vice President of the Provincial Executive, will be joining us. See the Registration flyer in the middle of this magazine.

On May 11-13, **Carolyn Hilton, Moira Plexman, Claudia Stewart** and I will be attending the Spring Senate in Toronto. It should be a very interesting Senate and we will post the motions passed on the website.

Finally, we are only as strong as our members. We need more people to volunteer to join committees. Some of our Board members have been working for you for many years and they would like to pass their jobs on to new people. We need YOU! Please think about joining a committee or being on the Board.

### Student Wisdom!

A student asked his teacher, "Is it true that the law of gravity keeps us on Earth?"

The teacher replied, "Yes."

The kid then asked, "What kept us on before the law was passed?"

OOO

Father - "Son, I'm worried about your being at the bottom of the class."

Son - "Don't be - they teach the same stuff at both ends."



## Book of Remembrance

*We remember with fondness*

F G Connolly   Olga Daley   Doreen Daniels   Jean Dunlop  
Reine Lewicki   Joyce Mattick   Annis Munro   Margaret Withnell

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### *A Volunteer Opportunity*

Goodwill Committee Chair, **Marina Lloyd**, has become aware of RTO/ERO members who, from time to time, find themselves without an adequate support system. Marina is seeking to form a small team of people willing to lend a hand when such a member finds himself or herself in need of help. As a member of the team, you might be called upon occasionally to pick up groceries or to provide a ride to a medical appointment. Sometimes just to have a phone conversation or a visit will brighten someone's day. Such small acts of caring and compassion can make a world of difference. If you are thinking, "I would be willing to serve on such a team!" please contact Marina at [mfl@cogeco.ca](mailto:mfl@cogeco.ca) or 905-637-6030.

## 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



I received another good group of responses both to the Christmas letter sent to all those living outside of Halton and to the January issue of the newsletter. Thanks to all those who took the time to write and to send emails to me in Florida. And, as you can see below, the photos that were attached to several of the submissions really add to your story. Any messages mailed to my Hamilton address will be placed in the September issue.

How about you! Why not send me a note and let your friends and former colleagues know what you are up to. It's easy; send your message (and photo if you have one to share) by email to [pgnish@gmail.com](mailto:pgnish@gmail.com); by Canada Post to 5260 South Landings Drive, Unit #309, Fort Myers, Florida 33919 (if mailed November to March) or to 153 Fairliegh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4 (if mailed April to October). I hope to hear from more of you in the near future.

**Gerry Blosser** emailed me this photo of an alligator he saw. He said, "I saw this young fellow on my bicycle ride through Mayaka state park just before Christmas." He and Marcia are staying in Bradenton Florida from November to April.



**Maureen Downey** sent an email to say "Thanks for the great coverage you gave my article, *My Trip to China*, and the photos. You chose some of my favourite ones. I was pleasantly surprised to read about Mark Wickens' China experience, as it closely mirrored mine."

**Penny Hambly** emailed me: "I just got the Halton Herald in the mail and it looks great. Love the colour and the Happy New Year on it. Thank you for all the work that you do for us. We all appreciate it."

**Helen Conlon** wrote to say that she is "...alive and well and living in Brighton ON. My life here is pretty gratifying. I have made a lot of wonderful new friends as well as being closer to many of my family. Joining a couple of community groups, including the Arts Council and a nearby wonderful chorus, *Joyful Noise*, has been great. I am also a member of a very active Belleville Relay for Life team, Super Dan, in honour of my late nephew. I invite everyone to join us for the

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Springtime **Cork Jesters Wine Tour Poker Run**, my baby, held across Prince Edward County. The first run, in the fall, was a blast for all concerned! I would love to see you all!

(Editor's Note: Contact me, [pgnish@gmail.com](mailto:pgnish@gmail.com) if you would like more information on the run.)

**Audrey Hillman** mentioned that her teaching career in Halton included time at Blakelock High School, Oaklands Regional Centre, Woodview Children's Centre, Park School in Georgetown and Sam Sherratt School in Milton. She wrote to say, "It has been 13 years now since I left Halton. In 2002 we retired to Huntsville so we could be close to Algonquin Park and enjoy all that the Muskoka area has to offer. We bought a big home planning to convert part of it to a granny suite. The plan was to have our daughter Diana move from her group home in Milton to live in the main part of the house along with a live- in family for support and we would be free to travel and have her close. The plan never worked out because of lack of portable funding for Diana's support and no new funds available.

We have great memories of our time in Huntsville, but after 10 years of caring for the large home with the long driveway and the large yard, we left Huntsville and moved to North Bay area. We built the home we had envisioned with a down- sized area for Rod and I and a home for both daughters. The government has made funding for people with special needs more individual and our plan was to apply for the support money needed for Diana to live with her sister here in Corbeil. We barely got settled in the new place when we were offered a chance to move Diana to a group home in North Bay. A lady whose family wanted her closer to Mississauga asked to switch places. This is a rare thing. We never imagined Diana having a group home either in Huntsville or here as wait lists are years long and she would never have been a priority with her having a home already in Milton. Sometimes things are just meant to be.

Over the years we have managed to travel . We have been to every part of Canada and 49 US states with our 5th Wheel. We haven't made Hawaii yet. We do like to attend music events with the trailer also. This coming summer we will return to the Yukon and Alaska. I try to keep active with skating, cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing swimming, biking, hiking and Nordic walking. I have done a couple of really nice bike trips with my Lisa who teaches at Chris Hatfield. I have recently joined a camera club and am finally learning how to use my DSL camera off auto setting. Rod is into flying model airplanes. There never seems to be enough time to fit everything in but I have had my volunteer projects over the

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years. I am looking forward to helping with the Special Winter Olympic Games here in North Bay this winter.”

**Herman Star** telephoned me in Florida to wish us a Merry Christmas – also said how much he enjoyed receiving the Christmas message.

**Courtney Stoate** emailed to say “Jean and I are now in Ottawa where we live near our daughter, Jocelyn, (graduate of M.M.Robinson and now a lawyer) and her husband Michael. Lots to do here in the Capital - good amateur theatre and choirs - one cinema specializes in rare movies and is always packed. Supposedly being taken to lunch by Jean, Jocelyn and Michael on the 11th. I was taken completely by surprise to find the whole family there from Oakville and Toronto to celebrate my 90th birthday. (Sumptuous lunch at the Chateau Laurier Hotel). Anyone wishing to contact us - email [camcourt@sympatico.ca](mailto:camcourt@sympatico.ca).” He also sent special regards to **Warren McBurney** who has been very helpful.

**Pauline Weber** responded to my request to send a “short note about yourself.” with the following: “We are about to enjoy our eighth Christmas here at the end of Westall Lane on the banks of the Black River; with the sound of the rapids forming a soothing background to our quiet daily lives in the country. We’re 15 minutes from town and have only 3 neighbours on our kilometer of road; but every December our 4 guest bedrooms fill up with family, a local free range turkey is the feature for Christmas dinner, and all our favourite cookies are piled on plates.

Black River Manor has become a gathering place for friends and family who enjoy spending several days together every summer, Thanksgiving and Christmas. We enjoy our latest culinary creations, try new Prince Edward County wines, play games - accompanied by gales of laughter - and just unwind and get re-acquainted. If the ice is frozen on our ponds, hockey games may break out, usually with improvised equipment. The trails through the adjoining conservation land appeal to the snow-shoers in winter and the hikers in summer.

Wild turkey flocks cleaning up under the bird feeders, deer nibbling on the yew outside my window, and lots of red, black, and sometimes their gray cousins often distract me from the work I’m doing at my computer table overlooking the back lawn and the river. Did I say work? Well, yes, I’m still doing part time flexible sales and consulting work for an educational video company, mostly now working with streaming video library products. Or I may be doing minutes for a Tweed

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and Area Studio tour meeting, printing photos for my greeting cards, or experimenting with digital editing or printing on various photo papers. It keeps the neurons firing, and gives me reasons to keep learning new things! Having retired twice, who knows - I may do it again!

Gardening keeps me active in the summer, annually digging a new flowerbed somewhere on our 4.5 acres, and learning what plants do not appeal to the wildlife. Horticulture here in "The Land Between" (where the Shield meets the St. Lawrence Lowlands) is an adventure; it's amazing what will grow in rock niches. As part of a garden tour organized by the Friends of the Tweed Library, we hosted over 200 people on a warm July Saturday in 2013. The fun of sharing our special place made the extra work well worth while. The Municipality of Tweed has such interesting folk, many of whom have moved here from Toronto, Montreal or Ottawa. Volunteering, getting involved in community activities, and participating in local politics helps you get to know a good variety of people. Artists, publishers, authors, journalists, librarians, and retired educators are among the Tweedites who have found that this very affordable place to live also has a lot to offer. So if you're thinking of getting out of town, we heartily recommend it! It's good for the soul!!"

(See summer and winter pictures that Pauline sent of the area where she now lives - on Page 2)

**Vince & Linda Weeks** sent their Christmas Greetings and a picture from Hopetown in the Bahamas where they are making the most of their retirement by living on their sailboat during the winter.



**Dave Woodward** wrote to say, "A couple of years ago, I took Colton Roberts on a tour of all the buildings that make up the campus at TDL Group Corp. now sold to Restaurant Brands. In October, 2013, I completed my last day at TDL and miss the place and the people. However, I enjoy being free and am currently writing a local social history about the people who lived in the now Burloak Park and both sides of Lakeshore Road where I grew up. There really isn't anyone else to do it. Recently, I have been a volunteer at the Bistro in the Burlington Seniors' Centre. My daughter lives in Tampa and my brother-in-law and his wife in Texas, so we spend some of the winter months in Tampa and Galveston."

(Editor's Note: see Dave's article and pictures of his work at TDL beginning on Page 17.)

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## Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



About 20 of us went to Carmen's for the lunch and show "*Jingle Bell Rock*" in early December. There was good food and good entertainment. The impersonators of Johnny Cash, Brenda Lee, Elvis, Little Richard and others sang the favourite Christmas songs that were on the hit lists. We had front row seats, so were very close to the invited and spontaneous dancing by the audience. A few of our group joined in. It was a good way to get into the Christmas spirit and Carmen's is perhaps a venue for another year.

Last spring we went to Toronto on Go Transit and enjoyed a lunch cruise on Toronto Harbour. We will take the train into the city again this June and explore Ripley's Aquarium. I will try to get group tickets and order early in May to avoid the line up at the box office. I have been told it is an excellent outing.

We enjoyed the musicals and plays that we attended this past year and for that reason will go back to the groups that put them on. You can see the list in this issue's Calendar of Events. They are listed on the website, [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org) as well and will be highlighted in the monthly e-letters. If there are changes or new entries, we will let you know on the website and 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. Janet and I are always looking for new things to attend, so let us know if you have ideas.

### Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

Our membership is now over 2500. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members since January, 2015. Please welcome them and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Susarah Amm	Oscar Daley	Joan Dawson
William Demopolis	Paula Dominick	Constanc Halket
Catherine Hayes	Kenneth Hunt	Sharon Jenkins
Deanna Lagroix	Ruth MacBean	Robert McKay
Renee Meloche	Andrea Miersma	Angela Mongiardi
Marguerite Murrin-Cahill	John Rydzewski	Antonietta Sabetti
Jayne Smiley	Kymmie Sun	Mary Walker

## Nominations Committee Report

By Phyllis Kingsley



At the Annual General Meeting coming up on May 4, 2015 the members of RTO/ERO District 15 in attendance will be asked to vote on the slate of elective officers for the year 2015 -16. These officers will form the executive of your board. While we have nominations for most positions at this stage, any member of District can submit their nominations for any of the roles. If we have more than one nomination for a particular position, elections will be held at the AGM.

If you are interested in running for any of the positions below, please submit your nomination to me by email, [philipot44@gmail.com](mailto:philipot44@gmail.com) or by mail to Phyllis Kingsley 40 Rayne Ave., Oakville, L6H 1C2 by April 24, 2015. However, you can also make nominations from the floor at the AGM. At present, the nominations are:

President:	Carolyn Hilton
First Vice President:	Moira Balfour Plexman
Second Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Janet Carter-Wright
Treasurer:	Chub Baxter
Assistant Treasurer:	Daliah Brown
Member-at-large	Jim Baker

In addition to the elected positions, there are many other positions on the Board that need to be filled. We need a **Health Services** Chair who will liaise with the RTO/ERO Provincial Health Services and Insurance Committee and advise the Board and the membership about proposals and/or information regarding the Health Benefits Program. This is an important portfolio. The **Awards** Committee Chair is another Board position that is vacant. This person would oversee the application of the RTO/ERO Service to Others Grant, advise membership of deadlines regarding RTO/ERO and Johnson Inc. Bursary programs and implement the Distinguished Service Award program. The **Political Advocacy** Committee Chair also needs to be filled. This person liaises with the RTO/ERO Provincial Committee and keeps abreast of political issues which are important to retired persons. Finally, I would like to mentor someone to take over the

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role of **Newsletter Coordinator**. This role involves receiving most submissions to the Herald and forwarding them to the Editor; working with the printing company, managing advertising and (very) rarely contacting Canada Post. The mentee would join the Board as a member without Portfolio for the 2015/16 year and take over the coordinator position in June 2016 (or sooner if he/she so desires). Please contact me if you have interest in any of these positions or would like more information. My telephone number is 905 845-6911.

Involvement on the Board does not preclude you from “having a life”! There are only 5 Board meetings over the course of a year and you can miss one or two if you are travelling. You can keep in the loop through email wherever you are in the world. Most positions are not onerous. I urge and encourage our younger members to become involved in our organization. Everything that happens at the District level is the result of the volunteer efforts of our members. We need new blood with new ideas to keep our organization vibrant. We also need more involvement from men to address a gender imbalance on the board.

## My Job Search

My first job was working in an Orange Juice factory, but I got canned. Couldn't concentrate. Then I worked in the woods as a Lumberjack, but just couldn't hack it, so they gave me the axe. After that, I tried being a Tailor, but wasn't suited for it, mainly because it was a sew-sew job.

Next, I tried working in a Muffler Factory, but that was too exhausting. Then, tried being a Chef - figured it would add a little spice to my life, but just didn't have the thyme. Then, I attempted being a Deli Worker, but any way I sliced it... couldn't cut the mustard. My best job was a Musician, but eventually found I wasn't noteworthy.

I studied a long time to become a Doctor, but didn't have any patience. I became a Professional Fisherman, but discovered I couldn't live on my net income. Managed to get a good job working for a Pool Maintenance Company, but the work was just too draining.

After many years of trying to find steady work, I finally got a job as a Historian - until I realized there was no future in it. My last job was working in Starbucks, but had to quit because it was the same old grind. SO, I TRIED RETIREMENT AND I FOUND I'M PERFECT FOR THE JOB!

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## Local Grandmother To Grandmother Groups Receive 2014 RTO/ERO Service To Others Grant

By Carol Brayman and Linda Rafuse

This fall, Halton Grandmother Groups, Ubuntu and Oomama, were thrilled to learn they were joint recipients of RTO/ERO's Project - Service to Others Grant for their groups' project EDUCATING CHILDREN IN NEED: THE CHILD-CARE CENTRE IN ZIMBABWE. Their application was one of the few to receive the maximum grant of \$4000.00.



Two RTO/ERO members, **Linda Rafuse** and **Carol Brayman**, who had submitted the proposal on behalf of the Halton Grandmothers, presented the \$4000 cheque along with the \$4825.00 they'd pledged to the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign. As the photo shows, it was very gratefully received. The photo shows **Penny Hambly** and **Carolyn Hilton** handing over the award to **Carol Brayman** and **Linda Rafuse** on the right.

The Halton Grandmothers' several fundraising initiatives could not have been as successful as they were without the help and support of 26 RTO/ERO members who showed that indeed RTO/ERO members are still active, have many skills and talents to offer, and above all care. The events included a performance by the Arcelor-Mittal Dofasco Choir; an evening featuring speaker, Craig Kielburger who spoke about "Kids Who Care-Creating a Different World"; a Jazz Cabaret; and Kazuri Jewellery sale events. The \$4000 grant and the \$4825.00 pledged by the Halton Grandmothers have been sent to support the Chiedza Childcare Centre in Zimbabwe. Enthusiasm sparked by receiving the RTO/ERO grant along with amazing support by members raised a wonderful \$35,328.00 extra!

The Chiedza Child Care Centre is a non-governmental agency, established in 2001 by a group of concerned Zimbabwean professionals and business people. It was developed in response to escalating needs to provide education and practical help

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for children orphaned and/or infected with HIV/AIDS. The name Chiedza derives from the Shona name meaning light, appropriately underlining the positive philosophy and objectives which drives this project in the face of the daunting challenges of HIV/AIDS and poverty. So far the Centre has served over 17,090 vulnerable children.

One of the Centre's many supports is a specific learning program which helps vulnerable children who have not been in school integrate into a formal education centre. Our retired Zimbabwean teacher colleagues volunteer as tutors and mentors. The most exciting outcome of this grant is that more vulnerable children will have access to education in their formative years. Specifically, the \$4000 Grant money along with the \$4825.00 pledged by the Halton Grandmothers have covered school fees for 45 primary and 15 secondary level students, \$320.00 for O Level exam fees, and \$200.00 for pre-school learning materials. The additional \$35,328.00 will boost the education programs further and are providing much needed medicine and counselling for the children. Those funds are also allowing the many Zimbabwean Grandmothers who, with the support of the Chiedza Child Care Centre are caring for the orphans, to provide improved housing, educational materials for home, medical care, food and clothing.

As they grow in knowledge in a trusting and healthy environment, we know the children benefitting from this grant will be encouraged to become leaders in their communities. This is evident in the following statements from Chiedza students:

*"It showed me a vision of my future..."*

*"I made a better choice of who I want to be in life."*

A grateful grandmother said:

*"...saved my life to have school fees, clothing and food for 4 orphaned children in my care..."*

Thank you District 15, particularly 1st Vice President and Awards Committee chair **Carolyn Hilton** and president **Penny Hambly** for your support, and for approving and forwarding this Project-Service to Others application to Provincial RTO/ERO. Thanks also to all members and friends from many districts who have supported our local Grandmother groups and their initiatives. RTO/ERO members continue to make a difference as they light up and empower the lives of children both here and around the world.

(See more pictures related to the Service To Others grant on the back cover page.)

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**RETIREMENT: Chances are, you're doing it wrong****By Shane Walsh**

If you are new to Retirement, you may have a 25 or 30 year Retirement Plan. Your Financial Advisor may be looking at your investment portfolio as a "long-term" investment. Most financial advisors are quick to point out that people are living longer and a balanced portfolio focused on the long-term will help ensure you don't run out of money during retirement. Unfortunately, this conventional wisdom isn't right and most advisors are not transitioning their clients properly into Retirement Income Planning mode. Retirees are not being informed of the real changes that should happen in the planning and investment strategies - the need for risk management of the portfolio, and that a 25 or 30 year retirement plan is filled with short-term deadlines.

Retirement Income Planning is not a continuation of your accumulation strategy; it is a very different science from the process commonly used during the working years to accumulate assets. Some of the traditional approaches recommended by most advisors are actually detrimental to retirees in both risk management and the tax efficiency of the investment income received.

There are a limited number of advisors who are proficient in the field of Retirement Income Planning. If you're told that you need brain surgery, you would seek out professional help from a brain surgeon rather than have your general practitioner do the surgery for you. The same logic applies for your retirement. You have to ask yourself, "Is my current financial advisor proficient enough to provide me with a safety net to ensure my short-term deadlines are met with risk management in mind when detailing my 25-30 year plan... or is he/she the financial equivalent of a general practitioner?"

Most retirees reportedly fear they will outlive their savings. Rest assured, one of the risk management strategies specialists use is the Retirement Safety Net. In retirement, you will require an income stream from multiple sources including Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and your investment portfolio. When drawing down assets from your portfolio, you should always have 3-5 years' worth of income in guaranteed liquid investments (e.g. High Yield Savings Accounts, GICs) so that a portion of the money is not at risk when you need to withdraw the income over the 3 year period.

The purpose of the Retirement Safety Net is to draw income from investments that are not affected by daily market fluctuations. This approach allows for the  
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cash to be replenished every 3-5 years by taking profits from equities and then re-balancing the account for the next short-term period. This process should repeat throughout the duration of retirement, keeping your asset allocation in mind and adjusting where necessary. Here is how the process works. Let's assume our preferred retirement cycle is every 3 years.

**Step 1:** Have a discussion with your Financial Advisor and establish an asset allocation that is appropriate for you. Let's assume you have a 40% equity and 60% fixed income allocation.

**Step 2:** Within the fixed-income portion of the portfolio, allocate and invest one year's worth of retirement income into a High Yield Savings Account. This is where your retirement income is actually drawn from.

**Step 3:** Your second and third year's income is split equally into 2 GICs. The first GIC is invested for 1 year, and the other for 2 years. This will maximize interest over the short-term and more importantly, will provide a safe and non-fluctuating income stream.

**Step 4:** The balance of your portfolio, including any remaining portions to other fixed income investments, is left to grow using a diversified portfolio based on your personal risk tolerance. Profits from this portfolio over time will be used to replenish the income.

The purpose of having a Retirement Safety Net is to prevent the selling of investments in declining markets to fulfill income needs. If markets were in decline, having the Safety Net in place provides you with time to allow market-sensitive investments to recover. The process is risk averse in nature, but it will not prevent market declines or the subsequent erosion of account values over time. What it does provide for retirees, is security against short-term market fluctuations and peace of mind in knowing their income is secure and readily available to spend. Like your brain, you can't simply get another retirement; you only get one real shot at it. So when it comes to operating on your brain or planning your finances for retirement, make sure you're dealing with an expert in that specific area and not a general practitioner.

*In my last article "Top 10 Most Popular TFSA Questions," there was a minor printing error. As of January 1st, 2015, if you have never purchased a TFSA before, (and you were at least 18 years old in 2009) your TFSA contribution room is \$36,500.*

*This article was prepared solely by Shane Walsh who is a registered representative of HollisWealth Advisory Services Inc. (a member of the Mutual Fund Dealers Association of Canada and the MFDA Investor Protection Corporation). The views and opinions, including any recommendations, expressed in this article are those of Shane Walsh alone and they are not those of HollisWealth Advisory Services Inc. TM Trademark of The Bank of Nova Scotia, used under license.*

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## Retirement Leads to New Careers for Some

By David Woodward

I have always enjoyed receiving the Halton Herald and reading of the varied adventures of retired teachers, so I thought I would share my own adventures since retirement.

When I retired from the Halton Board of Education, I pondered what I might do in the next stage of my life. I enjoyed so many interests that it was difficult to focus on my next pursuit. Then the AMC Theatres branched out to Canada and opened a 24 theatre megaplex in Oakville. I got a job as ticket seller. As time went on, they kept asking me to be a leader on the team because of my 25 years of experience as a vice principal/principal. One thing led to another and I eventually became Concession Manager and then the HR Manager. It was exciting to learn how the movie theatre business worked. However, after 3 years of weekends and sometimes 15 hour days preparing payrolls, counting cash, checking inventories and splicing film, I asked myself why I was working so hard. I really needed my weekends!

I tendered my resignation in the week of the 9/11 attacks on the Trade Centre. I heard of a part-time job at the Tim Horton's Head Office in Oakville where they needed a gardener on site to cut grass, tend the landscape as well as perform Facilities Department tasks in the off-season. I heard later that they thought I was over-qualified and weren't going to give me an interview but I persisted and they hired me. You see, my dream job for retirement was being a gardener-designer-landscaper. When I was a boy, I spent all weekends and holidays at my grandparents' home on Lake Ontario in east Burlington. They were avid gardeners and the neighbour was a professional gardener who groomed a few estates in Port Nelson. He taught me much about the local flora of this area. As a teenager I worked on estates in Burlington.

I spent 12 full years working at the TDL Corporation campus, which consisted of 3 buildings, on Wycroft Road, east of Dorval. It was surrounded by extensive lawns and



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(New Careers.. continued from Page 17)

had a deck and patio at the back for employees to eat lunches and relax. When I arrived, I found only Hicks' yews, yucca, some nice trees, and geraniums. By the time I left I had changed it to an oasis of beauty in the suburban industrial complex - full of tulips, daffodils, roses, hostas, cannas and a riot of annuals depending on the season. I maintained the lawns so that they were weed-free. Around the employee patio, I lined the rails with flower boxes which I designed myself.



At the front, I put hangers on the lampposts and hung 24 inch baskets that trailed to the ground by the end of September. Tim Horton's gave me the latitude to do what I wanted without interference as long as I stayed within budget. I looked upon it as my garden and took a very personal interest in it. Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter were also great times to be in charge of decorations throughout

the buildings, inside and outside. Decorating the interior tree was delight for me.



In 2006, a new Distribution Centre was built near Guelph. They asked me to landscape the new building. On a hot 85 degree weekend at the end of June,

they delivered the English columnar oaks, the copper beech weeping fastigiatas, the blue spruces on standard stems, weigelas, creeping thyme, bugle weed, snow

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on the mountain, variegated willow standards, multiple grasses, perennials like coneflowers, which were interspersed with annuals of every colour and texture to make a continuous show from May until the end of October. Balancing the shaded areas with sunny sections of the landscape can be tricky but rewarding when the result is a riot of colour. I loved planning changes I would make for each new season.

During my last five years there I increased my work load to 35 hours a week, farmed out the grass-cutting to a landscape company and just did the gardens. The rest of the time, I performed many tasks in administration and facilities, keeping the buildings in good order. Part of my job consisted of liaising with the security staff and the cleaning franchise owners on a daily basis. A particular highlight occurred when Prime Minister Harper and the Finance Minister visited the headquarters. Who could ever forget the armed security guards on the roof with their automatic rifles? Then, at the end of 12 years I decided to pack it in and now I arrange my myriad photos into slide shows with music on the computer to brighten up a dreary winter's day.

Tim Horton's proved to be a remarkable and unique Canadian company with great leaders. They treated their employees with respect and appropriate rewards. Most of all, I was allowed the scope and creativity to do my job as I saw fit without micro-management. I only hope the new owners keep that corporate culture.

I am very proud to have been given the opportunity to be creative and productive in the latter working years of my life. There is life beyond teaching and I was fortunate to take advantage of that opportunity. To new retirees I recommend you pursue your dreams. You never know what hidden talents lie within.

(See Dave's coloured picture on Page 2)



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**RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List****Executive 2014 – 2015**

Past President	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
President	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
1st Vice President	Carolyn Hilton	905-844-2984
2nd Vice President	Moira Jane Plexman	905-845-1977
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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	Carolyn Hilton	905-844-2984
	Committee Member: Phyllis Kingsley	
Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
Communications		
Website Coordinator	Jeannie Woodcroft	905-315-0581
E-Letter Coordinator	Jan Murdoch	289-271-9817
Newsletter Coordinator	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
Newsletter Editor: Peter Gnish - Design: Cate Roberts		905-547-1628
Editing: Pam Ahrens, Carolyn Hilton, Phyllis Kingsley		
Proofreaders: Chub Baxter, Eleanor McCulloch, George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae and Ray Smith.		
Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
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East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
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Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
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Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	Nancy Parkhill	905-823-1993
Committee Member:	Darcea Hiltz	
Program	Moira Jane Plexman	905-845-1977
Committee Members:	Carolyn Hilton, Gail Reeves, Roberte Rivard, and Colton Roberts	
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Committee Member:	Janet Carter-Wright	
Tours	Jan Murdoch	289-271-9817
Committee Members:	Jim Brownridge, Shirley Brownridge, Connie Goman, Darcea Hiltz, Susan Hoicka, Colton Roberts	
Member Without Portfolio	Claudia Stewart	905-331-5614

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# Organize Me Please



Professional  
Residential  
Organizer



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Why would I hire a professional organizer?

Too often people accept the responsibilities of household organizing and estate administration without full comprehension of the complexity of that role. There are times when the organization of family effects should be dealt with by professionals who can work without emotional attachment to individual assets. Impartiality can simplify the procedures necessitated by altered family circumstances such as:

- \* Seniors downsizing to rightsizing
- \* Separation/Divorce
- \* Death/estate requirements
- \* The onset of an illness or disability

When a life change such as downsizing, divorce, a death or a disability occurs, the stress can be overwhelming. Depending upon the reason for the adjustment to the current living status, a professional organizer can add the necessary coordination to the task at hand. It may start by preparing a precise listing of all assets by categories, such as furniture, collectables, files or stored items. Then if required the determination of what should be donated, recycled, sold or disposed can be decided. The priority and timetable for tasks can be determined from the lists much easier than by handling the items themselves. Often there is a requirement to coordinate advertising the sales, and/or dealing with appraisers/auctioneers. Many people are not prepared to perform these tasks without causing a tremendous mental and physical drain to themselves and those around them.

The objective of **Organize Me Please** is to help you to clearly define your goal and to create the framework to direct you to an efficient completed result. Our role is to be the solution to household organizing when someone says,

**"I just don't know where to begin."**

[www.organizemepleasecanada.com](http://www.organizemepleasecanada.com)

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## You are invited to the...

### RTO/ERO HALTON DISTRICT 15

#### Annual General Meeting & Lunch

**Monday, May 4, 2015**

Burlington Convention Centre

1120 Burloak Drive (just north of the QEW)

Burlington, Ontario

## Entertainment by Michael Keys & Company



Get ready to snap your fingers and tap your feet to the beat of Michael Keys & Company. Michael has over forty years experience as an entertainer performing in various venues. The trio's lively entertainment will provide us with a most enjoyable afternoon.

**Cost:** \$30.00 for RTO District 15 members  
\$35.00 for guests/ non-member spouses

### PROGRAM

<b>Coffee / Tea:</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Business Meeting:</b>	<b>10:00-11:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Registration:</b>	<b>11:30 -noon</b>
<b>Lunch:</b>	<b>12 to 1:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Entertainment:</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.</b>

To attend please complete the registration form and mail with cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 15. Deadline: April 24.

**Registration Form**  
**Deadline is Friday April 24, 2015**

**Please Print:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Member \_\_\_\_\_ Guest \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vegetarian meal is required \_\_\_\_\_ Food allergy \_\_\_\_\_**

-----  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Member \_\_\_\_\_ Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vegetarian meal is required \_\_\_\_\_ Food allergy \_\_\_\_\_**

-----  
**Enclosed is a cheque payable to: RTO/ERO District 15**

**in the amount of:.....**

**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 2015.

- **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, Phyllis Kingsley by e-mail: [philipot44@gmail.com](mailto:philipot44@gmail.com) by mail to 40 Rayne Ave. Oakville, ON, L6H 1C2 or telephone: 905-845-6911.

Deadline - July 15, 2015.

## 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. 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.

## 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](mailto:dvezeau@rto-ero.org)

or Contact Hilary Barber by telephone 905-637-7067

or by e-mail at [hilaryjpbarber@cogeco.ca](mailto:hilaryjpbarber@cogeco.ca)

### Calendar of Events: April to November

- Apr 24 Dinner Theatre, Aldershot Players, West Plains United Church, Burl. Comedy, ***Don't Misunderstand Me*** by Patrick Cargill. 6:30 p.m. Cost \$35. Contact D. Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com
- Apr 30 Breakfast at Sunnyside Grill, Appleby Square, Burlington. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- May 4 District 15 Annual General Meeting and Spring Luncheon at the Burlington Convention Centre, 9:30 a.m. See details and registration form in centre foldout in this issue.
- May 5 Stratford Musical, ***Carousel***. Avon Theatre. 2 p.m. Cost \$115 includes bus. Contact D. Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com.
- May 21 Drury Lane Theatre, 2269 New St., Burlington. Musical, ***Something's Afoot***. 8:00 p.m. Cost \$28.00. Contact Dave Wright at 90-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com.
- May 28 Breakfast at El Spero Family Restaurant, 2420 Lakeshore Rd. West, Bronte. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- June 2 Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, 288 Bremner Blvd., Toronto. Entry Cost \$19.98 (senior). Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com by May 1,
- June 16/17 Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Locust St., Burlington. Burlington Foot Notes, ***Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance***. Cost \$25.00. 2:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. on June 16 and 2:00 p.m. on June 17. Buy tickets online or at the box-office 905-681-6000.
- Oct 7 Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Musical, ***Sweet Charity***, 2:00 p.m. Cost \$52. Contact Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328 or jcwright@cogeco.ca Cheques made out to Retired Teachers of Ontario District 15 are to be received by Janet at 4491 Appleby Line, Burlington, ON L7M 0P3 by Aug 21.
- Nov 5 Drury Lane Theatre, 2269 New St. Burlington. Musical, ***Gypsy***. 8 p.m. Cost \$28. 00 Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com by Sept. 1.
- Nov TBA Clarkson Musical Theatre, Meadowvale Theatre, Montevideo Dr., Mississauga. Musical, ***Hello Dolly***. Cost \$25.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com by Aug 15.

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## GERALD DROPPA, B.A., B.ED., M.ED.

By Warren McBurney, Goodwill East Convenor

*Compiled from Gerry's memoir The Story of My Life and approved by his daughter Nora Scrutton.*

The fourth of seven children, and the twin of Geraldine, Gerald (Gerry) Droppa grew up on a farm in eastern Ontario, south of Ottawa, between Winchester and Chesterville, where he was born 30 April, 1925. Saturday night was bath night, with a shared tub beside the wood stove. Sunday, after church and Sunday school in the local schoolhouse, the family gathered around the pump organ in the parlour - out of bounds the rest of the week - for a hymn sing. Music, on 78 rpms, came from the wind-up Victrola as well for some of us.

There were always dogs and cats at the farm, and horses to help with the heavy work. With the house often as cold as a meat locker, it didn't take long to get dressed in the morning. Life was busy, Gerry remembers, and there really wasn't any time to get into trouble. There were always chores to do before and after school, and full time farm labour throughout the summer.



But life wasn't always work. Making ice cream was a frequent treat in the hot summer, as was skinny-dipping in the nearby river, after a day in the fields. Christmas meant cutting their own tree and enjoying a traditional turkey feast followed by a date pie. Gerry says his parents really learned to live without much money, realizing that family was more important than wealth. Values like these don't change.

Gerry's schooling at the local S.S. No. 5 began in the fall of 1930. It included every subject, all taught by one teacher. The Droppa children walked the mile to-and-fro twice a day, with their home-packed lunches, warmly dressed in their hand-me-downs. Their family had the school caretaking contract for several years, including lighting the fire daily in the winter. When Gerry finished grade VIII, he was ready for Chesterville High School, five miles from home. In the summer, they rode their bikes; winter meant driving the horse and cutter, with an oven-warmed brick at their feet and a buffalo robe on their laps. Molly the horse knew the route well, but Gerry had to take part of his lunchtime to feed and water her

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(Gerry Droppo.. continued from Page 26)

at the local stable. Due to his many farm chores, he was obliged to drop some courses in Grade XIII and make them up the following year. He used this as an opportunity to take extra courses, finishing Grade XIII with thirteen subjects, including 100% in maths.

Ottawa Normal School in 1945 brought challenges: boarding with his married brother, observing the teacher on Tuesdays and teaching all day Thursdays, and attending classes the other days. The College was closed for three separate weeks during the year, to allow for three full weeks of practice teaching. Gerry signed his first contract with S.S. No. 15 Winchester in 1946 at \$1,300. Total enrolment was never under forty students - a real challenge. He boarded in the community and walked to school with his students. I am sure some of us remember the Neilson's Chocolate world map and the ink wells fitted into the desk tops ready for the straight pen nibs, the Christmas Concert - they could call it that then - and perhaps even the erratic heat from the wood stove.

Summer School was a necessity for the beginning teacher on his way up, and Gerry started his climb on the educational ladder. He realized that he had to be closer to a university for his classes, and in 1951 moved to Oakville as a grade VI teacher at Old Central School, on the site of the present Oakville Centre. With the town dump next door, rats were very common visitors in the classrooms.

Moving here brought romance into Gerry's life when he met Judith Wells in Walkerton. She was visiting her cousin, who happened to be married to Gerry's sister. Judith lived in Stratford, and when Gerry was teased about his frequent trips there, he claimed that there was some pretty nice "scenery" in Stratford! It was no surprise that they were married on Boxing Day, 1953, in the Festival City. "I give Judith full credit for giving our family a real sense of love and security... the best thing any parent can give her children."

Five years later, Gerry became principal at Elmwood School - just a short walk from their home on Stewart Street - and in 1960 of Westwood School. Many a softball found its way through the nearby greenhouses, and the wise principal arranged with the owner to replace the broken glass and to send the bill to the school board. Today Westwood is the home of Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. Gladys Speers P.S. was his final principalship. At the time of his retirement, after 19 years at Speers, no other principal in Halton had served that long in the same school. Springtime meant a student musical, and December brought

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the Christmas Concert, after which all the staff was invited to the Droppos' for their annual party. But all good things have to come to an end. One day, walking hand in hand with his principal, a little boy said, "You look just like my Grandpa, Mr. Droppo. And he died last week!" Gerry says he decided then and there to retire at the end of June, 1981. Retirement festivities were varied: a framed photo in the entrance way of the school, an oak tree planted in his honour on the school grounds, a lovely tea and a new set of golf clubs.

And what of retirement for Gerry? He and Judith led tours for fellow retired teachers to all the continents except Africa. A more leisurely way of life came at their cottage near Huntsville. Their activities continued at St. John's United and with the Shriners. They celebrated their daughter Nora's success with Ontario Power Generation and their son Ian's receiving his Ph.D. at Exeter University in England. They have had immense pleasure in seeing their two grandchildren, Tim and Emily, grow up under their grandparents' loving watch. Sadly, Judith died suddenly on 4 December, 2012, after 59 years of happily married life. Life without his help-mate was just not the same. Gerry has chosen Trafalgar Lodge as his retirement residence, in the centre of the town to which he has given so much of himself.

And what of his philosophy of life? After years as a husband, father, teacher, principal and an exemplary Christian, he sees his life as an ongoing adventure. "Say each day - my life begins anew today. What am I going to do with it?"

Happy ninetieth, Gerry, on 30 April, 2015!

### **Strange But True Health Tip: Drink coffee to have a better nap**

In a Japanese study that examined how to make the most of a nap, people who took a "coffee nap"—consuming about 200 milligrams of caffeine (the amount in one to two cups of coffee) and then immediately taking a 20-minute rest—felt more alert and performed better on computer tests than those who only took a nap.

Why does this work? A 20-minute nap ends just as the caffeine kicks in and clears the brain of a molecule called adenosine, maximizing alertness. "Adenosine is a by-product of wakefulness and activity," says Allen Towfigh, MD, medical director of New York Neurology & Sleep Medicine. "As adenosine levels increase, we become more fatigued. Napping clears out the adenosine and, when combined with caffeine, an adenosine-blocker, further reduces its effects and amplifies the effects of the nap."

(From [www.health.com](http://www.health.com))

## Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



While I am sitting here writing this report the snow is so high that I can't open my back door. Hopefully by the time that you read it in the Herald, the miserable winter weather will have finally disappeared.

Since my last report I have added four items from our local newspapers to our Halton RTO/ERO scrapbook. In January, the Oakville Beaver published photos of performers who were in the third Annual Spectacular Showcase Production which features local talented performers aged 40 and older. Four of the performers were from the popular Burlington Footnotes to which several of our members belong. Posing in a photo during a ballet duet was member **Kate Lowe**. Kate is a lovely experienced Footnotes dancer who was once a Tiger-Cat cheerleader. Besides dancing in the show, Kate sometimes acts as a substitute teacher for the opening number.

Another of our talented members was featured in an article in the Hamilton Spectator in January. **Jenny Peace** is a retired music high school teacher, a former Burlington Teen Tour Band member in the early 50s, and musical director and conductor of the Clarkson Music Theatre for the past 10 years. Jenny is also the founder of the New Horizons Concert Band as well as the band's instructor and conductor. Most of the band's 26 members, some in their 80s, have never played before. and some who have, now want to learn how to play a new instrument. Jenny stated in the Spectator article that she created the band in 2012 because she gets enjoyment out of seeing other people accomplish something that they thought that they couldn't do and she gets to share her passion for music with them. She also mentioned the fact that everyone is different - some catch on quickly, some take a long time, but everybody who has tried it has been successful. Jenny, I know that the reason that they are all eventually successful is due to you. Congratulations on such a great endeavour!

Now for the sad part of my report. I received two obituaries in the last two months to add to that section of our scrapbook. Born July 22, 1913, **Annis (nee McMane) Munro** passed away peacefully January 10, 2015 after a long and full life. Annis graduated from U of T in the class of '37, and taught high school in her hometown of Milverton and then in Waterford where she met her late husband, Science teacher **John Munro**. Annis was the original "life-long" learner.

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At 62, she retrained and taught at the School for the Deaf in Milton for several years. In her eighties she took courses in computers and became quite competent. At this time she also wrote a wonderful memoir of her early years in 1920s Milverton. Meanwhile, she remained an active member of the Canadian Federation of University Women, the Arts and Letters Club of Burlington and the UCW at Wellington Square Church. Annis also played a good game of bridge and enjoyed extensive travel with her husband and also her friends. Those who knew her recognized her great generosity both toward her family and in her community. Annis will be remembered as an example of a well-lived life that was a bright light to all who came in contact with her.

In December under the Passages page, the Hamilton Spectator featured an article on member **Joyce Mattick** who passed away peacefully at the Carpenter Hospice in Burlington on Nov. 4, 2014 at the age of 66. The article was titled "*Losing a Leg Couldn't Stop Joyce from Dancing.*" Since it was too long to include all the information here, I will just give you a summary of its contents. Joyce began a very successful teaching career in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and after eight years she returned to Burlington and taught for the Halton Public School Board. Joyce's teaching goals were to support, guide and ensure that her students were happy and successful learners. She was a tireless director of Brant Hills' school theatre productions and musicals. Many of her students gained confidence through singing, dancing and acting. Joyce loved the theatre and performed in it locally. At the age of 54 she was diagnosed with a rare bone cancer and had to have her leg amputated above the knee. She didn't let that stop her and she went on to learn to tap dance so well with an artificial leg that audiences could not pick out the one-legged dancer in the Players' Guild of Hamilton tap group. As a way of giving back to those who helped her, Joyce began volunteer work at the Hamilton Health Sciences Prosthetics and Orthotics Department at Chedoke. She designed, initiated and carried out a highly effective program at the Regional Rehabilitation Centre that showed amputee patients that with some modifications they could continue to lead active and productive lives just as she had. Her dedication to her volunteer work resulted in Joyce's being awarded the Hamilton Health Sciences Cornerstone Award. During all her volunteer work she continued to be involved in theatre, her first love. Her last performance was in Burlington's Drury Lane Theatre production of **Anne of Green Gables**, her favourite musical which also happened to be the first show in which she performed. I saw the show and I can honestly say that as I watched her spirited performance, I didn't realize at the time

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(Archives.. continued from Page 30)

that she had an artificial leg. In closing I will quote from the Spectator which sums up this remarkable lady's life which was cut too short, "Teacher, actress, singer, dancer, volunteer and friend tackled every challenge life threw at her." She will continue to be an inspiration to everyone who knew her and also a role model for me. When I get up in the mornings full of aches and pains before I go to my dance classes I think of Joyce and that she would tell me to get going because the show must go on!

That's all for now and PLEASE keep those articles and photos coming to 1446 Brenner Crt., Burlington On. L7P 2Z2 or contact me at judym Sloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538. You can also contact me on my cell phone or text me at 905-467-2363.

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## Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Hilary Barber



Spring is on the way and hopefully the warmer weather with it. It is a time of hope and renewal for many, and for making plans for time at summer cottages, barbecues, and other outdoor activities.

On April 15th we will be hosting our annual "**Wine and Cheese Social**," where we provide Halton School Board employees considering retirement, an opportunity to find out about all the benefits of belonging to RTO/ERO and specific events and opportunities provided by District 15. Flyers advertising this event went to both boards and several private schools at the end of February. If you know of anyone thinking about retirement who is not attending, please invite them and consider attending with them. The contact person for this event is **Claudia Stewart** 905-331-5614

Please contact RTO/ERO in Toronto at 1-800-361-9888 and ask for membership if you have had any changes to your address, phone number or e-mail address. I recommend that you check the District 15 website at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org) and the provincial site at [www.rto-ero.org](http://www.rto-ero.org) on a regular basis. On both these sites you will find lots of current information, past copies of newsletters and links to other sites of interest.

It has been a pleasure serving as the chair of the Membership Committee for the last few years. I am standing down as chair as of the end of May 2015, but know I am leaving the committee in the very capable hands of **Claudia Stewart**.

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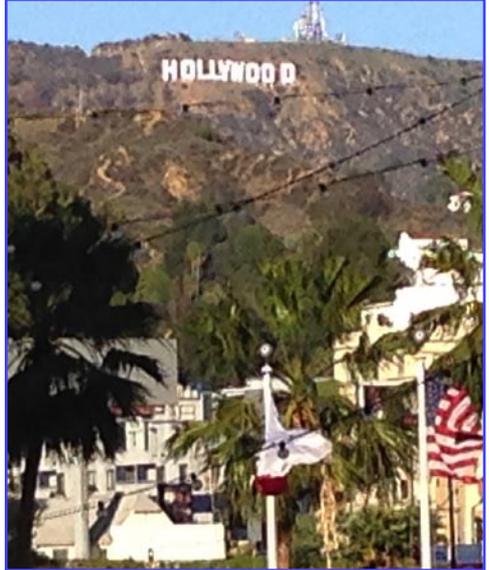
# Tours Committee

By Jan Murdoch



**Rose Bowl:** A small group of members and spouses ventured to Los Angeles to welcome in the New Year. 2015 started early with breakfast at 4:30 a.m. Then it was off to the bleachers to view the Rose Bowl parade in Pasadena. Preparation for the Rose Bowl parade starts in February each year with the

selection of the theme around which floats are designed. All surfaces on the float must be covered with plant products so along with the flowers we saw orange peel and grasses. In between most floats were huge College and High school bands playing great tunes accompanied by baton twirlers, flag bearers and dancers. It was quite entertaining.



In the afternoon we attended the first ever College Football Playoffs, the Florida Seminoles versus the



Oregon Ducks. Although my team, the Seminoles, fell apart in the second half of the games, it was fun to cheer them on with the tomahawk chant. Back at the hotel we got to watch the alternative Playoff game where Ohio beat Alabama. Many of my questions about the game were answered

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(Tours.. continued from Page 32)

by our resident expert **Tom Johnson** (in the photo on the left; my husband Ernest is on the right) who once played College Football for Kent State University.



### Travel Survey

Those who received the February e-letter were able to complete a short survey on travel. From this survey we found that quite a few members prefer to travel with their spouses and to go at the last minute because of health concerns. If health is a concern, it is not the 90 days ahead of travel that should be a problem but rather the year before you go on any trip. A better understanding of how travel insurance works and how a claim can be denied would be of benefit. If, in the year before travel a health issue arises, even a change in a prescription dose, it is not only your family doctor you should be talking to for permission to travel, but also your Insurance Company. Make the call to a Johnson agent if you are with the RTO plan; it only takes a minute to be sure.

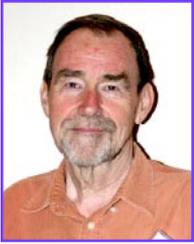
The survey also revealed that there is still an interest in visiting American cities, New York and Seattle being the preference and European countries including the Greek Islands. A new trend is spouses traveling alone either because one member of the couple is not interested in travel or he/she is physically unable to travel. The individual either finds a friend who likes to travel or they contact me and I try to find them someone to share the costs and avoid the single supplement. It is often a better and safer travel experience going on a trip with other people.

**Greece:** The good news is that although the Canadian dollar is down in value so is the Euro. Visiting Europe makes sense and the best time for Europe is early spring or fall. One of the advantages of being retired is that you can travel in low season when fares and accommodation are more affordable. With this in mind, a trip to Greece has been planned for Oct. 24 - Nov. 3, 2015. The trip is well priced at 950 Euros and includes most meals, tours, accommodation both in Athens and on the Island of Amorgos, plus transfers and ferry rides. You get a great trip for about 95 Euros a day, which at the time of writing was about \$136 CAD. The size of this group is limited to 18 people including myself so it is important to get your deposit of \$150 Euros in as quickly as possible.

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## Health Services Committee Report

By George MacRae



Here are a few more items pertaining to our Health Insurance Plans.

***Coverage for a Spouse and Dependent Children after a Member's Death:*** Coverage can be continued for your spouse and dependent children after your death provided they are already enrolled at that time in the RTO/ERO Group Insurance Benefits and premiums continue to be paid. Details may be found in the RTO/ERO Insurance Plan Booklet.

***Ambulance Service:*** In Ontario, ambulance services are generally an eligible expense for medically necessary transportation. Eligible ambulance services, when medically necessary for emergency treatment, in excess of the amount paid by the provincial plan, are reimbursed under the RTO/ERO Extended Health Care Plan at 80%.

***New Electronic Claims Submission Possibilities:*** Chiropractors, physiotherapists, vision care specialists as well as some massage therapists, acupuncturists, and naturopaths now have the ability to submit your claims to Johnson online for instant processing before you even leave their office. Ask your health provider about eClaims.

***Long Distance Calls from Outside Canada:*** Long distance telephone calls home from outside Canada can be costly and inconvenient. Last year while travelling in China, my credit card was refused by a bank machine in Beijing. I needed to contact my bank to set the matter straight. After my initial panic, I remembered that I had a Skype account at home, which allowed me to make calls to other computers that had Skype installed. However for an annual fee of about \$30 it allowed me to call regular telephones - all I needed was Internet access. So from my android device connected to the hotel internet, I was able to call my bank in Toronto - excellent reception and no cost. To tie this to a health report, this would have come in handy had I needed to contact Allianz. Fortunately, no such need arose.

This will be the last Health Report that I will be submitting to the Halton Herald as I will be 'retiring' as your District Health Representative as of the upcoming Annual General Meeting. It has been a real pleasure serving the district in this capacity for the past 3 years.

# Program Committee

By Moira Plexman



The biting February cold was not enough to stop over 90 members from attending our recent *Murder Mystery at the Atrium*. The setting for the mystery was an auction for a European Chateau and winery.

The owner of the chateau was suddenly poisoned and the hunt for the culprit was on. A number of the audience including **Dave Wright, Pat De Mille, Art McGlynn** and **Carolyn Hilton** were recruited to join the actors to play out the events and we thank them for being such great sports.



Once all of the clues had been revealed, teams were invited to identify the murderer and the motive. The winning team of **Penny Hambly, Jeannie Woodcroft, Darcea Hiltz** and **Margaret Livingstone** identified **Carolyn Hilton** as the murderer. As the illegitimate daughter of the late baron, she stood to lose her allowance if the Chateau were sold, so she poisoned her half brother to stop the sale. In a strange turn of events, once her situation was revealed, the murderer attempted to shoot Detective Dents to avoid being taken into custody but the detective proved to be quicker at the draw. It was quite the grand finale! The story line was cleverly and humorously crafted. A highly



(Program. continues on Page 36)

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(Program. continued from Page 35)

entertaining time was had by all. Congratulations to our draw winners and the winners of the “detective” themed centre pieces which were put together by **Pen-ny Hambly**.

Mark your calendars for **May 4!** Your Program Committee has organized musical entertainment following lunch after the Spring AGM. We invite you to come out to hear the wonderful music of **Michael Keys and Company**. This trio featuring Michael Keys on keyboard along with a saxophonist and percussionist will entertain us with a variety of musical styles. Michael, a singer and keyboardist has over 4 decades of experience playing in a variety of venues from clubs to cruise ships. Please refer to the middle pages program insert to register for our May 4 event.

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## Webmaster Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Have you been browsing lately? If not, why not check out District 15's website at <http://district15.rto-ero.org>. The site contains timely information for members. On the HOME page, you will find the latest 'news' postings as well as useful links. Bereavement notices (please send me an email if you have a bereavement notice to post), deadlines for scholarships, volunteer opportunities, upcoming events and our calendar are some of the topics. You will find cancellation notices on this

HOME page as well.

Along the top of the page you will find more menu tabs with details of the activities of your District 15 RTO unit. Do you have a business/service that you would like advertised under MEMBER TO MEMBERS? Maybe you are looking to re-connect with a colleague – read the 'Members with Messages' section.

Are you travelling and want to read the latest or previous editions of the Halton Herald? We post the Halton Herald on the website.

We hope that we can be of service to our members but we need your help in becoming a viewer of [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org). Please send me an email ([jeanniewoodcroft@gmail.com](mailto:jeanniewoodcroft@gmail.com)) and tell me what you think about the website or, better still, send me some timely information to post!

## Awards Committee

By Carolyn Hilton



District 15 plans once again to recognize those 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 a **Distinguished Service Award**. These awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting on May 4, 2015.

We are seeking nominations for these awards. The nomination form is available on our District website [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org). It outlines the criteria and process for nominations. Please fill in the form and email it to [chilton@cogeco.ca](mailto:chilton@cogeco.ca). The deadline for nominations is **April 17, 2015**.

If you don't have access to the website, or are unable to download the form, the following is the nomination process:

- 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

### Strange But True Health Tip: To eat less, eat more

Grabbing a 100-calorie snack pack of cookies or pretzels may seem virtuous, but it's more likely to make you hungrier than if you ate something more substantial, says Amy Goodson, RD, dietitian for Texas Health Ben Hogan Sports Medicine. "Eating small amounts of carbohydrates does nothing but spike your blood sugar and leave you wanting more carbs."

Goodson recommends choosing a protein such as peanut butter or string cheese with an apple. "They are higher in calories per serving, but the protein and fat helps you get full faster and stay full longer—and you end up eating fewer calories overall," she says.

(From [www.health.com](http://www.health.com))

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## To Me...It's Special

In the January edition of the Halton Herald we invited you to complete the sentence, "To me it's special because..." by sharing a photo and/or describing the details. We received three submissions - these follow. All have pictures which accompany the articles. Some can be found with

the articles while others are on the colour pages as noted.

Thank you to the three members who took the time to write the articles and to submit the photos. They will each receive a \$10 Tim Hortons gift certificate for responding to this invitation to become involved with the Halton Herald.

### *1. To Me...It's Special - by Peggy Morrison*

I have been in love with horses ever since I started riding at the age of 8 in my hometown of Ottawa. Throughout the years, these beautiful animals have remained a large part of my life and it is only recently (2010) that we left our farm in Halton Hills to move to the town of Oakville. For over 25 years, my husband Scott and I enjoyed having our two horses, Katy and Olivia, at Pinecreek Farm.

My 'redirection' years from my life as an educator have been filled with interesting challenges: project work, consulting contracts, serving on not-for-profit boards, travelling, participating in humanitarian missions to Pune, India and Lome, Togo along with improving my fluency in the French language. Of course, I have continued to seek out riding opportunities whenever I am able.

For the past 20 years, there has been a group of 9 riders from all over the world which meets regularly to experience different cultures and different places from the back of a horse. We have explored France, Italy, Germany, Ireland and British Columbia, to name just a few. Since I was turning 65 in December, 2014, it was important that this particular riding holiday be a special event as reaching this milestone was certainly a cause for celebration.

There was one day in particular that I will remember for the rest of my life. The photo (*on the cover page*) shows the beautiful Andalucian/Arab mare, **Camboria**, and me galloping along the beaches of the Mediterranean Sea at Cape Trafalgar. It was *a moment of unadulterated joy* and the grin on my face tells it all. I call the photograph: THIS is what turning 65 looks like! The day was perfect from the time that we rode through the National Forest to the gallops along the beaches.

(To Me...It's Special... continues on Page 40)

(To Me... It's Special...continued from Page 39)

I felt like the luckiest person in the world to have not only good health but the will and determination to continue finding adventures like this one.

My love of horses is a constant theme in my life and I look forward to many more world adventures in the years ahead but this particular riding trip to Spain to celebrate my 65th will hold a special place in my heart forever.

### ***2. To Me...It's Special - by Linda Kittmer***

After suffering a concussion and the subsequent after affects, I was unable to return to my job as a special education teacher, but I felt I still had a lot to give. I began fostering future dog guide puppies for the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides and discovered the most incredible volunteer work imaginable!

I raise these remarkable puppies from about 7 weeks of age, until they are 10-12 months old, doing their basic training and socializing them, while exposing them to as many experiences as possible. Once they are close to a year old, they are ready to enter what I affectionately call Puppy University. It is there that they begin formal training in one of six programs: Canine Vision; Hearing Ear; Autism Assistance; Seizure Response; Diabetic Alert; or Service, for clients with physical disabilities.

Although it cost about \$25,000 to raise and train one of these dogs, these amazing Dog Guides are provided to the clients free of charge. All money comes from private donations and corporate sponsors, so by volunteering to be a 'foster mom', I can do my bit to help this worthy cause.

The most remarkable thing about this new passion is that in addition to being able to give back and help others, I have discovered that raising these puppies helps me deal with my 'new self' too! Pictured (*on the back cover page*) is my current foster puppy **Yoshi** on her first mall outing at just 7 weeks of age, back in June 2014. I will get a new puppy in mid-February and Yoshi will be heading off to Puppy U in March or April of this year.

### ***3. To Me...It's Special - by Marlene Horne***

Marlene recently travelled to Central Europe. She submitted the following commentaries with accompanying photos of three aspects that were very special to her on the trip.

(To Me...It's Special...continues on Page 41)

(To Me...It's Special...continued from Page 40)

• **Edelweiss** – While travelling on the country roads of Central Europe recently I was hoping to find some edelweiss, the national symbol of Austria and Switzerland. Since this scarce, short-lived flower is now found only in remote areas of the Alps, my chances of seeing it in the wild were nearly impossible. This picture is special to me because at last I found some edelweiss being sold at a flower shop in Cortina d'Ampezzo. They were culturing the plant to be sold to the locals for their gardens. Each bloom consists of 5 or 6 small yellow clustered florets surrounded by fuzzy white petals in a double star formation. Truly this flower is a symbol of alpinism given its rugged beauty and purity of colour.



• **Slovenia** – For centuries pilgrims have travelled across the pristine glacial waters of Lake Bled in the Julian Alps to the only island in the country of Slovenia. The attraction on the island is the Baroque church started in 1420 on the site where the Slavs have worshipped since ancient times. I am getting ready to be rowed across the lake in a flat bottom boat known as a pletna along with Bob Brown, retired Chartered Accountant and National Business Management Manager at Ford. This picture is special because from the centre of the lake one can view the sweeping mountain panorama, a cliff-hanging castle and the surrounding medieval towns that were spared destruction during World War II because of Marshall Tito's political manoeuvres.



• **Bavaria** – After hiking to the Manngrat Ridge near the top of the Germany's Kehstein Mountain, I looked down below and could see the small chalet known as the "Eagle's Nest" where Adolph Hitler entertained. Consider the contrast of the silence surrounding the stunning beauty of these snow-capped Alps with the 1945 explosions of Nazi complexes in the valley below when the allied forces attacked. To me, this picture (*on the back colour page*) is special because I saw people from all over the world come up and enjoy this magnificent vista of the Bavarian Alps, in peace.

(More To Me...It's Special...pictures on the back cover page)

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(We Get Letters.. continued from Page 8)

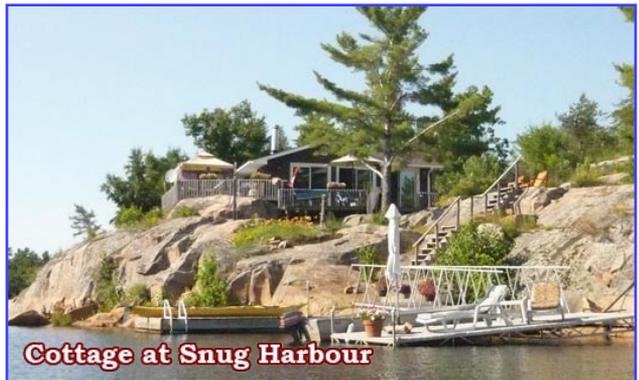
**Damian & Nanci Cooper** sent an email “...to express my sincere appreciation for your thoughtful message this season. It resonated for me as I decide which charity to support this year.”



He said, “I’ve been blessed since I retired from Halton in that my education consulting business has taken off, literally worldwide. Hence, I’ve been in the position to support a variety of charities since launching the company in 2005. For the past 2

years I’ve donated to The Compass, our local Port Credit organization that supports the needy in the area. This year, with such serious health issues in West Africa, I went with Medecine Sans Frontiers. So your message was most timely.”

He and Nanci left for a month in Brazil at the end of December. He said, “I have a week’s work in Brasilia and we’ll spend the remainder of the time being tourists. I have an old musician friend who I haven’t seen for over 30 years who now lives in Brazil so we’ll also visit Jeff & his family. This year’s work has taken me across Canada many times, including working with The First Nations Schools Association in BC. I’ve also been to Cairo and Malaysia. This is what retirement looks like!”



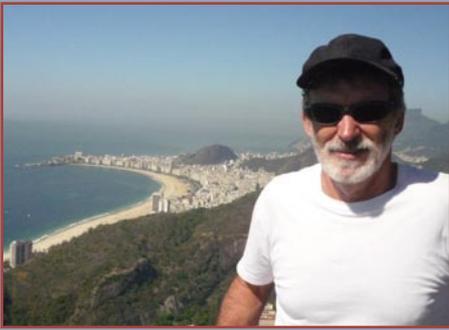
He continued, “Nanci enjoys a slightly less hectic lifestyle as a member of two book clubs. She’s

also taken up rug hooking and goes to the gym or runs almost every day. With the three children from our previous relationships now 32, 28 & 27 respectively, we are more or less empty nesters.”

(More Damian & Nanci pictures on the next page)

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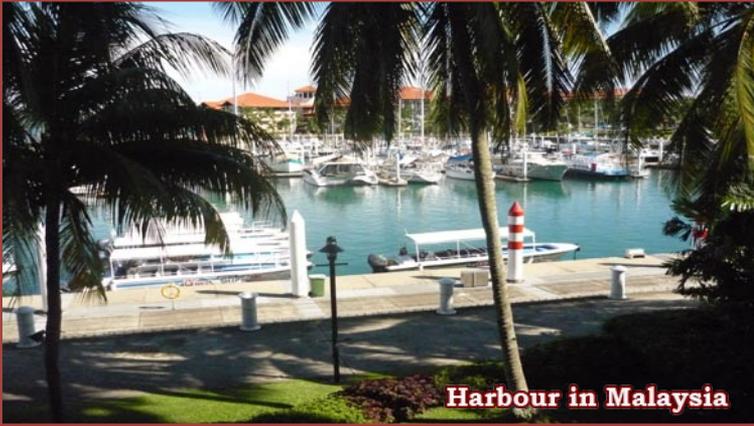
# Keeping in Touch...



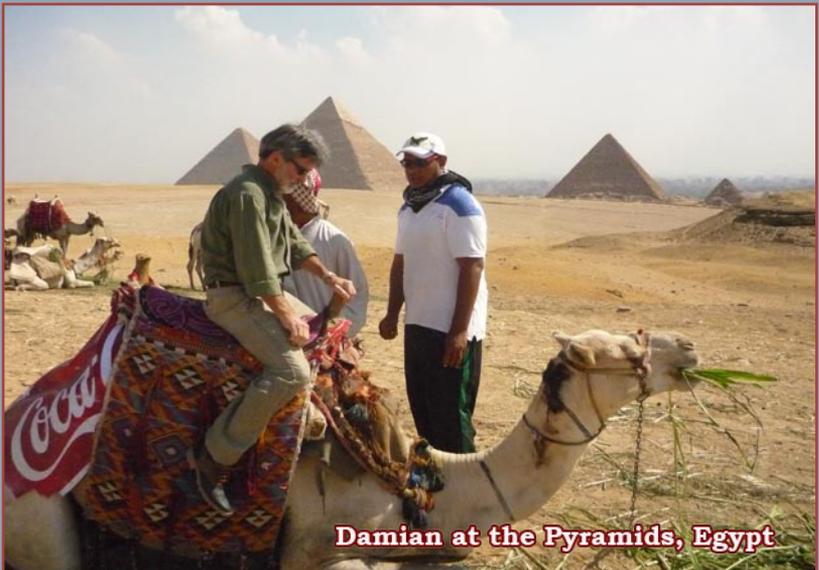
**Damian at  
Sugarloaf Mountain, Rio de Janeiro**



**Nanci on Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro**



**Harbour in Malaysia**



**Damian at the Pyramids, Egypt**

# Special to Me...

**"Yoshi - my current foster puppy!"**  
by Linda Kittmer...page 40



**"Unadulterated joy!"**  
by Peggy Morrison...page 39  
Riding the Beach, Cape Trafalgar



**"Our trip to Central Europe"**  
by Marlene Horne...page 39  
In the Mountains of Bavaria



# Special to All of Us...



**Halton Grandmothers**  
**"Learning and Growing in Zimbabwe"**  
by Carol Brayman and Linda Rafuse...page 12

