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E O

District 15

# HALTON HERALD

April, 2017

***Connecting With a Dream!***

*Machu Picchu From The Sun Gate*

# Connecting With Others Through...

## Sharing Personal Experiences



*Rick Cullis Family...page 5*

## Volunteering



*Freeman Station...page 20*

## Donating to Those Less Fortunate ...page 24



## Meeting Former Colleagues



*Breakfast at Moe's*

## Travelling



*Peru...page 32*



*Winter Meeting...page 27*



## President's Report

By **Moira Plexman**



As I write this report, the days are starting to become longer now that we have passed the midpoint of winter. By the time you receive the April edition of the Halton Herald spring will be well underway. The arrival of spring sets a number of events in motion in our district.

My term as president will be completed at the end of May. As this is my last report, I wish to thank the members of the board for their enthusiasm, commitment and support of our organization. Thank you to our newest board members. Past President and Awards Chair, **Carolyn Hilton** is retiring from the board. In recent years she chaired various committees to further the work of RTO/ERO District 15. Her service, sage advice and friendship are much appreciated. I am indebted to 1st Vice President **Claudia Stewart** and 2nd Vice President, **Micki Clemens** for their good humour and unfailing support. Special thanks also to my former English teacher, **Chub Baxter**, who is leaving the board after many years of service. He stepped back from the treasurer role in June 2016 but remained as assistant to ensure a smooth transition.

Our winter meeting on February 28, which featured entertainment by **Jenny Peace's New Horizons Adult Concert Band**, had an appreciative audience. It was great to see some of our members in the band. Playing with Jenny's band might be a wonderful retirement activity.

Have you visited our "new" recently launched RTO/ERO District 15 website? Web Master, **Jeannie Woodcroft**, has devoted hours to the design and creation of our new website. We hope members will take time to check out the regularly updated content. School reunion information has been added for those who may wish to re-connect at schools where they once taught. Did you know that if you misplace your Halton Herald you can always check out the on-line version?

Governance has been an over-riding theme at RTO/ERO this year. The January edition of Renaissance included a special insert outlining RTO/ERO Strategic Plan 2020. Provincial President Martha Foster visited with the board to dialogue about the Strategic Plan and Governance. It was the focus of the March Presidents' Workshop and it will be on the agenda for the May Senate.

This year RTO/ERO District 15 is responsible for organizing Pre-Senate in Guelph. Senate will follow on May 15-17. Your Senators are President **Moira Plexman** and

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Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

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1st Vice President **Claudia Stewart**. Our 2nd Vice President **Micki Clemens** and Webmaster **Jeannie Woodward** will attend as Observers.

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Please refer to the Nominations Committee Report by **Carolyn Hilton** for an outline of the slate of officers for 2017-18. Here you will find opportunities to become involved with our board. If you are interested in a position on the board, please contact Carolyn Hilton at [chilton@cogeco.ca](mailto:chilton@cogeco.ca) or myself at [plexmanm@gmail.com](mailto:plexmanm@gmail.com).

The *Annual Meeting* takes place on Monday, May 8, at the Burlington Convention Centre. All members of RTO/ERO District 15 are invited to attend the 10:00 am business meeting at no cost. At the business meeting committee chairs will present reports and the executive will be elected. The business meeting will be followed by a luncheon and entertainment that requires pre-registration and payment. Entertainment is by the *Golden Horseshoe Chorus*. Please refer to **Penny Hambly's** Program Report for details.

It has been an honour to serve RTO/ERO District 15 as your president. I plan to remain on the board as past president and foundation representative. I look forward to continue working on behalf of the retired education workers in our district.

**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.**

*Editor's Note:* My Apologies to **Nancy Sorensen** whose last name was misspelled in the last issue of the Herald!

## We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



As you can see below, the response from members writing about themselves and their activities has been great over the past three months. And, to receive photos makes the messages really come alive. Thanks to all those who made a submission for this issue.

How about you? Your friends and former colleagues are waiting to hear what you are up to and how you are doing. Send me an e-mail at [pgnish@gmail.com](mailto:pgnish@gmail.com), telephone me (905-547-1628) or send me a letter (153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4).

**Gerry and Marcia Blosser** sent photos and wrote about their most recent escape: “Biking through the Muggins Mountain wilderness, east of Yuma. We do a lot of hiking and biking.”



**Marcia and Gerry at Martinez Lake on the Colorado River North of Yuma**



**Rick Cullis** wrote “...your page is the *go to* page in the Herald. I was very pleased, for example, to see the report from **Lynne Gapes**. I knew Lynne and Bob from the time I started teaching, while they were both at Tecumseh, and worked with Bob at E.C.Drury so it was nice to see Lynne’s update.

After 26 years in our house in Burlington Cathy and I decided to “downsize” to what turned out to be a condo that was bigger than the house. I don’t know. We thought it was strange too. After 5 years there, working on the condo board, no longer having a workshop and not enough studio space for the two of us, we decided the condo was not for us. Driving southwestern Ontario on weekends for coffee in places like St. George, St. Mary’s and Paris, kept ending us up in Niagara-on-the-Lake where we happened on a bungalow that really grabbed us.

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

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

The upgrades were already done, the gardens already set enough that even I'd have a hard time killing them off, so here we are and loving it. The kids were a little ticked at first that we left but now they like coming down for things like the candlelight stroll, the parks, and of course, the wine. We have no four lane roads and one stop light. For sure there is traffic but we either walk, bike or drive the "secret" ways to get in and out of town. We run out of minutes every day which is perfect. Just need another lifetime or two to do everything. A real treat was the time we had our grand daughter from Calgary get dressed in her finest to be picked up at the front door by a Caleche and delivered to the theatre where our neighbour, one of the actors, gave her the Royal tour backstage after watching *Peter and the Starcatcher*.

It's hard to believe it's now 16 years since I retired but thanks to the Herald I am able to keep up to date. As well, I am fortunate enough to be able to attend the annual E.C. Drury retirees breakfast organized by **Larry Jaroslowski**. It's really great to see people at this event every year, to remember some of the kids, marvel at the growth in Milton and be kind enough to not notice just how much older we're all getting. So, that's me pretty well up to date.



(The picture ) is of Cathy and I at the candlelight stroll in December.

We cancelled our Florida trip this year. We've been on Anna Maria island for the month of March for maybe a dozen years. Now the prices have jacked up enough and, with the state of the dollar, we realized we were looking at about a 40% increase to go to where we have already touched every rock on the island. That being said, we already miss it. So we'll do something else like go to Iceland, which is also expensive, but at least it would be all new rocks to touch.

I think we'll boycott the inauguration and watch coverage of the rally the next day. Interesting times are coming. I just hope they're not dangerously interesting times."

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

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

**Paul Dennis** emailed me with a Christmas/New Year wish. He said, “You escaped the wild wintry north just in time. Winter has arrived with a vengeance in Kin-cardine. Now we hunker down until April! Lol.”

**Dennis Drummond** emailed with some very serious advice. He said, “Joan & I went to our family doctor to thank him & wish him well in his retirement. While there he decided to listen to my heart. We were surprised to learn that I had a murmur. I had absolutely no symptoms of a heart problem. An echocardiogram later indicated a severe stenosis of the aortic valve & required a double bypass. I am aware that at least 3 Nelson people died of heart attacks in the last 2 years. So the purpose of this email is to alert people to have their heart checked regularly - perhaps every time the doctor checks for Blood Pressure.

On Sept. 7 I had open heart surgery at Hamilton General. I am presently at Mac-Cardia rehab & skating once a week at Appleby arena - very lucky. Joan says I can stop buying lottery tickets as we have already won the lottery. Thanks Peter for all you do to support & share communication with the Nelson gang.”

**Penny Hambly** sent an email in January to say that she, Tara and the grand kids just got back from a cruise out of Miami to Honduras, Belize and Cozumel on Norwegian Getaway where the boys climbed to the top of the ropes. She also said “Hunter was thrilled to see his picture with the dog” in the Alaska article that she submitted for the January edition of the Herald.

**Joyce Frank** hit the front page of the Island Sun on Sanibel Island in February. Her husband, Lloyd, sent a photo of the top of the page. Joyce, a graduate of



the Ontario College of Art, retired from E.C. Drury High School where she taught Art and Photography. She is an accomplished artist who lives in Milton and shows her work across the province. She and Lloyd own a home on Sanibel and spend a

good portion of the winter there.

(We Get Letters...continues on Page 8)

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

(Recruitment..continued from Page 7)

**Ann Marie Nickerson** emailed me to say, “Although it is a whole week beyond “old” Christmas, I am just now managing to respond to your lovely letter. Your Christmas letter was very thoughtful and touching. It resonated with me in many ways and, also, due to the fact, that I no longer live in Halton. I live in Niagara. I feel a little disconnected from District 15, although I lived in Halton for 31 years. Your letter reminded me that I am still a part of the RTO District 15 community.

I enjoy your article in every edition of the Halton Herald and I read the Herald from cover to cover. Although I spent a small amount of my teaching career in Halton (I also taught in Dufferin-Peel, Niagara, Community College and Nova Scotia). I still recognize persons mentioned in the Herald who I crossed paths with at Perdue, Oakville Trafalgar, Georgetown or Lord Elgin.

You and Cate and the others on the editorial team deserve much thanks and appreciation for all the hard work you do to produce the Halton Herald, which is something I look forward to receiving on a regular basis. Some of us have remained more in the background due to ill, failing parents and our own battles with cancer (My husband and I each had a turn). These events can absorb a lot of time, not freeing time for wonderful volunteer work like you do. In closing, please understand that we low-key silent members do wish to thank you and appreciate all that you do to keep District 15 alive and interesting.”

**Robert Schellenberg** sent this message - “Just got your Season’s Greetings letter. Thank you, it is a good letter. All the best to you from an old colleague. All the best to you and your family. schelly”

**Nancy Sorensen** emailed to say, “Chatted with a fellow retiree last week and he congratulated me on my Halton Herald article. He receives it electronically. I am off to South Africa end of January, another adventure, including 2 safaris, Victoria Falls and a visit to a school in Zimbabwe. If you are in need of more articles, I may have more ammunition for you when this experience is over.”

**Ron Ziegel** sent this message from the hospital: “I really appreciate the number of people who have expressed their concern and sent their good wishes to me and my family since my stroke in mid December. I hope to get back some day and personally thank them. In the meantime I am going full tilt at the Oakville Hospital trying to get better. I have asked friends not to drop in and visit me as I have a very busy schedule in rehab and need to rest in the free time I have. When I am able to receive visitors I will happily let you know. Thank you for your good wishes and prayers.”

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## Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



In each issue of the Herald we ask for suggestions that we can list in our events calendar. **Mark Richardson** emailed me to say that he and his wife Jan are members of the *Windjammers Pops Wind Ensemble*. They are doing a benefit concert for the Mission Aviation Fellowship at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum on May 28th. *Windjammers* can be found at [www.windjammers.ca](http://www.windjammers.ca). The 35 members of the ensemble, which includes a number of retired and active teachers, are from the Kitchener, Guelph and Cambridge areas.

The Mission Aviation Fellowship is a Christian humanitarian relief and development organization that uses light aircraft to provide hope and provisions to some of the poorest people in over thirty countries.

I emailed **Darcea Hiltz** to see if the *Halton JAZZ Singers* had a show we could add to our calendar. Darcea told me that they had 38 bookings last year including singing the national anthem at the July 1st celebration in Burlington. Darcea said the gigs are good for the bank account but all the managing takes some of the joy out of her retirement. However, she is excited about their next engagement. The *Mississauga Big Band* is hosting a night of jazz singers on April 8th. The only vocal jazz group is the *Halton JAZZ Singers*. Details are in the calendar of events. More information can be found at [haltonjazzsingers.com](http://haltonjazzsingers.com).

The date for the Aldershot Players spring dinner theatre is April 28 and the play is *The Cemetery Club*.

We had a successful lunch cruise on the Niagara River last September so will try the Grand River this June. There are refreshments and entertainment at the Landing at 11:00 am and the three-course lunch runs from 12:15 to 3:15 pm.

**Margaret Daniels, Penny Hambly, Kate Lowe, Judy Sloan, Joan Wilson and Butch Rogers** are RTO/ERO District 15 members in the *Burlington Footnotes* cast of *Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance* on June 20th and 21st. They appreciate your support.

If you would like to come with us to the Shaw Festival to see *Me and My Gal*, **Janet Carter-Wright** has to have your cheque by Aug 23rd. You can contact Janet at 905-336-5328 or [jcwright@cogeco.ca](mailto:jcwright@cogeco.ca) and I am at 905-639-5093 or [davidwright16@me.com](mailto:davidwright16@me.com)

# The Hell With The Bell Breakfast

Photos By Marilyn MacLennan

This event is held yearly in September to give newly re-tired teachers the opportunity to meet with members of District 15 and hear the benefits of joining RTO/ERO. If you recognize any of the new people please encourage them to join us.





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

Our membership is now well over 2600. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members since Dec., 2016. Please welcome them and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Catherine Bury  
Don Crocker  
Frank Easson  
Gale Hitchcox  
Awadhinarine Jaggernath  
Theresa MacDonald  
Philip Papadopoulos  
Calogero Sferlazza  
Marlene Waldhauser

Kevin Caughlin  
Leslie D'Amico  
Amy Evans  
Irene Ireland  
Jane Longmate  
Jacqueline Morrison  
Shirley Picard  
Linda Smith  
John Woodley

Mary Louisa Conant  
Patricia Doyle  
Karen Hartling  
Hipple Jackson  
David MacDonald  
Janet Munday  
Susan Pritchard  
Brian Sylvester  
Rhonda Young

## Health Services Committee Report

By Colton Roberts



Those of you who are members of the Group Health Plan of RTO/ERO should have received your Insurance Plan Booklet covering 2017-2019 with the most recent Renaissance Magazine. Please read it and store it in an accessible spot where you can peruse it when you need to do so. This package is distributed every three years so please put it in a safe place.

You will have noticed that the plan is now underwritten by Sun Life and Cumis General Insurance Company. Our plan is still administered for us by Johnson Inc. You should see no change in how your claims are handled save for improvements in a few areas. More recent services which have been added for those with the Extended Health Care Plan in the last couple of years are highlighted on pages 24 through 27 including the latest addition of Venngo Member Perks which offers discounts in several areas.

If you have joined the plan more recently you may not have received this booklet. If it does not arrive in the next while you are encouraged to contact the provincial office of RTO/ERO or Johnson Inc. to obtain your copy.

For those who have questions about the plan or would just like to know more about the Plan, there is a workshop being presented at the Waterfront Banquet and Conference Centre in Hamilton. I am working with Hamilton District RTO/ERO to jointly sponsor this workshop on Tuesday, May 30, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Lori Macdonald-Blundon, Pension and Benefits Officer-Provincial RTO/ERO Office, will speak about the new underwriter, Sun Life. For travelers the health seminar will be most helpful, particularly for understanding the “stability clause.” She will also talk about Best Doctors, Elder Care, Venngo Member Perks, and “Complex Claims.” She will answer all questions patiently.

The fee will be \$10 for members with the districts subsidizing the remainder. A light buffet lunch is included. Please contact me if you are interested in attending the workshop. More details can be found on the next page and will be included in a future e-letter and on the RTO/ERO website.



## **Health Seminar For RTO/ERO Health Plan Members**

**Date:** Tuesday May 30, 2017, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

**Cost:** \$10 per member. RTO/ERO District 15 is subsidizing half the cost.  
A light buffet lunch included.

**Location:** The Waterfront Banquet and Conference Centre, 555 Bay St. N.,  
Hamilton L8L 1H1

**Speaker:** **Lori Macdonald-Blundon**, Pension and Benefits Officer - Provincial  
RTO/ERO Office

New for 2017, **Sun Life** (our new underwriter) and **Venngo Member Perks** will be presented. For all travelers the RTO/ERO Seminar is particularly useful. Understanding the 'stability clause' is particularly useful when booking flights or when cancelling your trip. Lori will also talk about the programs "Best Doctors," "Elder Care" and "Complex Claims".

### **Contact: Colton Roberts – District Health Representative**

(Please use e-mail if possible)

coltonroberts328@gmail.com

905-335-0027

Please provide the following information

- Your first and last name, e-mail address and telephone number
- The number of people attending.
- Dietary restrictions, if any
- The last 4 digits of your RTO/ERO plan card number

This workshop is being sponsored jointly by Halton District 15 and Hamilton District 13. There are a limited number of seats available so you are advised to register promptly to ensure a place at the seminar.

**Registration Deadline is May 15th.**

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

## Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



Since our last edition of the Halton Herald I have received three items for the District 15 RTO/ERO scrapbook. All were photos with clippings from the Burlington Post newspaper featuring members who have volunteered their time in various ways in the service of others and who deserve our recognition. I have not received any obituaries since my last report. That could be a good thing but unfortunately there may be members who have passed and no one has sent me their obituaries. If you want them to be recognized in my column please do so in the future.

The November 25, 2016 edition of the Burlington Post contained a photo showing RTO/ERO Executive Director Jim Grieve presenting District 15 members **Linda Middaugh** and **Liz Watson**, both members of the Halton chapter of Canadians in Support of Afghan Women, with a cheque for \$3000. The cheque was a *Service to Others* grant given to these ladies for their project that will provide a starter kit for a school in Afghanistan. The funds will go to the Nazoo Anna School for Girls to provide much needed resources such as hundreds of books and science lab items. Also present in the photo was our past president **Carolyn Hilton**, chair of our Awards Committee. Thanks to Linda and Liz for suggesting that District 15 submit their worthy project especially during this very needy time for women in Afghanistan.

On December 2, 2016 the Post contained a photo of member **Mary Gowan**, a volunteer with Burlington's Partnership West Food Bank, smiling broadly as she received a \$57, 273 cheque for the Food Bank. The cheque represents the proceeds from the recent Smile Cookie sales at area Tim Hortons locations and was presented by the co-owners of the Tim Hortons on Brant Street. Did any of you buy a cookie from Tim Hortons for this worthy cause? If so, it was money well spent!

The final item that I have for the District 15 scrapbook was featured in the December 8 edition of the Post. It was a photo of a group of West Plains United Church ladies proudly displaying some of the scarves that they had knitted as part of the church's *Chase The Chill* campaign. On December 13 about 100 completed scarves were hung from tree branches in Bolus Park, free to anyone in need to keep warm. Included in the photo was our member **Lois Lenon**, also seen knitting in another photo in the Post. What a thoughtful and creative way to help those in need.

(Archives... continues on Page 15)

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

(Archives... continued from Page 14)

If you have been following my reports you will by now be aware of the many kinds of newspaper and magazine clippings that are being sent to me to include in the Archives. So please, if you see something about any former staff members, not just teachers as they can also be associate members, take the time to cut it out and send it to me at 1446 Brenner Crt., Burlington ON, L7P 2Z2. Don't worry if you don't know if they are RTO/ERO members. I will find that out on my own. You may also contact me at either judymsloan@yahoo.ca or 905-336-5538. Also, remember to send me any obituaries of our members.

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## Webmaster Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Greetings from your RTO/ERO District 15 Webmaster. I hope that you have had the time to view our new website and are finding your way around the new menus.

I am sure that everyone is enjoying a nostalgic viewing of the albums found on the main menu tab *Pictures*. Also, we have a new section called *Connecting by Interests* found under the main menu tab *Who We Are*.

Most main menus, once selected, offer even more choices; be sure to explore these sub-menus found on the left. There are several new pages of interest. See if you can discover some new information. When your pointer (which normally appears as an arrow) changes to the pointing index finger of a hand this means there is more information – just select!

Past copies of The Halton Herald and e-letters are found under the main menu *News*. Whenever you wish to return to the home page, select the blue RTO rectangle found at the very upper left of your screen. You can also use your browser's 'arrow left' backup button.

I welcome your input and suggestions. If you wish to email me (jeanniewoodcroft@gmail.com) or another member of the executive try the new secure *Contact Us* feature which is found in the dark area at the bottom of each page.

I look forward to hearing from you with comments. Stay well!

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

**RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List*****Executive 2016 – 2017***

Past President	Carolyn Hilton	905-844-2984
President	Moira Jane Plexman	905-845-1977
1st Vice President	Claudia Stewart	905-331-5614
2nd Vice President	Micki Clemens	905-847-2452
Secretary	Barb Borthwick	905-332-0611
Treasurer	Carol Pashkievich	905-827-4509
Assistant Treasurer	Chub Baxter	905-643-3732
Member-at-Large	Jim Baker	905-639-1292

***Committees***

Archives	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538
Awards	Carolyn Hilton	905-844-2984
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	Nanci Wakeman	905-823-2564
Newsletter Editor: Peter Gnish - Design: Cate Roberts		905-547-1628
Editing: Pam Ahrens, Catherine Briggs, Nanci Wakeman		
Proofreaders: George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae, Eleanor McCulloch, Jordan Palmer, Ray Smith and Nanci Wakeman		
Photographer: Virender Paul Madan		
Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
West Convenor	Ruth Roberts	905-634-9255
East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
North Convenor	Marg Megelink	905-877-7135
Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
Health Services	Colton Roberts	905-335-0027
Membership/Recruitment Chair	Marilyn MacLennan	905-628-8353
Committee Members:	Judy Sloan, Claudia Stewart	
Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	Micki Clemens	905-847-2452
Committee Member:	Darcea Hiltz, Maureen O'Toole-Bujold	
Program	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
Committee Members:	Micki Clemens, Mary Lyons, Moira Plexman, Claudia Stewart, Carolyn Hilton, Colton Roberts,	
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Committee Member:	Janet Carter-Wright	
Tours	Jan Murdoch	289-271-9817
Committee Members:	Joy Bennett, Barb Borthwick, Maureen Downey, Susan Hoika, Linda Kittmer, Marji Peglar, Jeannie Woodcroft	

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)



## Calendar of Events: April to November 2017

(Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com)

- Apr 8 *Halton JAZZ Singers* in concert at **The Mississauga Big Band** spring concert *Open Mic*. 7:30 pm. Cooksville United Church, 2500 Mimosa Row, Mississauga. Hurontario/Dundas St. Cost \$20 at the door. Seniors \$10.
- Apr 27 Breakfast at Moe's Family Restaurant, 467 Speers Road, Oakville. 9:00 am. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Apr 28 Dinner Theatre, Aldershot Players, West Plains United Church, Burlington. Play *The Cemetery Club*. 6:30 pm. Cost \$40.00. Contact Dave Wright.
- May 4 Stratford Musical Matinee. *HMS Pinafore*. 2:00 p.m. Package cost bus & ticket \$118.00. Contact Dave Wright.
- May 18 Drury Lane Theatre, 2269 New St., Burlington. Musical: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. 8:00 pm. Cost \$28.00. Contact Dave Wright.
- May 25 Breakfast in Burlington. 9:00 am. The location to be decided. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- May 28 *Windjammers Pops Wind Ensemble* in concert at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, J.C. Munro Airport, Mount Hope. 7:30 pm. The group cost is \$35 per ticket. Proceeds are for the Mission Aviation Fellowship charity. Contact Dave Wright.
- June 13 **Grand River Lunch Cruise**, 36 Brant County Rd. 22. 11:00 am. Cruise from 12:15 to 3:15 pm. Cost \$50.00. Contact Dave Wright.
- June 20 Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Locust St., Burlington. **Burlington**
- June 21 **Footnotes, Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance**. Cost \$25.00. 2:00 pm & 7:00 pm on June 20 and 2:00 pm on June 21. Buy tickets on-line or phone the box office at 905-681-6000.
- Oct 6 Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Musical: *Me and My Gal*. 2:00 pm. Cost \$59.00. Contact Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328 or jcwright@cogeco.ca. Cheques written to Retired Teachers of Ontario District 15 must be received by Janet at 4491 Appleby Line, Burlington, ON L7M 0P3 by Aug 23.
- Nov 26 Clarkson Musical Theatre, Meadowvale Theatre, Montevideo Dr. Mississauga. Musical, *White Christmas*. 2:00 pm. Cost \$28.00. Contact Dave Wright by Aug 15.

**You are invited to the...**

**RTO/ERO HALTON DISTRICT 15**

**Annual General Meeting & Lunch**

**Monday, May 8, 2017**

Burlington Convention Centre

1120 Burloak Drive

Burlington, Ontario L7L 6P8



**The Golden Horseshoe Chorus**

will entertain us. They are an a cappella singing group of women who sing fun songs in close four-part harmony under the direction of Jordan Travis. Songs range from jazz, to doo wop to barbershop. It promises to be an enjoyable afternoon.

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

**PROGRAM**

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

To attend please complete the registration form and mail with a cheque payable to **RTO/ERO District 15.**

**DEADLINE: Friday, April 28**

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

**Registration Form**

**DEADLINE: Friday, April 28, 2017**

**Please Print:**

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

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

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

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

-----

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Send to: Mary Lyons,  
2307 Humber Court,  
Burlington, ON L7P 3C9 (905-336-5744)**

## Burlington Group Needs Volunteers

By Ruth Miller

The Friends of Freeman Station (FOFS) is a 100% volunteer group engaged in the rewarding endeavour of relocating, preserving and restoring the historic Burlington Junction Railway Station. The 1906 building was slated for demolition until FOFS was formed to save it. To date more than 4,500 hours of volunteer labour have gone into the project and some \$ 390,000 in cash and corporate/ private donations has been raised. On the Station's lower level FOFS is planning to install a computer-driven museum-quality interactive diorama depicting life in the hamlet of Freeman (which is now part of Burlington) in the early twentieth century.



FOFS is looking for volunteers to join the building restoration project and/or the diorama construction project. Depending on your interests there are many opportunities for you to get involved in this historic legacy.

### Volunteer opportunities:

- Curriculum development- writing teacher material for class visits
- Bricklaying and carpentry
- Accounting - simple, spread sheet, income & expenditures
- Photography - amateur (digital)
- Computer - correspondence, spreadsheet data input and management
- Web site - assistant webmaster using WordPress (we'll teach you)
- Email database - adding/editing contact information
- Gardening - grounds maintenance, flower beds, mowing, weeding
- Community relations – arranging and staffing public appearance events
- Publicity – news stories and media relations
- Model railroading – garden scale design, layout and operation
- Steam boiler certification – live steam locomotive operation
- Videography – video documentation and editing
- Artistry – scene and mural painting
- Docents – volunteer staffing to receive and brief the public
- Artifact management – logging, documenting, photographing, data entry

Details at [www.freemanstation.ca](http://www.freemanstation.ca) or email [info@freemanstation.ca](mailto:info@freemanstation.ca)

## **Nominations Committee Report**

**By Carolyn Hilton**

At the *Annual General Meeting*, which will be held on May 8th at the Burlington Convention Centre, members of Halton District 15 RTO/ERO will vote on the slate of officers for 2017-18. Those elected will form the executive of the District 15 Board. Any District 15 member may submit a nomination for any position. If there is more than one nomination for a particular position a vote will be taken.

At present the nominations are:

President	<b>Claudia Stewart</b>
First Vice President	<b>Micki Clemens</b>
Second Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	<b>Barbara Borthwick</b>
Treasurer	<b>Carol Pashkievich</b>
Member at Large	<b>Jim Baker</b>

If you are interested in the vacant position listed above then please contact me at [chilton@cogeco.ca](mailto:chilton@cogeco.ca) or 905-844-2984 or by mail to Carolyn Hilton 18 Ridge Dr. Oakville, ON L6H 1B6 by April 24, 2017. Nominations can also be made from the floor at the May 8th meeting.

In addition we are also looking for a Political Action Committee Chair and some more members for our Program Committee. Volunteering for a board position is not too onerous as it involves only five board meetings a year. Please consider becoming involved. Present board members are always willing to mentor new people.

**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 Marilyn MacLennan by telephone 905-628-8353**

**or by e-mail at [maclennanred@sympatico.ca](mailto:maclennanred@sympatico.ca)**

## Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Marilyn MacLennan



I am pleased to assume the chair of the Membership and Recruitment Committee. Thank you to **Claudia Stewart** who has so ably filled this role. She is now the first vice-president.

Since December we have welcomed 14 new members. By the time you read this our ranks will have continued to swell with the addition of mid-year retirees as well as those who have chosen to switch to RTO/ERO from other groups.

Please remind your friends who are District 15 RTO/ERO members to let us know if their contact information changes. They should also inform the RTO/ERO provincial office by contacting Dianne Vezeau at 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or by email at [dvezeau@rto-eto.org](mailto:dvezeau@rto-eto.org). We want to ensure that all RTO/ERO provincial and District 15 information is received by them.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Phone: 905-631-6058 or [macleannanred@sympatico.ca](mailto:macleannanred@sympatico.ca)

### Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in September, 2017.

- **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,

Nanci Wakeman by e-mail: [nanci.wakeman@gmail.com](mailto:nanci.wakeman@gmail.com) or  
by mail to 1393 Clarkson Rd. N. Mississauga ON, L5J 2W6 or  
Phone: 905-823-2564.

Deadline - July 15, 2017.

## Political Advocacy Committee

By Micki Clemens



At the November 28, 2016 meeting of the board a motion was approved to have Micki Clemens inquire into the appropriateness of sending a letter to the Ontario Teacher Pension Plan (OTPP) “denouncing their decision to outsource their enterprise technology service, which resulted in the elimination of 108 Ontario jobs.”

This action, on the part of District 15, was intended to reinforce the same message sent in a letter by the Provincial RTO/ERO office to OTPP earlier in the fall and which had been reported in the Highlights of the Fall Senate proceedings, October 25 and 26, 2017.

Micki Clemens did succeed in discussing the issue with Simon Leibovitz who was very prompt with his return communication. His answer was both direct and to the point. He stated that the Provincial Office had received several similar inquiries from a few other Districts and also from some Provincial Committee representatives. He advised that the OTPP, in its formal response to the Provincial office, had indicated its firm resolution on this decision and that it would be a fruitless action on the part of District 15 to expend any additional time, effort or energy on this issue. He commented that he had instructed others in similar fashion. With that direction, Micki Clemens reported this communication to the President and it was agreed that the matter be dropped.

### 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.

## RTO/ERO District 15 Donates

By Moira Plexman

The photo on the right shows me and Past President **Carolyn Hilton** delivering a cheque to the food bank in Acton Foodshare on December 6th..



The photo on page 2 shows me presenting a cheque to a volunteer at the Georgetown Bread Basket.

Last year we donated to food banks in Oakville and Burlington.

### REUNIONS

- Falgarwood PS - 50th Anniversary Celebration on June 6, 2017  
Contact: [doddss@hdsb.ca](mailto:doddss@hdsb.ca)
- T.A. Blakelock HS - 60th Reunion on May 20, 2017  
Contact: [bucka@hdsb.ca](mailto:bucka@hdsb.ca)
- Centennial MS - 50th Anniversary Celebration on May 26, 2017  
Contact: Florence Richl 905-873-1210 after 4pm [freeflo@sympatico.ca](mailto:freeflo@sympatico.ca)

### Puns for Educated (Medicated) Minds...

1. The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. I thought I saw an eye-doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
3. She was only a whisky-maker, but he loved her still.
4. A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
5. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.



## **A Special RTO/ERO Group Insurance Offer**

***Open enrolment for education retiree insurance Feb. 1 to April 30***

For those of us who are not savvy with insurance terminology, the above means that RTO/ERO is currently allowing eligible members of RTO/ERO who have individual insurance with another company to join our group insurance health plans without filling out a medical questionnaire.

These plans include:

- Extended health (which includes travel insurance)
- Semi-private hospital
- Dental

Acceptance is guaranteed if you are switching to coverage you already have.

“During our open enrolment window, you’re automatically guaranteed acceptance into any of our plans if you have the same existing coverage,” explained Gayle Manley, RTO/ERO member and chair of the Health Services and Insurance Committee that oversees the RTO/ERO plans. “If you wish to pick up additional insurance coverage that you don’t have now, a medical questionnaire would be required. We don’t require a medical questionnaire for our dental plan, but there is a first-year coverage limit of \$500.”

Retirees from the broader education sector are also eligible for the open enrolment campaign.

Why switch? Your next question might be why would someone want to join RTO/ERO and enroll in our group insurance? There are many reasons.

- An individual’s insurance rates have risen recently.
- They want an insurance plan that is created by members, for members.
- They might like to take advantage of RTO/ERO’s top 31 benefits of membership, such as Member Perks (1200+ discounts), travel insurance, a dedicated travel agency, opportunities to network and connect with colleagues and much more.

“RTO/ERO membership offers many perks in addition to insurance,” said Martha Foster, president of RTO/ERO. “We offer a unique healthy, active retirement lifestyle. Social activities, travel discounts, affinity programs, an award-winning magazine that members love, volunteer opportunities, and much more. The list of member benefits is considerable.” RTO/ERO welcomes members from the broader education community including early years, school boards, post-second-

(Special Offer..continues on Page 26)

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

(Special Offer..continued from Page 25)

ary, private schools and related education organizations.

For more information about RTO/ERO's open enrolment, go to:

English: <https://www.rto-ero.org/here-for-your-future>

French: <https://www.rto-ero.org/fr/ici-pour-votre-avenir>

Still have questions? Contact our Insurance Team at 1-877-406-9007 or [insurance@rto-ero.org](mailto:insurance@rto-ero.org).

## **Making Connections!**

### **Share Your Story**

#### **(and pictures if you have them)**

We all make connections in our lives that have a positive impact through our interactions with people, activities, culture, travel and many other things.



Now the Halton Herald is inviting you to share a story about some connection you have made (or are making) that has added to the quality of your life. It can be about anything at all. So, get writing and send in your piece.

Each participant will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Hortons – good enough for a coffee or hot chocolate and a cookie!

1. A picture is worth a thousand words. So submit a photo - either colour or black and white. Include a brief description explaining how the photo relates to the theme of “Making Connections.”

2. Write an article or an anecdote of no more than 500 words.

3. Send the entries

- By mail to Peter Gnish, 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON, L8M 2K4  
(All mailed hard copy photos received will be returned)

- By computer, as an attachment to an e-mail message to [pgnish@gmail.com](mailto:pgnish@gmail.com).

4. Entry deadline is July 15, 2017.

If you have any questions please contact me at [pgnish@gmail.com](mailto:pgnish@gmail.com)

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

## Program Committee

By Penny Hamby

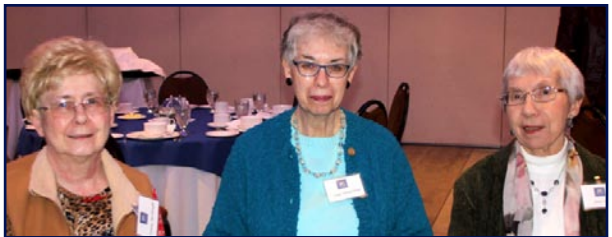


On February 28 we held our RTO/ERO District 15 Winter Lunch at the Burlington Convention Centre. We were entertained by **Jenny Peace** and her *New Horizons Band* of Seniors, many of whom have recently learned to play an instrument. See photos of the Winter Meeting below.

Jenny (B.Music, B.Ed. M.Music) retired from a thirty-one year career as an Arts Head, music and drama teacher in Halton. She attended a summer camp with the New Horizons organizer Dr. Roy Ernest to learn more about the program and then began the group in Burlington in 2013. She has enjoyed working with interesting and talented adults. We really enjoyed listening to the band play their wonderful music.

Join us on Monday May 8th for our **Annual General Meeting** and lunch at the Burlington Convention Centre. The morning will start with our General Meeting at 10 a.m. where the new Executive will be sworn in. That will be followed by lunch at noon with entertainment by *The Golden Horseshoe Chorus* under the direction of Jordan Travis. They are an a cappella group of women who sing fun songs in four-part harmony. I have heard them sing and know that you will really enjoy them. See the registration form in the middle of this booklet. **Deadline is Friday, April 28th.** We will also be celebrating Canada's 150 birthday so our theme will be all red and white.

Thank you to the Program Committee members who have helped to organize our events this year. They are: **Micki Clemens, Carolyn Hilton, Moira Plexman, Colton Roberts, Gail Reeves** and **Claudia Stewart**. Remember that we always are open to new suggestions for our events.



(Winter Mtg Photos..continue on Page 28)

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(Winter Mtg Photos..continued from Page 27)



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## Looking for Inactive Members

By Claudia Stewart

Attention RTO/ERO members, please help find folks who are known to the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan as **INACTIVE MEMBERS**.

Inactive members are former teachers who have paid into our pension plan but for a number of different reasons have not collected. Ontario Teachers Pension Plan is endeavouring to find former teachers who, for example, may have taken out their pension, but then gone back into teaching as a supply teacher and started contributing to the pension plan again.

I am assuming if you are reading this, that you are receiving a pension from OTPP, so you are not part of this group of former teachers. You may know some friends who did teach but haven't received a pension. Please encourage them to call OTPP Member services with their Social Insurance Number. OTPP can quickly determine if they qualify for the payout. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. No need to be hesitant about it. Just make the call and satisfy your curiosity.

There are 69,000 inactive members so please talk to friends, neighbours and relatives who may have taught in Ontario and help them find out if they are eligible to receive this cash out.

Let me tell you about the experience of my friend **Margaret**. Margaret taught at Central Public School in Burlington beginning in 1955 (prior to the establishment of social insurance numbers) for a total of ten years, with some time off for her children. At that time she took her pension out of the plan and used it to buy a fridge and stove. Once the children were attending school, she began volunteering at the local school which led to supply work. She finished supply teaching after the mid 1970s. She did other kinds of volunteer work but not substantial paid employment.

Margaret received a letter from OTPP dated December 8, 2016 inviting her to contact **CLIENT SERVICES** department of OTPP at 1-800-668-0105 or 416-226-700 from 8:00 am to 5:30 pm Monday to Friday. Margaret called and had her SIN at the ready. On December 29th, 2016, she received a second letter indicating her birth date, membership date, total credit and her OTPP Registered Pension Plan Number and an explanation of a monthly pension of \$15.43.

(Inactive Members..continues on Page 30)

(Inactive Members...continued from Page 29)

“An annual pension of \$15.43 a month was calculated for you at age 65 (after reduction for CPP and before any increases due to inflation if applicable). Given that this amount is below payment threshold, in place of future pension payment a lump sum pension value of \$984.53” cheque was included in the letter.

So not quite enough for an around the world cruise perhaps but certainly enough to do something fun or frivolous. You may also enquire at [otpp.com](http://otpp.com) Margaret was very pleased to receive this money and joins me in encouraging our gentle readers to share the information with former teachers and their friends to find out if they might be in that same position.

## RTO/ERO Foundation Report

**Moira Plexman, District Foundation Rep**

Recently, I participated in a foundation teleconference with other districts. Generally, participants felt that more information about the foundation should be shared with districts. We agreed on the following statement: “increase in information would increase knowledge and broaden the reach of the foundation throughout districts.” To that end Jo-Anne Sobie plans to send out “bits and bites” to be included in future district newsletters.

In addition to funding the research by Foundation Chair Dr. Paula Rochon, the foundation has also committed funds to support seniors at the local level to address the issue of “social isolation”. More information will be made available in subsequent newsletters.



### Book of Remembrance

*We remember with fondness*

James Aitken  
Nancy Fennell  
Lois Walshe

Arlene Apramian  
Clifford Goodwin  
Robert Wilson

Mary Easson  
Norah Quinlan

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## Tours Committee

By Jan Murdoch



As I write this report in February, all the members of our Asian trip are busy making preparations for our departure in March 2017. It is going to be a truly amazing adventure, offering an authentic cultural experience in Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Bhutan.

The tours committee has been at work planning the Fall 2018 excursion to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. The response from the membership has been overwhelming for this destination. We want to maintain the authenticity of our travels so we max the group at 20. With the interest expressed so far it is very possible that we may have two groups travelling in 2018 to “Down Under” going back to back.

The journey will be divided into three sections so that we can accommodate those who can only travel for a short time or who are working with a specific budget. Part one will be to Australia and Northern New Zealand, part two will be an extension to Southern New Zealand and part three will be an extension to either Cook Islands or Fiji (this destination depends on where the airlines are flying). We are having an information session in early May 2017 to outline the details of the trip and the associated costs; however, you can pick up a Goway or Collette brochure to learn more about our destinations.

Our trips are customized to suit our personal requirements and interests. In Australia we plan to include the Great Barrier Reef for some swimming and snorkeling and Kangaroo Island where one can experience wildlife in an Australian bush setting. In New Zealand we are looking forward to sightseeing in the Rotorua area, cruising in the Milford Sound and then visiting the Queenstown area. Some in our group plan to ride the Nevis Swing, a 300-metre arc, 160 meters above a river. I'll be a spectator admiring the view. Our final destination is a tropical paradise comprised of 300 islands with 320,000 square kilometres of sea. Fiji's sun-drenched resorts are among the best in the world, a perfect place to relax before the long flight home.

In 2019 we are planning an excursion to South America with a possible extension to Antarctica. If this is a destination that interests you, you might want to join our advanced travel list. Members on the list often join our planning team and they receive travel information before the RTO/ERO District 15 membership at large.

(Tours...continues on Page 32)

Visit us on the Internet at [district15.rto-ero.org](http://district15.rto-ero.org)

(Tours...continued from Page 31)

If you have any questions about the 2018 adventure to “Down Under” or suggestions for future travel destinations please contact me at [janmurdoch8@gmail.com](mailto:janmurdoch8@gmail.com) or 905-891-8407, TICO #50015976.

## Machu Picchu, Peru - A Life-Time Dream Fulfilled!

By Peter Gnish and Cate Roberts

Travelling, I’ve always found, is a great way to connect - with others’ cultures, with nature, with friends and family and, with our dreams.

“There’s just one thing I want to do before I die.” Ever said that? Although we’ve seen much of the world over the last 30 years, a big wish still on my bucket list was to visit Machu Picchu. Last fall I did just that with my wife **Cate**



and our close friends **Joyce and Lloyd Frank**. With the experts at *Enchanting South America*, we designed a 17 day tour just for the four of us based on our interests. *Enchanting* arranged knowledgeable English-speaking guides and drivers, flights, and comfortable accommodations for us - all we had to do was enjoy! Each of us delighted in different things!

We were all struck with the scenic diversity in Peru. Like Canada, Peru is vast, with many different geographic zones. We travelled through valleys with lush vegetation, past volcanoes (some still active), into deep canyons with rejuvenating hot springs, and along winding roads up to the highest point in the Peruvian Andes where ancient Inca and pre-Inca cultures construct



ed comprehensive terraces that modern day families still farm, many in the same way.

We passed herds of llama, vicuna and alpaca in bleak, remote areas drinking from frozen mountain streams, then ventured along narrow dirt roads

(Machu Picchu...continues on Page 33)

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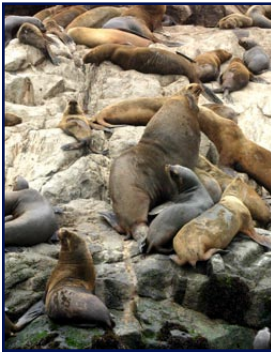
(Machu Picchu...continued from Page 32)

through mountain tunnels to see majestic condors soaring!

In sharp contrast we experienced the steamy Amazon jungle. A local guide from our eco lodge took us on excursions into the jungle where we gingerly walked suspension bridges built high up in the majestic tree canopy as howler monkeys complained. We saw a multitude of birds flit about - wild parakeets, macaws, toucans, swamp vultures. We canoed past caiman to get to botanical gardens where cocoa trees, Brazil nuts, pineapple and papaya were grown for the area. And although we missed an early morning sighting of a tree sloth, on a night walk we saw an anteater!



On Lake Titicaca we boated to the famous reed islands then continued on to isolated rocky islands that had no transportation (and limited plumbing) where we spent the night with a local family and met school children, farmers and artists.



Completing our geographic smorgasbord, we went out into the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Lima to see sea birds, penguins, boobys and - Joyce's most memorable moment - to swim with the sea lions that came and nibbled our toes.

On our trek through Peru, we experienced large cities and towns founded by the Colonial Spaniards. They all had things in common - magnificent central squares with churches on one side and government buildings on the other and in the center a fountains surrounded by palm trees and well-kept gardens. But it was the small towns with their local markets that we enjoyed most. Multiple kinds of potatoes, quinoa and meats were interspersed with colorful woven handicrafts sold by women whose home township was known by the style of their hats! In the small town churches the carvings were native and the statues of the Virgin Mary were dressed in local garb or were designed in the shape of a mountain. This amalgamation of religious cultures is best represented by the huge painting over the altar in Cusco which shows Jesus and the disciples celebrating

(Machu Picchu...continues on Page 34)

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(Machu Picchu...continued from Page 33)



the Last Supper with guinea pig as the main dish!! (Yes we tried it - it tastes like chicken!)

We were all awe-struck with the very dramatic Inca ruins which are Peru's treasures! The 'must-see' sites of Saqsawaman, Ollantaytambo, Pisac, Q'enqu, Coricancha and Tambomachay dot the Sacred

Valley around the Urubamba Valley. Research now notes these ancient architectural settlements were used for religious, astrological and engineering sharing. While we all marveled at the majestic architecture, Lloyd, an engineer, related to the difficulty and precision and ingenuity that would have been required to construct these large stone mountain cities with their gargantuan walls. The stonework is so precise a piece of paper can't be inserted between the blocks! Imagine the skill required to construct temples so that on the June solstice a beam of sunlight will shine through a designated opening onto a specific reflecting surface - amazing! And all done with pre-Iron Age tools by a culture without the benefit of a written language!



Of course Machu Picchu, the mysterious Lost City of the Incas is the epitome of the Inca civilization. Cate was captivated by the history and spiritual significance of the site for the Incas. Joyce found a spot to quietly sit and paint, Lloyd explored and I couldn't believe that I was really there. Because we were staying in

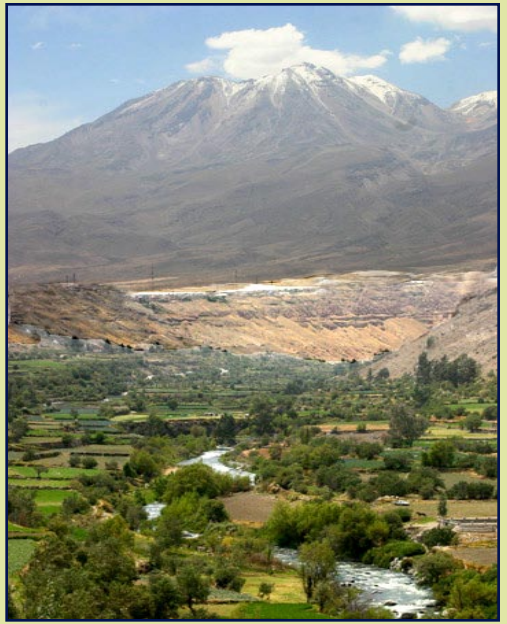
a hot springs lodge in Aguas Calientes we were able to spend two days at the site - one with a guide, the other on our own. My dream of climbing to the Sun Gate, the pilgrims' jungle entrance, was within reach! Cate and I trekked off over steep rocky terrain and... in the sunshine looked down on Machu Picchu from the top of the mountain, the most celebrated view!



All I could think of was, "I have done it, I have achieved my bucket list goal!" Well, except for...

(Machu Picchu...continues on Page 35)

# Nature in Peru...





# Faces of Peru...

