

EROT
E O
District 15



HALTON HERALD

HALCYON EDITION

Volume 5 - January, 2009

*Peace and Goodwill
to all in the New Year*



"Snowshoeing in Cranston, Alberta"

Honourable Mention Photo by Marilyn Ortwein
Submitted for Surviving the Winter Contest

Surviving The Winter Photo Contest

"Icicles in March"

Contest Winner: Diane Miller as selected by the Communications Committee. Diane will receive an award of \$25. Congratulations!



Honour Mentions:

Eunice Cooke - *"Snow on Thermometer"*



Rena Ghose - *"Snowblower"*



Rena Ghose - *"Winter Storm"*

I will never forget:

- The traffic in the major centres – dodging cars, trucks, buses, pedestrians, camels, dogs, boars, rickshaws and how can I forget the holy cow.
- Driving was like playing a live video game. We played chicken everyday
- The beautiful women adorned in jewellery and bright, bold, colourful saris
- The variety of colourful turbans wrapped in different ways depending on the region
- The monkeys running along the maze of wires in Old Delhi and the monkeys running along the narrow roads
- The beautiful palaces
- The garbage that is strewn along the roads and in villages
- The markets filled with colourful spices, teas and fruits and vegetables
- The beggars and their persistent pursue for a rupee

Would I go back to India? Absolutely yes!



Peter	Cate	Victoria
Linda	Joyce	Rebecca

By Cecile Leach



Let me begin by wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year. I hope you enjoyed the festive season with family and friends. The snow and cold weather certainly arrived sooner than expected this year and got us in the spirit of things.

At the Fall Senate, **Brian Kenny** was returned as President for another term. **Margaret Couture** was elected as 1st Vice-President, **Joan Murphy** was elected as 2nd Vice-President and **Doug Carter** and **Sue Stephenson** became our Executive members. **George MacRae** completed his term on the Provincial Communication Committee and **Linda Jones** joined the Provincial Nominating Committee. Thanks George for your work at the Provincial level and your continued efforts as Webmaster for District 15.

Our Fall General Meeting on November 6 was a very informative and pleasant evening at the Burlington Seniors' Centre in Burlington. Thank you to Nancy Beddoe from Oakville and Cathy Lamb from Burlington for their insight into Seniors' Centres in our area. The performance by the Rich Harmony Choir (a group of Burlington Senior Centre singers) was lovely music to our ears. The Greek menu for the dinner was very tasty and certainly plentiful.

Mark your calendars for our **February 17th** event at the Milton Sports Centre. It promises to be both intriguing and thrilling. Check the Coming Events calendar in this issue for other exciting programs as well as recreational activities.

Although **Colton Roberts** has offered his resignation as Chair of the Program Committee he will remain on the committee and

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continue to offer his support and enthusiasm in the planning of our programs. Thank you, Colton. For the remainder of the year, **Mary Lyons** will be our Board Liaison and **Jan Moxey** has offered to compose our newsletter articles. Each event will be convened by different members of the committee.

This year our District must review our constitution and **Mary Lyons, Linda Jones** and **Ray Smith** have offered their services. They will present the revised constitution to the Board for approval upon completion. We hope to be able to present it to you at our Annual General Meeting in May.

Our District is still looking for a Second Vice-President and also a Chair for the Program Committee. Do you know that our membership is in the vicinity of 2100 members? Do you realize that only a handful of people volunteer to plan, organize and lead the activities to serve the needs of our membership? Many hands make the load so much lighter. If you would like to discuss the expectations and commitment for any position, I can be reached via e-mail cecile.leach@sympatico.ca or by telephone @905-634-8027. Our District will only remain active and vibrant if we have your support. We welcome all offers of assistance!

I look forward to seeing many of you at our February event. For those heading south for the winter, and unable to attend, have a safe and warm winter!

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

District 15 membership is now nearing 2100 strong. Below are the names of retired teachers who have become members between August and November, 2008. Give them a warm welcome and invite them to join you in one of our many activities

Josephine Aquan-Assee	Jenny Catton	Maureen Childerhose
Doreen Chisholm	Heather Conlin	Joyce Cooper
Jim Craig	Mary Jane Curry	Hilda Darcie
James Evershed	Wanda Flis	Elizabeth Freeman
John Henderson	Gary Hutchison	Barry Koepke
Jill Labreche	Fred Leighton	John Moore
Wanda Muhleisen	Mona Nahmias	Gloria Odorico
Patricia Pate	Geoffrey Pettit	Moiria-Jane Plexman
Barbara Rahman	Arnold Rawana	Ronnica Reid
Neetha Sands Barclay	Wesley Sargant	Agostino Sartor
Elaine Smith	Roseanne Swalwell	LeAnne Taylor
William Taylor	Elizabeth Tough	Wendy Turnbull

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MY TRIP TO INDIA

Submitted by **Linda Price**

On Nov. 1st I embarked on a memorable 3-week trip with 3 District 15 colleagues (**Joyce Frank, Cate Roberts & Peter Gnish**) and 2 friends (Rebecca Abitbol & Victoria Thompson) to enchanting India. India has a rich tapestry of history, a spectacular mix of landscapes and many religious customs. Our trip was concentrated in India's "Golden Triangle". We landed in Delhi, flew to the Holy City, Varanasi, took a train to Agra, and then drove to Jaipur, Pushkar, Nimaj, Jodhpur, Deogarh and finally Udaipur. From Udaipur we flew back to Delhi and then a 20 hour trip back home to Toronto. It was a whirlwind trip! We visited many temples and became familiar with Hinduism which is practiced by 80% of the country's population. We also became familiar with Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. The places of worship range from simple shrines to ornate architectural masterpieces such as Jama Masjid in Delhi. I was most impressed with how spirituality is such an integral part of everyone's lives. The people of India are passionate about their religious beliefs and family. This was so apparent when we followed the pilgrims in Varanasi down to the river Ganges. We witnessed a variety of religious traditions unfolding at sunset. The images on the ghats will remain with me for life.

We visited many historic legacies such as forts, the Red Fort in Delhi; palaces, the City Palace in Udaipur, and mosques. Of course the most famous monument, the Taj Mahal in Agra, just took our breaths away. This majestic mausoleum, built by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, in memory of his second wife, was certainly a highlight of our trip.

I personally enjoyed our time in Pushkar and Nimaj, where we stayed in luxury tents and immersed ourselves in life on the desert. Our camel ride through the desert to the Pushkar Camel Fair was a huge highlight for me. The view from the camel (we were so high up) allowed us the opportunity to view families completing their daily chores in the village and we marveled at the contrasts in this desert. As we approached the desert we viewed a vast landscape of sand and scrub and yet in the distance merchants were selling their wares; camels, horses and dogs were wandering everywhere; children were delighted with the ferris wheel, cotton candy and games, and the colourful saris and turbans were in stark contrast with the desolate environment.

(India Trip ... continues on Page 30)

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Social Committee

By Colton Roberts



The Fall General Meeting, on Nov. 6th, was very successful. We look for the same at our **Winter General Meeting** which is set for the 17th of February. **See the flyer and registration form include in this mailing for details.** Specifics for the AGM are still being worked out. It has been suggested that we charge \$10 for those who are attending just to hear the speaker and \$25 for the entire program. The date has been changed to Tuesday, May 5th.

Preliminary planning under the capable leadership of **Jan Moxey** is starting. A survey of members will be conducted to determine interests of members. Venues and workshop ideas are being considered. A **Wellness Day** will be held in early November, 2009.

The **Wine and Cheese** for teachers considering retirement is slated for April 2nd. Provincial Office has requested that our District host another **Retirement Planning Workshop** this year with an emphasis on getting potential associate members to attend. The suggested date is the last week of April.

This will be my last Social Committee report. I have tendered my resignation as chair of the committee. However, I expect to continue to serve on the committee but find it necessary to step down at this time.

(Political Action Committee ... continued from Page 27)

allowing student loans to be interest free until the end of their residencies will retain young doctors in Ontario. New medical training institutions can train from 500 to 700 doctors per annum, but the government must increase the availability of residency positions. Ontario is losing doctors to the U.S.A, Alberta and B.C. Ontario's numbers are only improving at a rate of 10, 20 or 30 per annum. Dr. Arnold believes that the health system in Ontario can be made well again, but he is concerned that there are currently 2500 doctors over age 65 eligible to retire.

Your Political Action Committee will continue to represent members in matters which concern our group and seniors in general and to report back to you via the Halton Herald, our website and at membership meetings. If you have questions or concerns or wish more information about what we are doing, you can contact me at 905-336-5785 or ljroux13@hotmail.com

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We Get Letters, Emails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



Although letters, emails and telephone calls have been scarce coming my way, there were a couple that came earlier that I neglected to include in the September issue. They are being highlighted now. My apologies to the writers - we do appreciate your communication and strive to print all we receive. So keep those messages coming. Let your friends and former colleagues know what you are up to.

Marion Jonassen wrote to thank District 15 for the prize money she received for winning the recent photo contest. She said, "I have always taken photos, I also paint pictures. All these work with colour and composition, so they work together. It makes my life full of things to create. Even my scrapbooking (my own rules and \$1 store materials) that I have been doing for about two years, uses the same skills and, after arranging some pages, I find sometimes that the composition could be better so this is a challenge, too. Thank goodness these things still will be challenges forever!"

Karen White (Skerrett) sent an email and a photo to show how she plans to "Celebrate 60" her own way. Karen decided to celebrate her 60th birthday on a Harley. She now lives in Prince Edward County and loves being able to ride the country roads. Both her late husband and her late father were Harley riders. She says that as much as she enjoyed being a passenger, she loves being the rider even more. Karen took the motorcycle course at Loyalist College in Belleville and bought a 2008 Harley Davidson 883 Sportster Low rider. Karen named the motorcycle, "White Lightning."



Getting On?

Q: Is it common for 60+ year olds to have problems with short term memory storage? A: Storing memory is not a problem - retrieving it is a problem.

Q: Why should 60+ year old people use valet parking?

A: Valets don't forget where they park your car.

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Fall Events

Shaw Festival - September 4, 2008

By Janet Carter-Wright

Thirty-two members of RTO/ERO District 15 travelled to Niagara-on-the-Lake to take in the play, *"Wonderful Town"* at the Shaw Festival Theatre. Many people came early and enjoyed the ambiance in this quaint town by shopping, strolling through the town and having lunch in one of the many restaurants. The play, by Joseph Field and Jerome Chodorov was a musical adventure about being young and pursuing a dream, based on the delightful novel and movie *"My Sister Eileen."* Two sisters arrive in New York to find fame, fortune and love. With the help of some colourful characters from Greenwich Village, they find even more than they bargained for. Music was by Leonard Bernstein and Lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. The costumes and staging were enthralling and the fast pace of the musical kept us on the edge of our seats. A great time was had by all.

The Hell With The Bell Breakfast - September 4, 2008



This event is always a good one - a nice blend of District 15 members who mingle and interact with newly retired teachers considering membership in RTO/ERO. It's a chance to share a good breakfast as well.



Fall Meeting - November 6, 2008

A good crowd attended the session at the Burlington Seniors' Centre to hear an excellent presentation about *"What's Happening at Your Seniors' Centres."*



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(Political Action Committee ... continued from Page 14)

Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and from Brampton, where a similar project has already been built, shared information with the audience about the huge increases in the costs of building and equipping the hospital and the resulting severe cuts to the number of beds provided under this financial model. The financial model, called a Private Financial Initiative (PFI) in Britain, is being rolled back because of its failures. In Ontario it was known as a Public Private Partnership (P3), now called an Alternate Financing & Procurement/Management plan (AFP or AFM). Audience members were shocked that they had never heard this information from their elected representatives, that there is no transparency or accountability in these models and that these deals are secret. As a result of this meeting and the expressed desires to know more, there are likely to be further public meetings and investigations driven by audience members holding divergent political views.

I also attended a talk by Dr. Ken Arnold, the President of the Ontario Medical Association, at the Canadian Club of Halton Peel on November 20th. He explained that 850,000 Ontarians are without family physicians - a shortage of 2500 doctors. The impact of not having a primary care physician for patients with chronic conditions, which are long term but manageable, is that it is more costly to deal with the dire complications. 15% of these patients don't have a family doctor and this results in 118,000 emergency visits and 17,000 admissions in one day across Ontario costing \$17 million. According to the Ontario Health Council, 8000 deaths per annum could be avoided if patients had a family physician. The shortage stems from the 1990's when doctors were seen as a cost to the health system in Ontario and cutbacks in fees and numbers of training places chased doctors to research, industrial medicine and the U.S.A. Municipalities have now been pushed into the business of becoming headhunters, but Dr. Arnold doesn't think that this competitiveness is good for the system. He stated that since 2004 many more surgeries, where there were waiting lists, have taken place with little increase in staff and over 20 million patients have been treated in Emergency Departments. Having family physicians work in groups is much more efficient for the system as a whole, as would computerizing medical records, which is taking a long time. A new deal was just reached with the Province of Ontario in October. New funding will pay for 500 licensed nurses to work in doctor's practices, and will address disparities in the system to ensure that there will be more doctors in obstetrics, gerontology and public health. Keep in mind that doctors in public health are working harder when you do not hear about them. In addition,

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responders who deal with serious HR problems amongst staff and volunteers. As a member of our Canadian Red Cross, Bill has accepted the call for help from his American Red Cross brethren many times before. We should be very proud of all our Canadian Red Cross volunteers who continually provide relief both locally and abroad to people afflicted by some kind of disaster.

Last but not least, I was reading through my Hamilton Spectator when I suddenly came across a photo of our own Communications and Newsletter Chair **Peter Gnish!** Beside Peter was Liu Dong Liu, a high school teacher from China. Liu is a liaison for our teachers sent to China. He meets them at the airport and helps to orient them to the customs of the city as well as assisting them with translations and travel excursions to other parts of China. This was Liu's second visit to our area and while he was taking ESL lessons in Burlington. He was a guest of Peter and his wife **Cate Roberts.** Liu was very fortunate to have stayed with such gracious hosts!

Please keep those newspaper articles and photos coming to me. Remember if you are not sure if someone is a member, send the item to me anyway at 1446 Brenner Court, Burlington Ont. L7P 2Z2. I will check it out. You may also contact me by email at judymsloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538. Have a safe and warm winter!

Bogus Cancer Cures

From the Simcoe Reformer

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission charged five companies with making false and misleading claims for cancer cures and reached settlements with six others. There is no credible scientific evidence that any of the products marketed by these companies can prevent, cure, or treat cancer of any kind.

The products the companies marketed include essiac teas and other herbal mixtures, laetrile, black salve, a corrosive ointment and mushroom extracts. There is a concern that people may forgo effective cancer treatments when choosing these products. In addition, some of these unproven products may have dangerous interactions with other drugs.

Talk to your doctor before using any of them.

“Surviving The Winter” Contest - Recipes

Try out this recipe - winner of the \$25 cash prize. Congratulations Diane!

Jewel's Mexican Corn Bread Submitted by Diane Miller

- 1 Cup Yellow Corn Meal
- 1 Tsp. Baking Soda
- 1 Tsp. Salt
- 2 Eggs
- 1 Can of Cream Style Corn 14 oz.
- 1 Cup Whole Milk
- 1/4 cup Oil (or Bacon Grease)

If you would like a more dense cornbread you can add a cup of unbleached or regular flour.



- 1 1/2 lb. Ground Beef
- 1 Large Onion Sautéed (Sweet Red Pepper may be added for colour)
- 1/2 lb. Grated Cheddar Cheese (or your favourite Cheese)
- 4 Jalapeno Peppers (or bottled chopped jalapeno's to your taste)

Brown Ground Beef and drain on paper towel.
Mix Corn meal, Soda, Salt, Grease, Eggs, Milk and Corn in a Bowl.
Spray your cast iron skillet and sprinkle with corn meal.
Pour 1/8 of Cornbread Mix in Skillet

Layer ...
1/2 of Ground Beef Mix on top of Cornbread Mix
Sprinkle 1/2 of Onion (and optional Sweet Red Pepper)
Sprinkle with 1/2 of Grated Cheese

Repeat layers ... Ground Beef, Onion and Jalapeno's and Cheese
Top with the rest of the Cornbread Mix.

Bake for 50 Minutes at 350 F.
Enjoy!

The members of the Communications Committee selected the following anecdote as the winner. Eunice will receive an award of \$25 for her efforts. Thank you Eunice!

“Surviving The Winter” Contest - Anecdotes

Winter Woes in Oakville

By Eunice Perneel Cooke

As usual, for the past five years, Eunice looked out the bedroom window upon arising to check the weather. Freezing rain was falling! It was Sunday morning and her husband, Joe, was to read the Scripture in church. Consequently, it was important that they get there, especially since he had practised the night before and was ready.

After breakfast, the freezing rain had stopped, but ordinary rain was falling. Eunice hadn't voiced her fears to Joe about perhaps not being able to make it to church. Now she was glad she hadn't said anything because the weather looked better. Surely, they could drive through rain. They had done that countless times. Eunice and Joe climbed into their car at about 10:45 and backed out of the driveway. Joe had cleared it the day before and it was fine. So far, so good. Eunice breathed a sigh of relief. However, when Joe steered into the street, the car began to slide sideways. The snow there had an invisible layer of ice in it, and the street sloped to both sides.

“Joe,” suggested Eunice, gripping her door handle, “maybe we shouldn't go.”

“Nonsense,” he replied. “It'll be fine. Relax.”

They drove, if you could call it driving, half way up the block, slithering from side to side. A few meters ahead were two parked vehicles, a car and a pickup truck, one on each side of the street, not exactly opposite but close enough.

“I don't like this,” squeaked Eunice. “It's dangerous! We could slide into one of those vehicles...”

“Oh, don't worry, I won't. I can control the steering,” snarled Joe, and immediately slid sideways.

“See?” shouted Eunice. “Stop the car!”

“I can't stop in the middle of the street!” Joe answered, slapping the steering wheel. “I'd be blocking traffic.” Eunice wanted to point out there didn't seem to be any traffic, but she merely pleaded for him to try to pull over to the side.

“Oh, alright,” conceded Joe, noticing that his wife was on the verge of a full-blown panic attack, “And then what?”

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Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



How would you like to snuggle up with some wonderful reading material during the cold winter days? I have just the books for you! Two of our Halton District 15 members have had their novels published. **Julie Boucher's** novel is called *Driftwood's Secrets*. It is about an abandoned cemetery, a message from the past, and a story of family ties transcending time and turmoil. Before her retirement, Julie was a popular consultant with the Halton Catholic District School Board. Her novel is available at Chapter/Indigo.

Eunice Perneel Cooke, a former teacher and librarian has written a novel entitled *Foxfire*, which tells the stories of Willie and Dorothy. They are loosely based on true events of the author's childhood in a simpler time when each day and its adventure seemed a wonder in itself to her. Eunice was born in a small town on the Black River, about 300 km north of North Bay. Her early years were spent on a mixed farm with her siblings and many animals. She believes that even in today's technological environment, children can relate to the excitement of rescuing a calf, the joy of holding newborn piglets or the panic of a house fire. Eunice has had a number of short stories and poems published in local papers. To obtain *Foxfire* contact the author at eunice.cooke@retrotales.ca or by calling her at 905-827-2783. Congratulations to both these retired educators for their wonderful achievement!

Congratulations also to our member **Donna Harvey**. Her son Craig was chosen to receive a \$1,000 scholarship from Johnson Inc. These scholarships and grants are awarded to RTO/ERO members and their dependents. Craig is enrolled at Queen's University and his program of study is Archaeology and Classical Studies. Good luck on your future studies Craig!

In October, the front page of The Burlington Post featured an article about **Bill Ferris** who is the husband of our member **Donna Ferris**. Bill, a retired secondary teacher and business/school administrator with the Hamilton-Wentworth Board, was spending three weeks in Houston Texas serving with the American Red Cross as the Disaster Response Staff Relations Manager. As you know “Ike” a Category 2 hurricane hit the state hard causing billions of dollars in damage and enormous devastation. Tens of thousands of people fled the area and were now struggling to piece their lives together as they returned. Bill had emailed me that at present, he was leading a team of

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Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Bill Caldwell



At the outset, I would like to extend best wishes to everyone for a Happy & Healthy New Year. We have been very busy during the last few months and plans for the **Annual Wine & Cheese Reception** to be held Apr. 23, 2009 are well underway. This is one of a number of opportunities for us to meet prospective retirees for the school year 2008-2009 in a social setting.

In addition to contacting retirees who qualify for Full Membership, our District is also making a concerted effort to broaden our membership base in RTO/ERO through the acquisition of Associate Members from various groups of Board employees who will be retiring.

I direct your attention page 17 in this issue of the Halton Herald which mentions plans for a golf tournament under the leadership of John Goodman. Two different formats are suggested. It is important to make your wishes known to John re this activity. We hope for good participation this year.

In closing, please advise past colleagues, those planning to retire, to consult the staff bulletin board at their schools/offices in late February for details on the Wine & Cheese Reception.

IF YOU ARE MOVING...

IF YOUR ADDRESS INFORMATION IS INCORRECT...

Please Contact **Dianne Vezeau** at the Provincial RTO/ERO office -
In Writing: 18 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7
By Telephone: 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or 1-416-962-9463 Ext 223
By Email: dvezeau@rto-ero.org

Ontario Expands Access to Diabetes Treatments

From Canada News-Wire

The Government of Ontario has recently listed Humalog(R) (insulin lispro injection)*, Humalog Mix25(TM), and Humalog Mix50(TM) insulin injections (vial and cartridge), onto the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Formulary. This announcement means that thousands of Ontarians with diabetes will have fully funded access to treatments that are important in the management of the disease.

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(Winter Woes ... continued from Page 8)

"I'm getting out and walking home," she declared, "You can go on...if you like."

Slowly and carefully, Joe eased the 1500 kg to the side of the rutted ice-covered street and parked. Reluctantly, he turned off the motor and pocketed the key.

"Well," he began in a resigned tone, "You can't walk on the icy street. You'll fall."

"But you could drive on it?" the words were out before Eunice could stop them.

"Okay," Joe decided not to argue that the car's tires were better than her dress shoes, "We'll try it."

After slipping once, Eunice gave her purse to Joe and decided to try walking through the knee-high snow of the six lawns on their side of the street. She hoped none of the neighbours would be watching her progress. Joe shuffled along, picking his way among the ruts and muttering. It took about fifteen minutes for the "prime timers" to reach home. Eunice lost her shoes a couple of times and soaked her slacks, but they finally reached their front door safely.

"We could have made it," was all Joe said as Eunice fitted the key into the lock. His wife wisely said nothing.

"Surviving The Winter" Contest Anecdotes - *Honourable Mentions*

Snow Shoeing- My Nemesis

By Marilyn Ortwein

I decided to try it again. As I had such a difficult time just putting the snow shoes on last time, I had a plan. I attached the boots to my snowshoes in the warmth of my condo. When we arrived at the head of the trail, I was able to sit on the floor of a van, remove the boots, that I was wearing and put on the boots attached to the snowshoes. How brilliant !!!

We began our trek. All seemed to be going well, until I heard someone say, "Avalanche area." I thought that I had misunderstood and said, "What was that?" "Avalanche area." The leader informed us that we would advance one by one past the area. I watched the leader walk carefully from our location to one hidden behind trees. He then shouted, "Next."

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(Snow Shoeing... continued from Page 9)

Shouting didn't seem to be the best method of informing us that he was safe (in my humble opinion), but entering into a shouting conversation didn't seem appropriate either. I kept looking up at the snow clinging to the side of this mountainous area and hoping that it would stay in place. One by one eleven of us moved through this area.

As we continued on, we came to an ice-covered stream. Once again, our leader gave instructions. "We should cross one at a time. Perhaps the heaviest person should go first."

There was a pregnant pause and then he decided to go first. One by one we inched our way across the ice as the cracking noises intensified. Another obstacle conquered. We hadn't hiked too far past the stream when I thought that I heard running water.

"Do you hear running water?" I asked the person behind me.

"I don't think that's possible," she replied.

The gurgling became louder and louder and then we saw it, a fast moving stream. I couldn't believe my eyes.

"Do we have to cross that?" I uttered.

"There's no other choice," was the reply.

I certainly had a choice: to retreat, fall through ice and be enveloped by an avalanche. I turned and looked for a way across the stream. By now, our leader was attempting to cross snow-covered logs, which were haphazardly strewn across the creek-bed. He finally made it, but no one else was prepared to follow his path. He told us that he'd continue up along the stream to see if he could find another way across. I suggested to another male hiker that perhaps one of us could check downstream. He told me that wouldn't be an option, for there was a falls downstream.

"Just a small one?"

"No, it's probably 25 feet."

What am I doing here! The leader returned with no solution. One of the women edged her way down the bank and crossed a very thin crust of ice and snow that had formed beside the logs. A bit of water seeped through, but not too much. She then climbed up the other side with a hand from the leader. This was our only option. I went fourth. When I got to the other side, I waited for the leader's assistance, but he was chatting to the fellow behind me.

"Excuse me, but I could use a hand."

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Health Services Committee

By Paul Durnan



Beginning January 1, 2008, the RTO/ERO Extended Health Plan allows those travelling outside of Canada for an extended period of time to obtain up to a 200-day supply of a medication. Previously you were only allowed to obtain up to a 100-day supply. For claims submitted electronically by the pharmacy, the pharmacist should contact the Johnson Pharmacy line and request Johnson to fax a form to the pharmacy for completion by the member. The form can be completed while the member is at the pharmacy and it can be faxed back immediately. This will allow Johnson's claims system to be updated right away so that the 200-day extended supply can be processed electronically.

Please note that the eligible amount payable to the member will still be subject to the calendar year maximum for the year in which the drug is purchased. Participants who have already reached their maximum will not be eligible for the extended vacation supply.

You should be aware, that before travelling, Mondial Assistance (formerly World Access) can be contacted for a variety of information related to your trip. This includes items related to health benefits, vaccination details, External Affairs warnings, doctors, currency information etc. Also, remember to take your Out-of-Province/Canada 2008 Travel Booklet with you when you go so you can consult it.

Before travelling, contact Mondial Assistance for information and advice

Be aware that the date on your receipt is your claim date for a drug. If at all possible, you may want to consider waiting until January if you are near the ceiling before filling your prescription. Please call me at 905-630-2285 if you have any comments or questions.



Book of Remembrance

(For the period August to November 30, 2008)

We remember with fondness

Dennis Amy	Catherine McInerny	Doreen Palmer
Savitri Rawana	Arthur Ernest Reed	Raymond Smith
	Mary Warren	

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(Evan Hoffman... continued from Page 19)

Yeller. Every child had a part, and it was necessary to have a dog join the cast to play the part of Old Yeller. Apparently the dog stole the show! Film day was another highlight for the whole community. One day each month, films and a projector arrived at the school. The children viewed the films during the day and the community came in the evening for a second showing.

When Evan applied to teach in Burlington in 1956, Jack Leadbeater (who recently celebrated his 90th birthday!) was one of the principals who hired him. He worked in John A Lockhart, Glenwood, Central and Strathcona, teaching Grades 5 to 8. One year was spent teaching remedial reading. He remembers, with satisfaction, one of his students who was resistant to all of his strategies until Evan brought a puppet from home. Once the child became comfortable with the puppet, both the child (and the puppet, of course) learned to read.

From 1967 until his retirement in 1987, he worked with Psychological Services as a teacher diagnostician. I was told that both children and teachers welcomed him warmly, without trepidation, when he walked into their classrooms to administer tests.

He hadn't been retired more than a year, when the tester was sorely tested himself. An operation for acoustic neuroma left him with no hearing in one ear and limited hearing in the other. His balance was severely compromised. Six months later, he was struck with meningitis which left him physically disabled. He uses a walker to get around the house and a wheelchair when he goes out.

Jean is still Evan's best friend, his "ears", his caregiver, his advocate. She has experienced her own health challenges, having been diagnosed with cancer last year. Evan attends the Wellness Centre one day a week, receives occupational therapy and support from other community agencies. Both are avid readers and maintain an interest in the happenings in the community and the wider world. They have experienced many losses, the most devastating of which was the death of their oldest child, Florence, in 1995. Still they are able to say that they have been truly blessed. They look forward eagerly to regular visits from their two children, Janet and John with their spouses, their five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Team Hoffman keeps working, one day at a time. Family, friends, faith, fun, fellowship and food, all combine to empower Evan and Jean not just to survive, but to thrive. Thank you both, for so generously sharing your stories.

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(Snow Shoeing... continued from Page 10)

He apologized profusely and said, "You didn't realize that you'd signed up for the adventurous hike," and laughed. I did not reply. By now, it had started to snow and the winds were picking up. We continued snow shoeing in search of a long log or some stumps. We finally found them. The log was a considerable height from the ground, but another tall woman and I thought it perfect. We cleared off a foot of snow with our hiking poles and sat down. The others perched on stumps. We were ready for lunch. This was not a pleasant experience, for you could not bear to have your hands uncovered without intense discomfort. I managed to eat half a sandwich and drink a cup of hot chocolate. I was ready to hit the trail. I looked over at the leader and he was eating leisurely. One of the other hikers told me that he enjoys his food and likes to take his time.

"In these conditions?"

"It doesn't matter."

Two or three of us were now standing and snow-shoeing in a circle attempting to keep warm. Finally the leader finished his lunch and we were back on the trail. It was snowing heavily now and the winds were whipping about us. I read the following in the next day's Calgary Herald, "Bow Valley residents were greeted with stiff winds and frigid temperatures on Monday. Temperatures dipped to minus 15 degrees Celsius, but with the wind chill, it felt more like minus 29. Winter is definitely here."

It seemed like an eternity before we reached the parking lot. The drive back to Canmore was no picnic. Spray Lakes Road is nerve wracking at the best of times. The road was snow-covered with icy sections. Visibility was poor. Fortunately the drivers were extremely cautious and after an hour and a half, we arrived at our destination. I can't recall ever feeling so cold.

"Surviving The Winter" Contest Anecdotes - Honourable Mentions

Prayer Poem and Sketch ...by Diane Miller



Watch over my teacher,
Oh Angel I pray.
Please keep me nice
so she'll have a good day!



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“Surviving The Winter” Contest Anecdotes - Honourable Mentions

2008 ... *The Year Spring Did Not Arrive*
 ...Poem and Photo by Diane Miller

*The snow covers the ground like a downy white duvet,
 Covering spring flowers asleep in cold cold beds.
 The icicles grasp the roof like translucent witches fingers,
 Not willing to let go, hanging on with their icy grip.*

*Where is the spring we are promised
 this year?
 The warmth always helps us to get
 things in gear.
 This cold is pervasive and digs in to
 the bone.
 We were in Florida ... why did we come
 home?
 The days have grown longer and
 deeper in debt
 To the cold days of winter we will not
 forget.
 The bunnies all shivered this Easter
 I'll bet,
 The earliest one we may always regret.*



*The warm days will come but when will they arrive?
 If they don't hurry how can things survive?
 Will they still be alive?
 Oh, how will we survive?*

Thoughts From a Wandering Mind

“Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.”
 “Someone told me I was gullible - I believe them.”
 “I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.”
 “If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain
 whales?”
 “Is it just me - or do buffalo wings really taste like chicken?”

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No More Telemarketers

by Kimberly Williams – Provincial RTO/ERO Staff

SELLING MERCHANDISE OVER THE TELEPHONE has been happening for years, but now there is a way to stop some of the unnecessary calls. As of September 30, 2008, Canadians can now register to be on the **Do Not Call List (DNCL)**. The list has been created by the federal government to reduce unwanted telemarketing calls from reaching the general public.

Telemarketers will not be able to call you 31 days after your registration. They are also obligated to maintain their own do-not-call list. To stay on the list you must re-register every three years. If, for some reason you do receive a call, you can tell them to add you to their list and this must be done within 31 days. They will not be able to call you.

There is a small catch—telemarketers may not be able to call you anymore once you are on the list, but there are a few organizations that will still be permitted to contact you, such as registered charities, newspapers looking for subscriptions, political parties and companies that you've done business within the previous 18 months. Since market research or polling agencies are not selling anything or requesting donations they will also be able to continue to call those who have registered on the list.

If you want to register onto the list or want more information on the service contact the DNCL at 1-866-580-3625 or online at www.lnnte-dncl.gc.ca.

Church Bulletin Bloopers

1. Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It is a good chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
2. This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Howell to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
3. Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8 pm. Please use the back door.
4. For those of you who have children and don't know it, there is a nursery downstairs.
5. The Senior Choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

Visit us on the Internet at www.halinet.on.ca/district15

What do Teachers Make?

Submitted by **Bill Caldwell**

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education. He argued, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?" He reminded the other dinner guests what they say about teachers: "Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach." To stress his point he said to another guest; "You're a teacher, Bonnie. Be honest. What do you make?"

Bonnie, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, "You want to know what I make? She paused for a second, then began. "Well, I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I make a C+ feel like the Congressional Medal of Honour winner. I make kids sit through 40 minutes of class time when their parents can't make them sit for 5 without an iPod, Game Cube or movie rental. And, you want to know what else I make?"

She paused again and looked at each and every person at the table.

"I make kids wonder. I make them question. I make them apologize and mean it. I make them have respect and take responsibility for their actions. I teach them to write and then I make them write. Keyboarding isn't everything. They use their God given brain, not the man-made calculator. I make them read, read, read. I make them show all their work in math."



She went on. "I make my students from other countries learn everything they need to know about English while preserving their unique cultural identity. I make my classroom a place where all my students feel safe. I make them understand that if they use the gifts they were given, work hard, and follow their hearts, they can succeed in life."

Bonnie paused one last time and then continued. "I believe money isn't everything. So when people try to judge me by what I make I hold my head up high and pay no attention because they don't quite understand. You see I believe that ... **I MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**"

She turned to the CEO who had started the conversation. "And, what do you make?" His jaw dropped and he went silent.

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Recreation Committee

By **Dave Wright**



The planned trip to Toronto's P.A.T.H. was diverted to **The Distillery District** where we joined The Halton Catholic Board retirees' walking club - great company and lunch at **The Mill Street Brew Pub**. The happy faces in the pictures are the evidence. The group meets Wednesdays for a walk, lunch, and companionship. If you are interested contact **Sandy Tonelli** at 905-878-7658 or tonelli11@hotmail.com.

A return trip is planned for June. Details are in the calendar of events. A tour of the **John Foote Armouries** in Hamilton is planned for April. The building has been home to military units since 1908. Presently there are four units



housed there and the Argyll Sutherland Highlanders will be our hosts. Veterans of that regiment will be our guides. A catered lunch is planned. Some members of the Argylls have been deployed to Afghanistan and we may have the opportunity to speak to these soldiers. It looks like a great day and it would be nice to have a good number of us to show our support for them.

Keep posted on the events this coming season by viewing the District 15 website, the electronic newsletter, and the calendar on Page 16 in this issue of the Halton Herald. **Bring a Friend!** *People who are not members of RTO/ERO are more than welcome to accompany you at any of the activities listed.*

To contact Dave Wright, Chair Recreation Committee
Telephone: 905-639-5093 or email: wandave@sympatico.ca

Visit us on the Internet at www.halinet.on.ca/district15

Political Action Committee

By Linda Jones



Elliott Priest's motto, "I think, therefore I still am" is one I live by. Some of us do crosswords or sudoku, some read, others learn new skills to achieve this goal. I get involved with political matters - and it has been a very busy autumn.

First came the Federal Election. In order to try and establish where political parties stood on issues of importance to our District 15 RTO/ERO members, a survey was sent to all candidates running in Halton. Only 6 out of 18 candidates responded. These responses were placed on our website and a message was sent to all members who have their email address registered with us as to where to find these views. Hopefully, by the time of the next election candidates will see our members as a greater force to be reckoned with. We need to start asking ourselves what needs to change so that we never again spend over \$300 million on an unnecessary election to make little significant change.

A concerned member suggested we should become involved in the issue of the closing to adults of McMaster University Health Centre's Emergency Department and in-patient beds. I wrote a letter, on behalf of our District, to the Local Health Integration Network urging that more public consultation take place before they made a decision on aspects of this issue over which they had control. However, my input and that of many others into the Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation plans were ignored. Despite the huge public outcry reported in the Hamilton Spectator and widely discussed at Hamilton City Hall, the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network voted to allow the integration of services to take place.

At the Fall Senate we learned that **Harold Brathwaite**, our Executive Director, was in talks with the newly reconstituted **Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP)** with a view to cooperating on advocacy for issues of mutual interest, such as the establishment of Pharmacare. If you are over 50 you are no longer termed a senior, but a ZOOMER!

In November I attended two meetings devoted to the provision of Health Care in Ontario. The first was the Town Hall Meeting on November 19th where the issue of how the new Oakville hospital is to be funded and managed was addressed. Speakers from the Ontario Health Coalition, from the

(Political Action Committee ... continues on Page 27)

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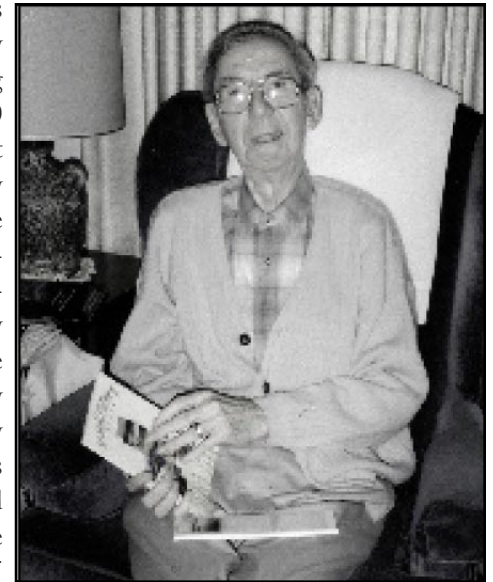
Profile: Evan Hoffman

By Gloria Simchuk and Marina Lloyd, Chair of Goodwill

Picture this! A teacher who has been retired for over 20 years, who has carefully kept photographs of all the classes he taught, including photos of individual students (with all their names!) and pictures of special events that took place in his schools. Evan Hoffman has not only preserved this memorabilia, he is happy to share it with visitors. When Gloria Simchuk visited the Hoffmans recently, Evan and his wife Jean agreed to allow Halton Herald readers a glimpse into their lives.

Evan and Jean - What A Team!

To spend time with the Hoffmans is a privilege and a pleasure. They are such a friendly, welcoming couple. Evan was born in 1930 in Preston, which is now part of Cambridge. He was an only child who lost his mother at the age of 6. Jean and Evan attended the same public and secondary schools. One could say they grew up together. Even before they completed high school, they knew they would eventually marry as they were already the other's best friend. They've been married for 56 years and have lived in the same Burlington home for 52 of those years.



Evan began his teaching career in a one-room rural school, housed in a century-old stone building in Puslinch. He was responsible for thirty-six children in 8 grades. No future assignment would be as daunting.

Experience in a rural school made a lasting impression upon him. Apart from the overwhelming task of teaching effectively to a wide range of grade levels and individual needs, he was impressed by the close connection between school and community. Evan recalled one Christmas concert when, as usual, the whole community was invited. He'd adapted a play from the book Old

(Evan Hoffman... continues on Page 22)

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Communications Committee

By Peter Gnish



The major objective of the Communications Committee is to interact with members, to keep them informed of news, activities and events in the District, and to encourage members to share their thoughts, creative ideas and some personal details with their former friends and colleagues.

The Halton Herald newsletter and the RTO/ERO District 15 website are the two most highly visible modes of communication. However E-letters with updated information are sent on a regular basis to all members who have provided us with their email addresses. If you are using a computer and have an email address, why not provide it to us. You will then be party to the latest breaking news from the District. Simply go to our website – www.halinet.on.ca/district15 and click on Email Addresses on the left, fill in the form that will appear then click on the Click to Submit button.

Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in April, 2009. So why not...

- 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.
- Share a funny story with our many readers.
- Provide us with a picture to share with our members.

Send your article or correspondence to the Editor, Peter Gnish by email: pgnish@cogeco.ca, by mail to 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton L8M 2K4 or telephone: 905-547-1628. Deadline - February 15, 2009.

Editorial Policy

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

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

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RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List

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2nd Vice President	TBA	
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Treasurer	Chub Baxter	905-643-3732

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Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
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Website	George MacRae	905 315 8581
Newsletter	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628

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

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East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
North Convenor	Iona Lobb	905-877-0767
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Recruitment and Member Services

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Committee Members:	Bev Hilton	905-632-4528
	Carolle Twiss	905-632-8036
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Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Social/Program	TBA	
Tours	Irene Chalupka	905-637-0887

Visit us on the Internet at www.halinet.on.ca/district15

Calendar of Events – January to June, 2009

- Jan 29 Breakfast at A Catered Affair, 140 Main St. East, Milton (by the Municipal Parking) 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285
- Feb 6 Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts, Musical “Hair”, 8:00 p.m.
- Feb 17 Winter RTO/ERO District 15 Meeting at the Milton Sports Centre. Robert Knuckle, author and undercover agent Carl MacLeod will provide a unique insight into the life of an undercover RCMP. See the flyer and registration form included in this mailing.
- Feb 26 Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant, Hopedale Mall, Oakville. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Mar 26 Breakfast at Johnathan’s Family Restaurant, 4121 Fairview St., Burlington. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Apr 15 Tour of the John W. Foote Armouries, 200 James St. N., Hamilton. 10:00 a.m. Guided by Argyll Sutherland veterans. A catered lunch and optional tour of the RHLI museum in the afternoon. Cost for lunch and a contribution to the veterans association. Parking will be arranged. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Mar. 11th.
- May 2 Dinner Theatre, Aldershot Players, “Key for Two” West Plains United Church, Burlington. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Cost \$35.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Feb 1st.
- May 5 District 15 Annual General Meeting. Details will appear in the April issue of the Halton Herald.
- May 13 Stratford Musical Matinee, “West Side Story.” 2:00 p.m.
- May 14 Drury Lane Theatre, 2269 New Street, Burlington, “HMS Pinafore”. 8:00 p.m. Cost \$24. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Feb 27th.
- June 3 Visit The Distillery District in Toronto. 10:00 a.m. Browse, shop, lunch at Mill Street Brew Pub, brewery tour. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 6th.
- June 24 Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts, Navy Street. 2 p.m. “Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance” with the Burlington Footnotes. \$23. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 6th.

Visit us on the Internet at www.halinet.on.ca/district15

RTO/ERO District 15 Golfing Survey

Think Spring!!! The RTO/ERO District 15 Golf Committee would like to find out if the golfers in the membership would like to continue with golf in 2009. If you are interested contact John Goodman at johng54@cogeco.ca or 905-627-4187 and give your response to the following questions:



1. Would you like the Committee to organize informal golf outings (Meet and Play) for up to 16 people at different courses 2 or 3 times a year?
2. Would you like the Committee to organize one formal tournament each year, but at different courses each year?

Please respond by March 20th in order to give the Committee time to plan the event(s).

HDSB Retirees are now able to have a CHATT account through a Retirees Conference

HDSB in partnership with the Halton Learning Foundation, the charitable organization for the school board, are offering retirees an account. The membership fee is a \$50 annual contribution to the Halton Learning Foundation. A \$35 tax receipt will be provided to the member.

For more information on how you can join the HDSB Retirees CHATT please contact Janice Rowe at the Halton Learning Foundation rowej@hdsb.ca or 905-335-3665 x3408

Are you missing CHATT?

- Staff Room Conference
- Buy/sell/trade
- Births
- Retirements
- Bereavements
- Book Club
- Film & TV Club

Contact Current Staff

Additional Retirees' Conferences as project unfolds

Visit us on the Internet at www.halinet.on.ca/district15