

REO
District 15

HALTON HERALD
Halcyon Edition
Volume 6 - January, 2010

*Friendship
Nature
Exercise
Exploring...*

2010
Health & Happiness

District 15: Living Healthy Lifestyles



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Being a Sweet Adeline...page 9



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Wellness...page 7



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Baseball Game...page 12

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President's Report

By Cecile Leach



Having just returned from a wonderful Trans-Atlantic cruise where warm weather prevailed, I am finding it very difficult to get back to work and into the holiday spirit. Although there is no thought of snow at this time I know it is coming soon!

Your District 15 Board of Directors met in early October for a full day "retreat" to do Strategic Planning for the coming years.

Our focus will be on Recruitment, Community Involvement and Program/Education for our Members. The Board of Directors is faced with the challenge of recruiting new members for positions on the Board. **Mary Lyons**, Past-President has taken on the interim role of Membership Chair and **Jan Murdoch**, our Second Vice-President, will be chairing the Program Committee for the remainder of this term. I thank both these ladies for assisting us in this way.



Two new members have joined the Board. **Phyllis Kingsley** (pictured on the left) has volunteered to chair the new "Awards Committee" and **Daliah Brown** (on the right) will be assisting our Treasurer, **Chub Baxter**. A warm welcome to both ladies! We all enjoy working on your behalf and the camaraderie we share. Why not join us by volunteering!



At the Provincial RTO/ERO Fall Senate in October, Margaret Couture was acclaimed as President, Joan Murphy as First Vice-President and Jim Sparrow became our Second-Vice-President. Our new Executive Members are Gary Fick and Leo Normandeau. Brian Kenny will remain on the Executive as Past-President. Our Provincial Liaison will be Jim Sparrow.

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

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(President's Report... continued from Page 3)

A highlight of the Fall Senate was a change in the Constitution - Article 4, 4.01 regarding Full Membership. This change was brought forth by your Halton District 15 representatives. It reads as follows: "That Article 4 - Membership, 4.01, be amended by the addition of a new item to read:

4.01ii a retired teacher with a minimum of 15 years of credited service who opted for a commuted value transfer from the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan following the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Rules in place at the time of commutation.

In the past, teachers who had commuted their pensions were not allowed Full Member privileges. The change bodes very well for our Second Vice-President who will now be permitted to attend Senate as a Senator rather than an observer and be given the opportunity to vote on your behalf.

Although I was unable to attend the **Fall General Meeting**, the positive feedback we received indicated that it had been a very successful evening. Everyone enjoyed the venue, the food and the speaker was "par excellence."

The first of our "**Wellness Series**" was well-attended and if you would like to participate in the second or third, I suggest you send in your registration forms ASAP because there was a waiting list for "*Make It Light, Healthy and Fast.*"

Mark your calendars for our **Winter Event** to be held on February 16th at the Milton Sports Centre. You will be entertained by "*The Blazing Fiddles*," a group of young musicians from Southern Ontario. They began playing together at the Grand River Cruises in Caledonia, Ontario in 2000 and are known for their high energy, versatility and wide variety of styles. From classical and fiddle to show tunes and jazz, "*The Blazing Fiddles*" have something for everyone.

(President's Report ... continues on Page 5)

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(President's Report... continued from Page 4)

I look forward to seeing many of you at our February event. For those of you heading South for the winter months and unable to attend, have a safe and warm winter! Let me end by wishing all of you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

District 15 membership is now more than 2100 strong. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members between July and November, 2009. Give them a warm welcome and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Colleen Beesley	William Behse	Maria Bertrand
George Chisholm	Darlene Davis MacLean	Teresa Demytruk
Paul Dennis	Ann Dunning	Linda Gallow
Ross Getsinger	Herald Greening	Robin Heaver
Marie-Claude Higgins	Joanne Irvine	Judy Jewitt
Betty Anne Karn	Sharon Kirlin	Steve Kisil
Catherine Lanc	Ronald Lencz	Archie Lieberman
Bonnie Manning	Pamela O'Shea	Linda Painchaud
Deborah Payne	Luba Podolsky	Ellen Reimers
Laura Robbins	Rosemary Shea	Jill Simpson
Andrew Smith	Pamela Smith	Bonnie Walsh
	Jane Wamsley	

Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in April, 2010.

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

Send your article or correspondence to the Editor, Peter Gnish by email: pgnish@cogeco.ca, by mail to 153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton L8M 2K4 or telephone: 905-547-1628. Deadline - February 15, 2010.

We Get Letters, Emails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



It's always nice to get communication from our members regardless of where they live and what they are presently doing. Your former colleagues and friends would like to know what you are up to. So plan to send me a line, an email or call me with an update. I heard from the following people over the past few months.

Bev and Marg Bowra sent greetings from Edgewater, Florida where they have their winter home for 6 months of the year. They wrote, "We arrived here yesterday after a rainy drive south caused by IDA. It is currently 51 degrees here but promises to rise back up in the mid 70's. I don't know if you knew that Marg and I spent a month in Africa. Our 2 weeks in Zomba, Malawi volunteering with locals on a variety of projects was most rewarding. We then did the tourist thing in Joburg/Kruger park safari and Cape Town. In September we shared our Malawi experience with the Burlington Ubuntu Grandwomen... We are looking forward to visiting Sydney, Australia and a 2 week cruise around New Zealand in January." Please be sure to read the article on the Bowras visit to Africa on page 35.

Joe Harwood sent a message to say, "After 4 years in Lindsay, **Gisela** and I have returned to the area and are now living in Ancaster. While we were in Lindsay I was the General Manager of the Academy Theatre - the oldest professional playhouse in Ontario. Needless to say I worked 50 hours a week+ for little pay. However, I met some great people (Murray McLauchlan, Sylvia Tyson, Ian Thomas, Mel Tillis, Roy Clark and many more) and had a great time. However, the beckoning of grandchildren called us back." Welcome back Joe.

Glen and Marilyn Hastings emailed me as follows: "Many thanks to **Colton Roberts** for his piece on the credit union. It was very flattering but I must say that many others contributed much to the credit union. **Norm Howell** and **Bernie Hurst** to name only a couple. I loved my job and the folks who belonged. I see many of you now and then. Glen retired in 1990 from Burlington Central H.S. and we have a very busy life. We both volunteer at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital twice a week as well as being on committees. I spent 6 years on the Board of Directors of the Auxiliary. I also volunteered at Dr. Charles Best School for 10 years after I retired. We both love returning to the community which has been so good to us. We have travelled to France, Portugal, Britain as well as enjoyed many cruises to the Caribbean. Glen keeps busy carving, working on the computer as well as teaching a cooking class for the men of our church." It certainly sounds like Marilyn and Glen are leading a very busy and fulfilling retirement.

Great Start to RTO/ERO Wellness Series 2009-2010

By Jan Moxey (Program Committee)



The first session in the **Wellness Series** was a resounding success. *"Make it Healthier, Lighter and Faster"* presented by **Lorraine Gougeon, RD**, took place in the Longo's Kitchen on Wycroft Road in Oakville, on October 19th. Lorraine created recipes of nutrition rich foods to add to our repertoire. Everyone enjoyed tasting several different recipes. She introduced the concept of nutrition dense foods and how making choices from these foods will enhance health. Members enjoyed the opportunity for dialogue with her regarding the latest research and information about nutrition.



After the presentation members enjoyed an informal lunch and an opportunity to socialize together. From one of the evaluation forms:

"Thank you for the opportunity to learn from someone of such high calibre. This is my first RTO event and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I look forward to the next seminar in the Wellness Series.."



Reminder: Please disregard the announcement made at the Fall Meeting about the follow-up sessions being filled. There is space still available in the two follow-up sessions. The next session, *"3 S's of Senior Exercise"* will be held on Monday, March 1, 2010. The third and final session, *"Container Gardening"* will take place on Monday, April 12, 2010. Check the flyer included in this mailing for forms and further details. General inquiries can be directed to Jan Moxey at janmoxey@cogeco.ca or 905-637-1025. Registration inquiries can be directed to Ray Smith, raysmith@cogeco.ca or 905-639-1645.

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Another Way to Stay Young and Healthy!

Meeting With Friends for The Hell With The Bell

A happy group of new retirees met for breakfast on Thursday, September 10th at the Quality Inn in Bronte.



Joyce Frank invited another group of retirees to her cottage to celebrate THWTB. District 15 members **Barb McFarlane** and **Greta Robinson** spent part of the day kayaking (see page 2). On the cover page you can see that whole group took the opportunity to enjoy the good weather with a refreshing dip in the cool waterfall.



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Join a Group and Share Positive Experiences!

Harmonize The World

By Mary Lyons

Carol Leppan, Nancy Nicholls, Jean Simpson and I (pictured on page 2) all share a love of singing. The 3 of us are members of District 15 RTO/ERO as well as of **Sweet Adelines International**, a female barbershop organization of over 30,000 members world-wide. Our chorus, North Metro, is based in Toronto and has 165 members ranging in age from the early twenties to mid-eighties. We meet every Wednesday to rehearse for upcoming shows and competitions. Not only do we practice our singing but each of our songs is accompanied by choreography which can vary in intensity and difficulty depending on the song.



Nancy has been a Sweet Adeline since 1962 and Carol joined in 1980. They sang with the Burlington Chorus before moving on to the North Metro Chorus. Besides being in the chorus, they were part of a quartet that performed at a local FWTO dinner in 1991. That evening, I asked Carol a few questions about her singing. She told me she was a Sweet Adeline and invited me to come to one of the chorus rehearsals. My first reaction was, "I'm not sure I'm interested in watching a bunch of old ladies singing on risers." I was soon to eat my words! What I saw that night blew me away! The music, the sound, the choreography and the energy of every single person on those risers made me realize that my image of Sweet Adelines was certainly not what I was seeing. Carol always reminds me that my mouth dropped lower and lower as the night went on. After one visit, I was hooked and it's been a love affair ever since. I officially became a member in 1992 and Jean followed in 2000.

(Sweet Adelines... continues on Page 10)

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(Sweet Adelines... continued from Page 9)

Becoming a member was not as simple as saying that you wanted to join. First, you have a voice test with the assistant director who suggests which of the four parts she thinks you would be best for. The following week, the director listens to you and makes the final decision. Next, you receive sheet music and an audio file of the audition song sung in your assigned voice part. Two weeks later, there is an audition where you sing the songs as part of a quartet to see how well you can hold your part in a four part harmony situation. Talk about intimidating! Even after becoming a member, there is a rigid testing program before each show or competition. All the songs being performed must be note and word perfect before you can go on stage with the chorus. This is determined by each person singing the songs to a “tester “ who has been assigned to them.

The North Metro Chorus is the largest in the world and the only Canadian chorus to have won three gold medals at the International level. Currently, our chorus is preparing to compete in Seattle, Washington in October, 2010 and we are hoping to win our 4th International gold medal. And even champions have coaches. Although our choreographer and director are considered among the best, this summer at the Nottawasaga Inn we will spend a weekend with an invited coach to help us in our final preparations for International Competition.

Part of the competition is to present a 15 minute show package. In the past, North Metro has done *Les Mis*, *Newsies*, *Mary Poppins* and *Paint Your Wagon* to name just a few. Where else could a woman transform herself from her everyday life as a mother, wife, teacher, sister, daughter, etc. and become an entertainer who has the potential to transform people’s lives through music. Being a part of such a dynamic group has given us many years of friendship, fun and support as well as the opportunity to learn more about singing and performing.

The North Metro Chorus has produced three CDs which showcase the best of our music. We are currently recording our 4th and it should be on sale in the near future. Our chorus has put on a show every 2 to 3 years and our last one was at Hamilton Place on November 7th. It was a great success. Thank you to those who were part of our audience. Thank you as well for the calls and emails telling us how much you enjoyed the show. It makes all the hard work worthwhile.

The Sweet Adeline theme song, *Harmonize the World*, sends the message of how music has the power to influence people’s lives. On a personal level, it has given us tremendous satisfaction to see how our audiences have enjoyed our music. Hopefully, the four of us can continue to enjoy this hobby for many more years and to continue, as our song says, to “harmonize the world with a song.”

Go To The Theatre and Stretch Your Mind!

Shaw Theatre

By Janet Carter-Wright

On October 9th, 29 District 15 members enjoyed the musical “*Sunday in the Park with George*” at the small Royal George Theatre in Niagara-on-the-Lake. This is a compelling story from the book by James LaPine about inspiration in art and in life. The musical tells the story of French impressionist painter Georges Seurat as he creates his masterpiece. A hundred years later, his great-grandson, another artist, learns from the ghosts of the past. The music and lyrics are by Stephen Sondheim.



During intermission and after the musical, members chatted and had lively discussions about the wonderful effects, costumes, dialogue and music. The first part dealt with Georges Seurat and his painting and relationships. The second part dealt with his great grandson and his electronic type of art. Both were very creative and extraordinary. Members not only enjoyed the play but some stayed over and enjoyed the ambiance of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Others went to the craft festival at Balls Falls in the morning and finished off the day with wonderful theatre. It was a memorable day and we look forward to next year.

Exercise For a Healthier You!

Bicycle Ride

By Dave Wright

On a cold morning in mid-October, five of us rode the Dundas Rail Trail from the end of Main St. West in Hamilton to just past Binkley Rd. We were dressed for the cold temperature and wind. With the return trip we pedalled a total 20 km. Unfortunately we were in two groups and missed getting together at the start and didn't meet on the trail. So the photograph on page 2 is only of **Dave Wright, Jennifer Lobo, and Vincent Leahy. Susan Roberts** and a friend were in the other group. By the end of the ride we were ready for a lunch of hot soup and coffee.

In the spring we will plan another ride along the beach strip from Burlington to Confederation Park. It is a paved trail and an easy ride. So join us.

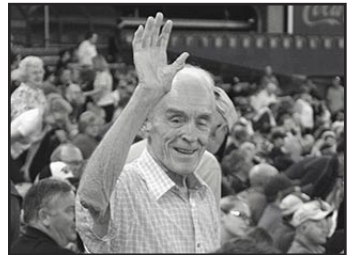
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Be Social and Enjoy Events!

District 15 Takes In A Blue Jays Game

By Dave Wright

What a wonderful turnout we had from our local district. A total of 48 seats were sold to our members for the baseball game on August 22nd.. The comraderie was great as you can see from the picture of **Jim Baker** and friend on page 2. The game was enjoyable except for the fact that the Blue Jays ended up losing to the Angels. Oh well, maybe next year. Plan to attend the next time we go.



One Day the Devil challenged the Lord to a baseball game.
Smiling the Lord proclaimed, "You don't have a chance, I've got Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle, and all the greatest players up here."
"Yes", laughed the devil, "but I have all the umpires."

**IF YOU ARE MOVING or
IF YOUR ADDRESS INFORMATION IS INCORRECT**

Contact **Dianne Vezeau** at the Provincial RTO/ERO office

In Writing: 18 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7

By Telephone: 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or 1-416-962-9463 Ext 223

or by email at dvezeau@rto-ero.org

Contact **Bill Caldwell** by telephone 905-633-9506

or by email at wscaldwell@sympatico.ca

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Exploring Healthy Living

This issue has focussed on **Healthy Living** with the inclusion of a series of articles and pictures related to the topic. We hope you enjoyed them and found them stimulating. **Now we want to know what you do to keep yourself healthy in “Body, Mind and Spirit.”** We would like you to share your ideas with the membership. And we are willing to reward you for your efforts.

“Exploring Healthy Living” Challenge

Write an article about what you believe keeps your body, mind and spirit healthy. Share it with our membership and have it printed in the Halton Herald. To do so you must enter this challenge. You will also have a chance to earn some cash.

The rules are simple!

- Make the article a page or so - a maximum of 500 words please.
- If you can, supply us with a picture or pictures of the activity, of you doing the activity, of the product - something that can enhance the article. The photos can be either in colour or black and white.

Enter as many times as you like!

- Send the article & photo(s) either electronically or by Canada Post
- By mail send your article and photo(s) to
Peter Gnish, 153 Fairleigh Ave. S.
Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4. All hard copies received will be returned
- By computer, send your article and photo(s) to me as an attachment to an email message. Send it to pgnish@cogeco.ca.

Include your name, telephone number and email address if you have one, with a brief description of the photo and how it relates to your article.

This is **NOT** a contest. We are simply Challenging you to reflect on your daily activities and tell us what keeps you healthy. Everyone making a submission will receive a cheque for \$10.00. **The Challenge deadline is February 15th, 2010.**

Have questions? Contact Peter Gnish at 905-547-1628 or pgnish@cogeco.ca.

Diet: A selection of foods for people who are thick and tired of it.

Brain cells come and brain cells go, but fat cells live forever.

Overheard about how to cure a desire to diet: “Inside me lives a skinny woman crying to get out. But I can usually shut her up with cookies...”

More From "Exploring New Horizons"

This contest was advertised in the April issue of the Herald and the top three selections were published in the September issue. The following two submissions by **Judith Robinson** and **Sandra Taylor** were judged as **Honorable Mentions** in the contest. Why not get your ideas published in the Herald? Make a submission to this month's Challenge. See page 13 for details.

My Adventures in the Book Trade

By **Judith Robinson**

Shortly after I left full-time teaching and turned 50, I began writing books. Since I was a child, I had loved to write and I wrote numerous newspaper and magazine articles over the years. But when I stopped full-time teaching and began supply teaching and tutoring, I finally found the hours to write a full length manuscript.

I joined the Professional Writers Association of Canada and met Nate Hendley at one of the Toronto chapter's evening seminars, a friendly young man who had published a few books about true crime. He recommended me to his publisher - Altitude Publishing. The company was in the process of putting together a series of short books about famous Canadians for grades seven and up. I sent Altitude a list of people I might be interested in profiling and they hired me to write a biography of faith healer, **Aimee Semple McPherson**.

Because I was writing a book that was part of a series, I had a formula to follow. This made the process much easier. I sent the 29,000 word manuscript in to the publishing company at the beginning of September, 2005 after having written it five times, in two months. Then Altitude provided me with an editor to work with, named Dianne Smyth. Dianne and I emailed the manuscript back and forth from Alberta to Ontario, until mid-October. The book came out in April, 2006.

There were several book launches of *Working Miracles: The Drama and Passion of Aimee Semple McPherson*. I was teaching a course for The University of Western Ontario at the time, and the book store had a group book launch for all of their faculty. And then I held another one in the hall of Walton Memorial United Church in Oakville on September 24 of 2006 – shown in the picture.



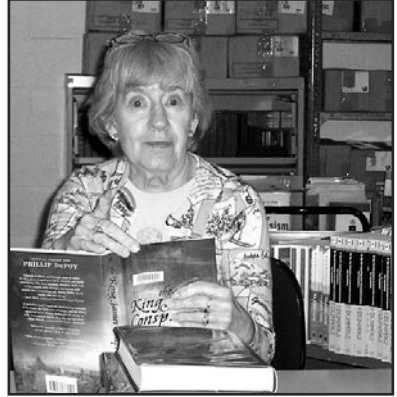
(Book Trade... continues on Page 31)

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RETIRED, TIRED and HIRED AGAIN

By Sandra Taylor

After many years of teaching and being head of a language department, my brain became slightly frazzled. Following retirement, I still became involved in my love of teaching. Yes, I did tutoring (students and adults), supply teaching and volunteering (which I still do for the Burlington Museums). However, it became rather clear to me that I had to find different employment so that my active brain remained active but in a different domain. Through the volunteer grapevine, one of the volunteers indicated that she worked for a book wholesaler and distributing company in Mississauga. The company needed book processors; why not telephone to find out what employment was possible. Being involved in language books as Department Head (perusing catalogues, examining various possibilities, ordering), I telephoned the manager of the section, drove to the company's location, had an interview with the supervisor of the Cataloguing and Processing Department and within one hour, **HIRED!** Moreover, the hours were flexible and part-time. GREAT (with a day off!).



So, what exactly do I do? It could be called detailed work. Orders arrive from various libraries across Canada on green order sheets. The books for that library are then counted to verify that all have been picked and collected. (Hopefully the picker has initialled the order so that in case of any error or omission I can verify if the book or books have been scanned). The books are catalogued and marked by a cataloguer in the front office, which have been arranged, in order according to the sheets, on large carts. These carts are then numbered according to whoever catalogued them, and placed in numerical order. The detailed work (or processing) begins.

Depending upon that library's security demands, I usually affix a bar code, security patch, wrap and tape the hard covers, or cover a spine label with a mylar patch on books with no dust cover as well as paperbacks. The security patches may be rather large or small, covering up information. Moreover, each library may demand various areas upon which the security patches are placed, as well as the bar code. Some bar codes may be placed on the front left, according to a template, or on the back cover - no template. To cover a hard cover book with

(Retired, Tired, Hired... continues on Page 33)

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Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



We are doing a lot of the same things but they have been popular. As the saying goes, "If it's not broken, don't fix it." Perhaps it is the great company at the events. So join us for a good time.

The **Art Bus Tour** in April is something new. It was brought to my attention by **Ulla Lenzen-Butt** who is an artist and has showings in the James North art community in Hamilton. **Peter Gnish** told me about it as well. Apparently these tours are lots of fun and I am all for that. If you have something you would like to do, let me know. I will try to arrange it and get you some company. Remember, we welcome your spouse and friends at all our activities.

We will do an easy **Bike Trip** again in weather that is warmer than what we had for the last one. Also, a **Nature Walk** in the spring is arranged. We host a series of **Breakfasts** from October to May - see the calendar for dates. The first one you attend in each of the locations is free. There is no time limit on how long you can stay and chat. Bring your spouse or a friend. There are deadlines for **Theatre** tickets to get good seats. The newsletters that are sent to you electronically each month and the District 15 website are reminders of events and critical dates.

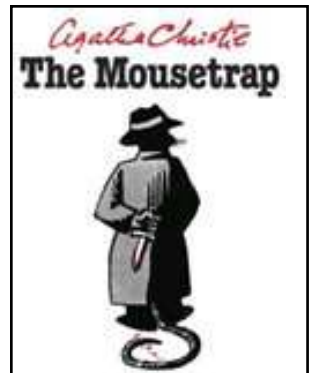
For more information and to sign up for events, contact me at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca or contact the convenors **Janet Carter-Wright** and **Paul Durnan**. A special thanks to Janet and Paul who have helped me to organize events for your enjoyment and to **Peter Gnish** and **George MacRae** for publicizing them.

Theatre Events

By Dave Wright

We went back to the **Aldershot Players Dinner Theatre** in October and enjoyed a roast beef dinner and Agatha Christie's "*Mousetrap*."

The play opened in London in 1952 and has run continuously there ever since. It is the story of a couple who has taken over the management of a hotel near London and their first four guests. A snow storm is raging outside and another guest arrives after being stranded on the road in the storm.



(Recreation Committee... continues on Page 17)

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(Recreation Committee ... continued from Page 16)

A policeman arrives on skis because he says he has come to protect the guests from someone who has murdered a woman in London and who he believes is coming to the hotel to commit another murder. The most disagreeable of the guests, Mrs. Boyle, is murdered and for the rest of the play the policeman tries to determine which of the other guests did it. At the end of the play we are sworn to secrecy so I can't tell you who did it. The cast played to a full house and portrayed the characters very well. In two evenings, our district had thirty-four members in the audience.



“Camelot,” was the **Drury Lane Musical Presentation** this fall. As usual the Drury Lane singers provide a good evening of entertainment. The musical is based on a novel about the legend of King Arthur and the knights of the round table and was written and produced by Lerner, Lowe and Hart.

It opened on Broadway in December, 1960. Prior to that it was at the O’Keefe Centre in Toronto. The story is of a king in England, Arthur, who falls in love with a lady, Guenevere. After outlining all that is wonderful in his kingdom in the song, *“Camelot”* she agrees to become his queen. He dreams of creating a forum (the round table which has no head seat) in which knights would meet and talk and make decisions rather than settling disputes in a battle. Lancelot arrives from France because he is intrigued by the idea and Arthur accepts him as a close friend. Unfortunately, Lancelot falls for Guenevere and she for him. She loves Arthur and wants Lancelot to leave. He says he won’t leave her by singing the well known ballad *“If Ever I Should Leave You.”* Arthur’s illegitimate son, Mordred, arrives from Scotland and intends to kick out Arthur and take over as king. As a result of his scheming and disclosure of the love affair the fighting starts all over again. Arthur forgives the two. As Arthur prepares for a battle he meets a young man who has come to join the army. Arthur sees him as hope for the future and sends him home with his dream of Camelot.

Snowbird Alert!!!

Members travelling south for the winter season without a valid driver’s licence because of the strike should read the full article on the topic that is posted on the District 15 website.

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Fall General Meeting With Steve Paikin

By Bev Balch



The November 4th **Fall Meeting** may end up being the highlight of the Year. Despite the cold and rain, 172 attended a spectacular evening. The Atrium provided a beautiful setting for friends and colleagues to mix and mingle. The dinner was delicious. But **Steve Paikin** was the reason for the large crowd and he did not disappoint.

Steve used his knowledge and inside connections with the news makers in Ontario to weave together the backdrop behind those events with a focus on the personalities.

Many in the audience are frequent viewers of TVO's **The Agenda** and appreciate the in depth and thoughtful discussion which is the hallmark of Steve's program. His engaging talk left us spell-bound and we could have listened for hours. Steve opened up to questions at the end of his talk and took time to chat as he autographed books.



I received an email from Steve later that evening to say, "I had a great time. Thanks for inviting me." And a big thank you to RTO/ERO District 15 for subsidizing this great evening.



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THE YACHTS OF SEABOARD	OCEANIA CRUISES®	PRINCESS CRUISES <i>escape completely</i>
NCL NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE FREESTYLE CRUISING®	CUNARD	Regent SEVEN SEAS CRUISES



Jan Murdoch
Retired from HDSB in 2001. "I love to cruise and I believe it is the best vacation value around today." Call me to discuss your vacation plans. We have hundreds of incredible cruise specials and bonus offers.

Jan Murdoch
Cruise & Vacation Specialist
www.cruiseshipcenters.ca/jmurdoch



Chuck Rattray
Retired from HDSB in 2002 "I can't think of a better way to relax and see the world than on a cruise." Let me show you why there is no better value for your vacation dollar and how you can take advantage of our many cruise specials.

Chuck Rattray
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Calendar of Events – January to June, 2010

- Jan 28 **Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant**, Hopedale Mall, Oakville.
9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Feb 11 **Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts**, “*The Mating Game.*”
- Feb 16 **Winter Event** at the Milton Sports Centre. See the enclosed flyer for details and a registration form.
- Feb 25 **Breakfast at Country Grill**, 470 Appleby Line, Burlington, at the northwest corner of New St. & Appleby Line, 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Mar 25 **Breakfast at Troy’s**, 295 Main St. East, Milton. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Apr 9 **Art Bus Tour**. Visit art galleries and tour art events in Hamilton. Meet the artists and learn about their work in a party atmosphere. Finish the evening with what is known as the “*James North Crawl.*” The bus leaves The Pearl Company, 16 Steven St. at 6:30 p.m. Cost \$15.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by March 1.
- Apr 17 **Dinner Theatre. Aldershot Players**. Play “*The Underpants*” by Steve Martin. West Plains U. C., Burlington. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Cost \$35.00. Call Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by Mar. 1.
- Apr 21 **Guided Nature Walk**. Riverwood Conservancy, Burnhamthorpe Rd.W., Mississauga. 10:00 a.m. Cost \$10.00 or less. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by March 15.
- Apr 29 **Breakfast at El Spero Restaurant**, Hopedale Mall, Oakville.
9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- May 18 **Bicycle Trip**. Hamilton Beach Strip. 10:00 a.m. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 10.
- May 27 **Breakfast at Cora’s**, 3455 Fairview St. Burlington.
Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- June 2 **Stratford Musical Matinee**. “*Kiss Me Kate.*” 2:00 p.m.
- June 22 **Oakville Theatre for the Performing Arts**, Navy Street. 2 p.m. “*Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance*” with The Burlington Footnotes. Cost: \$23.00. Contact Dave Wright at 905-639-5093 or wandave@sympatico.ca by May 6.

RTO/ERO District 15 Contact List

Executive 2008 – 2009

Past President	Mary Lyons	905-336-5744
President	Cecile Leach	905-634-8027
1st Vice President	Linda Jones	905-336-5785
2nd Vice President	Janice Murdoch	289-956-0163
Secretary	Janet Carter-Wright	905-336-5328
Treasurer	Chub Baxter	905-643-3732
	Assistant: Daliah Brown	905-825-8470

Committees

Archives	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538
Awards	Phyllis Kingsley	905-845-6911
Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030

Communications Chair	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
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.

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

Health Services	Paul Durnan	905-630-2285
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Recruitment and Member Services

Chair: Mary Lyons (Interim)	905-336-5744
Assistant: Bill Caldwell	905-633-9506
Committee Members: Bev Hilton	905-632-4528
Carolle Twiss	905-632-8036

Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Action	Linda Jones	905-336-5785
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Program	Jan Murdoch	289-956-0163
Tours	Irene Chalupka	905-637-0887

Snakes

By Eunice Cooke

If you share the sentiments of Emily Dickinson when she said: “But never met this Fellow/Attended or alone/Without a tighter breathing/And Zero at the bone;” you had better leave the room or if you are reading this, you may want to crumple up the paper and be on your way. Are you still there? Alright, then.

I want to make it clear that I am not in love with snakes. My encounters with these reptiles, however, do not give me a feeling of horror, but rather a delicious fear and a kind of fascination. Even an encounter with a poem about snakes raises goose bumps on my arms and a shiver down my back. Karen Connelly, in her “*The Lesser Amazon*” thrills me with this excerpt:

*“I found a nest of baby snakes beneath
the bathmat, living red leather,
tongues flicking an ancient orange.
They covered my feet in an exotic reptile weave,
wound up my shins and looped themselves
around my waist and neck and slid anxiously
through my slick hair.
It took me an hour to comb them out
and send them slithering to the garden.”*

At the risk of dating myself, I will tell you this. The boys at the one-room school I attended as a child used to catch garter snakes by their tails and chase the girls with them at recess. We all screamed mightily and ran as fast as we could. I guess I didn’t run quite fast enough once and got a little snake down the back of my dress. It slithered out readily but I have never forgotten the feel of it. It was weird.

When training to be an elementary teacher, our science master informed us that we needed to be acquainted with snakes so that if a student brought one in for “show and tell” we wouldn’t have hysterics. He brought a live garter snake to class and made us touch it. Its scales were dry, not slimy as we expected. It flicked its tongue at us, but we were assured that this species was perfectly harmless. I thought I had it made after that experience and would never be afraid of snakes again.

I discovered I hadn’t quite reached that blase dimension when after two years of freedom from wildlife in my classroom, it happened. A freckle-faced youngster brought a small garter snake in a big pickle jar for the edification of his peers. Bravely, I reached in and stroked its green and yellow striped sides. I had the boy pass the jar around so every pupil could do the same. I felt proud of myself. At the

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Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Mary Lyons



As you read in the last issue of the Halton Herald, **Bill Caldwell** has decided to step down as the Recruitment and Membership Chair. For the interim, I will assume that role. On behalf of the District 15 Board and membership, I would like to thank Bill for his years of service to our organization. I am also very happy to report that Bill has agreed to stay on as a member of this committee. He will continue to keep our database up to date. Please

let Bill know of changes to your home address, phone number or email address so that you continue to receive the newsletter and information about our District. You can reach him by phone at 906-633-9506 or by email at wscaldwell@cogeco.ca.

In April, District 15 held a very successful **Retirement Planning Workshop**. The current Provincial direction is that any education worker can now be a member of RTO/ERO. Not only teachers attended our session but also custodians, secretaries and educational assistants. Our District will continue to actively recruit new members from all education employee groups. If you know of people who may qualify for membership, please pass along their names to me and I will contact them with information about RTO/ERO and the benefits of membership. I can be reached at 905-336-5744 or by email at mlyons3@cogeco.ca.

Plans are underway for a **Wine and Cheese** reception for those planning to retire in 2010. The information will be in the schools by March so if you know of any education workers who will be retiring, ask them to look for information which will be sent to their schools in March. As well, those who have retired but who are not yet members of RTO/ERO are welcome to come and learn more about the organization. If you pass those names along to me, I will contact them and send them an invitation.

As I mentioned, this role as Recruitment and Membership Chair is an interim one for me and we are actively looking for someone to take on the role. Please consider becoming a part of the District 15 Board. It's a great way to learn more about RTO/ERO and also District 15. Please call me or email me if you would like more information.

If you have any questions or concerns about membership, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me. If I don't know the answer to your question, I will certainly find someone who can help. Have a happy and safe 2010. I look forward to seeing many of you at one of our events.

Remembering Emerson Lavender: A Gentleman and Scholar

By Marina Lloyd - Chair of Goodwill Committee



His name was Emerson but everyone called him “Em.” Emerson Stewart Lavender was born May 20, 1925 and died September 25, 2009. Throughout his eighty-four years, Emerson played many roles with devotion, intelligence, compassion and wisdom. He was son and brother, husband, father and grandfather, seaman and veteran, teacher, principal and Director, author and historian, mentor and friend.

The youngest of three sons of a United Church minister, Emerson spent his formative years in Schreiber, a CN railroad town on the north shore of Lake Superior. Lorna Scott, who was featured in the last issue of the Herald, remembers being sent by her mother to the United Church manse with baked goods and receiving a treat from Emerson’s parents in return. His love for the landscape of his childhood was shared during the many trips north with his wife, Maddie and his three girls - Jan, Susan and Beth. But, as Beth recalled during her memorial service eulogy, her father wanted his children to appreciate, not only the north, but the west, east and south of this country of which he was so fiercely proud.



Emerson enlisted in the Navy at the age of 19 and served as a wireless operator on HMCS Copper Cliff, one of the corvettes in the 7th Canadian mid-ocean escort. He travelled between St. John’s, Newfoundland and Londonderry, Ireland escorting Allied merchant ships across the Atlantic Ocean. After the war ended, he enrolled in the University of Toronto, graduating with an Honours degree in History in 1949. In 1957, he joined the staff of the newly-opened Nelson High School. He taught history at the school until 1963, going from there to become the principal of Burlington Central High School until 1967. **Doug Lawless**, who was a colleague of Em’s for eleven years from 1959 to 1970, says that Emerson believed that everyone in the school system was there to support students and teachers, particularly students. In Doug’s words, he was “a gentleman, a scholar, a writer and a loyal friend who loved hard work and excellence.” Emerson retired as Director of Education in 1981 and worked at OISE from 1983 until 1989.

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(Remembering Em Lavender ... continued from Page 24)

Even after retirement, he eagerly accepted any opportunities to spend time with students. He spoke to Grade 10 History classes at Nelson H.S. on numerous occasions. **Miles Ross**, one of the history teachers at the school, recalls how the students sat “mesmerized” as Emerson talked about the conditions on board HMCS Copper Cliff, his role as a telegraph operator and his scariest moment when he mistook a large whale for an enemy submarine. He would also meet these Nelson students at the Naval Monument in Spencer Smith Park during their walking tours of downtown Burlington and describe for them, the role of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Merchant Marine. He was, for many students, the human face of war.



Emerson spoke of the war as being his lucky war - lucky because he survived the rages of the sea and the enemy, lucky because he wasn't obliged to fight in the Pacific and lucky because, being a veteran, he was able to enroll in university even though he had not graduated from high school. He served on Nelson's Wall of Distinction committee and on the 50th Anniversary committee. He participated in Remembrance Day assemblies and was on hand to greet visitors from Burlington's twin city of Apeldoorn in the Netherlands. Before the Teen Tour Band left for Apeldoorn in 2005, Emerson addressed the band members, reminding them of the bonds of friendship that were forged during the war between Holland and Canada and retelling the story of the downed airmen who were helped by Dutch people. Grade 10 student, **Kacey Neeley**, interviewed him for her World War II History project and when she won a Halton School Boards' Visions Canada Award, she accepted her prize from Emerson's hands.

Emerson's daughter, **Beth** described her father as a man who could convey much wisdom with few words. “Be very good to each other” and “One day at a time” are two sayings that she remembers well. However, it was when he put pen to paper that he was at his most articulate. His Remembrance Day letter to the CBC program Morningside about a schoolmate named Warren, who was shot down in France in June 1944, was so moving that it was reprinted in **Peter Gzowski's** *The Morningside Papers*. Emerson wrote newspaper articles, letters to editors and co-authored three books - *A Thousand Ages*, *The Evaders (True Stories of Downed Canadian Airmen and Their Helpers in World War II)* and *A Book of Remembrance*. He co-edited *A Source Book for Ancient and Medieval History*.

(Remembering Em Lavender... continues on Page 26)

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(Remembering Em Lavender ... continued from Page 25)

A sense of gratitude characterized Emerson's whole life, even in the midst of great difficulty and suffering. He never took life for granted. Even after his last surgery, he talked of how thankful he was for the Canadian system of universal healthcare and for the compassionate care he was receiving at both Hamilton General Hospital and St. Joseph's Villa. He considered himself to be a lucky man but all those he met along his life's journey also consider themselves fortunate to have received so many gifts from the heart of the man they called "Em."

Health Services Committee

By Paul Durnan



I'll continue on from the report made in the September edition of the Halton Herald. It was hitting highlights from the health representatives' manual frequently asked questions section:

- Be aware that glasses ordered in December but paid for the following January are applied for the year in which they are paid for in full.
- Each eligible participant with benefit coverage is entitled to separate benefit maximums. Claims that you submit to the RTO/ERO Health Plans are attributed to your Plan's maximum and the claims for your spouse and dependents are attributed to their Plan's maximum.
- In certain cases, ambulance services for emergency treatment are not completely covered. Any amount above the provincial plan shall be reimbursed under the RTO/ERO Extended Health Plan at 80%.
- Dental Specialist fees are not a covered expense. RTO/ERO Dental Plan expenses are based on the current General Practitioner's fee guide. If you choose to receive treatment from a specialist, the claim would be adjudicated based on the General Practitioner's fee guide in the province where the dental services are performed. You would be responsible for the difference.
- Dental pre-determination (if exceeding \$600) must be proposed to Johnson Inc. in advance to determine how much will be paid. For major restorative treatment the pre-treatment radiograph will be requested.
- If you don't want dental coverage then your spouse/dependent won't have it either.
- The RTO/ERO Extended Health Plan provides for more drugs than the Ontario Drug Benefit (O.D.B.) Program. As well, it covers vision care, 15 paramedics, private duty nursing, and travel coverage (including trip cancellation and interruption delay).

Any comments or questions call me at 905-630-2285.

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Pension Committee

By Jim Baker



Matters of Interest

1. *Quality Service:* The Ontario Teachers Pension plan prides itself on the high level of service it provides to its clients. The counsellors who provide answers to your enquiries, either by phone or internet, are well qualified. They are all university graduates and are mentored for one year before they fully assume their responsibility.
2. *Community Agencies and Services Including Long-Term Care:* If you are seeking information for yourself or others (relatives) you should direct your calls to Community Care Access Centres at 1-866-243-0061. A new long distance number for human services, 211, is to be used, not 911 (emergency only) in a number of provincial regions. If your area has not been equipped with the service yet, call the Community Care Access Centres telephone number above.

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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Political Action Committee

By Linda Jones



In October, I attended an Open House held by the **Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network** to hear about their Clinical Services Plan for 2011-2013. I had the opportunity to speak to the Chair, Board Members and staff including the Executive Director. No copies of the report were available to be taken home. The plan appears to be at a very general stage resembling a “vision” document e.g. “the right care, in the right place, at the right time” - ‘apple pie’ statements, whose implications are not yet known. We do know that a hospital in Niagara has already been closed and some ERs have been closed or are slated to be closed in the near future in this catchment area.

I asked why the public was not allowed to make delegations to the LHIN in front of other citizens as one can do to our School Boards and Municipal Councils. Such a delegation allows for transparency and accountability which every publicly funded institution should be required to provide. I also asked why no members of the public (health care clients) were included on the Steering Committees. Those listed were representatives of agencies or service providers. I never received a satisfactory answer to either question. I requested a copy of a couple of sections of the report and received a massive package of papers and a video sent by courier. I would rather see my tax dollars and yours spent more wisely.

When a government puts forward a Bill in a Legislature, the public quickly learns through the media or opposition politicians what the implications are. For a public institution to hold a little publicized Open House that has the potential to have a major impact on our lives smacks of an attempt to hide their process and procedures. It is unlikely to provide the LHIN with the kind of community feedback that is truly needed. I would like to acknowledge RTO/ERO member **Marie Jacobs**, who has been tenacious in trying to hold this LHIN to account and has given me great support, encouragement and advice.

BURLINGTON SENIORS' ROUNDTABLE

Since Burlington is home to 46% of the seniors in Halton, these discussions were sponsored by the United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton in partnership with the Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee. The 4th session in the series, titled “*Healthy Communities: Collaborate, Communicate and Consult*,” was held in mid-November. It was reported that Burlington Municipal Council has adopted a resolution to identify the City of Burlington as an “AGE-FRIENDLY CITY”

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as defined by the World Health Organization. There is a four page checklist of age-friendly city features, which can be used for self assessment and charting progress. It can also be used by groups of seniors such as ours to describe how the checklist of features matches our own experience of the city's positive characteristics and barriers.

We heard of community initiatives such as Food for Life, Partnership Aldershot, the Seniors' Centre partnered with Acclaim Health and Active Aldershot. Finally we discussed what our organization could be doing for active seniors, supportive seniors and supported seniors and to ease the transition between these stages. It was suggested that since retired teachers travel a lot we could go to long term care homes and do travelogues, which would help with feelings of isolation. There will be a final report summarizing what has been learned presented in February, which I will share with you in another report.

Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



Hello again. Since our last edition of the Halton Herald I have added five more items to our Archives scrapbook.

In September the Burlington branch of the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario (RWTO) held an information session to learn about RWTO and the benefits of joining. There are three branches in Halton. They are Burlington, Oakville and Lydia

Snow which serves Milton, Georgetown and Acton. Many of our women members of RTO/ERO Halton District 15 including our executive and board of directors, also belong to RWTO. For more information please contact **Mary Lyons** at 905 336-5744 or mlyons3@cogeco.ca.

In October the SignPost page of the Burlington Post included a photo of our member **Bev Bowra**. Bev and two other members of the Burlington Lakeshore Rotary Club were in Zomba, Malawi where they had volunteered for a two week Sweat Equity program assisting Dignitas International and Emmanuel International with school, health, water and sanitation projects. They were a team of 12, with other friends of Rotary from Burlington, Hamilton, Millgrove and the Toronto area. Kudos to you Bev for donating your time and effort to this worthy cause. Read about his trip. The article begins on page 35.

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The November issue of Snap Burlington featured a photo of our members **Carroll Goodwin, Sonja Spelman** and **Joan Thomas**. They were attending the celebrations at St. Gabriel Elementary School in Burlington which celebrated its 50th anniversary on September 29th. The festivities began with Bishop Bergie officiating at the mass at St. Gabriel Church followed by a barbecue and open house at the school. All former and present staff and students were invited to attend. I personally have very fond memories of this school as my children attended "St. Gab's" and I spent five wonderful years there before my retirement. Congratulations to St. Gabriel School for their 50 years of dedicated education of their students and hopefully many more years ahead.

Sadly, our scrapbook now contains the obituaries of two of our members. Both obituaries had been posted in the Hamilton Spectator. **Thomas Hugh Ortwein** passed away on August 23, 2009 at the age of 76 after a courageous battle with cancer. Hugh was a respected educator with the Halton Public Board for more than 30 years. He spent his first years as a teacher, then as a principal at various schools, retiring from his last post at Bruce T. Lindley in 1988. Some of you who taught with Hugh might remember that one of his favourite places was at Lakes End Lodge in Restoule, Ontario where he spent many memorable summers with his loved ones. **Emerson Stewart "Em" Lavender** passed away on September 25, 2009 at the age of 84. Em came to Burlington in 1957 as part of the original staff of Nelson High School having formally taught in Huntsville, Richmond Hill and Thornhill. He was principal of Burlington Central High School from 1963-1967 and served in various administration posts, retiring as Director of Education for the Halton Public School Board in 1981. He then served at OISE from 1983 to 1989. Em was co-author of *"A Thousand Ages"*, *"The Evaders"*, *"A Book of Remembrance"* and co-editor of *"A Source Book for Ancient and Medieval History."* These educators will be sadly missed and fondly remembered, each in his own way for their valuable contribution to the Halton Public District School Board and its students and staff.

If you have been following my reports, you will by now be aware of the many different kinds of newspaper and magazine clippings that are being sent to me to include in our Archives scrapbook. 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 District 15 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. Until next time, keep warm!

(Book Trade... continued from Page 14)

I gave a talk for a national book club in Toronto - arranged by one of my former students. I did a book signing at Books Expo Canada, the book trade's massive annual book fair at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where I met a number of other authors and hundreds of book lovers. And I gave two public readings - one in Hamilton as part of "LitLive," a monthly reading series, and one in Peterborough, through the Writer's Union of Canada, for which I had my expenses paid.

About a year after the book came out, the publisher began to have serious financial difficulties and eventually went under. I did not receive any royalties on the sales of my book. I did receive a small advance of \$1,000 - not much for such a long and laborious process. But I am still happy to have my book in print. James Lorimer, a more established publisher, contacted me a week after Altitude went under - and told me that they wanted to continue publishing my book. So three years after it was published - the book is still in print. But I have yet to receive any royalties other than my advance. Writing books is not a way to get rich! My friend Nate lost thousands of dollars of royalties when Altitude went under. I'm not sure how much I lost because I don't know how many books were sold. It's a sad commentary for such a labour of love.

On May 27, 2009 I went down to "Book Expo America" in New York City to find a literary agent. Because the Canadian book industry appears to be going through a fair amount of turmoil, I decided that I wanted to find an American publisher for my next book - just to make sure I get my royalties next time around. And it wouldn't be a bad idea to find an agent - because agents usually know which companies are headed for trouble and they're not likely to cut a deal with one that's about to go under. They want to make their percentage.

The "Writers and Agents Day," run by *Writer's Digest*, consisted of a series of panels of editors and publishers offering advice to authors and key note speeches from authors and experts. In the afternoon hundreds of writers from all over the world got a chance to line up and give a three minute pitch of their book idea to 70 editors and agents. I managed to talk to eight. Although the agents had differing opinions as to how I should approach my book, they all seemed to love my concept. I found the day immensely worthwhile. The registration cost me about \$200 American and the flight out of Buffalo \$119 all inclusive. Yes - it was an expensive way to spend a day - but I believe that the results will be more than worth it. I learned that it's much easier to see an agent at a writer's conference than it is to reach them through email. Each agent gets thousands of emails a year and they may only take on about 25 clients - usually referred to them through their pool of writers.

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I am currently polishing my book proposal – the document that agents use to sell a book to a publisher. An agent will only take me on as a client if they feel that my proposal will sell the book. The proposal consists of sample chapters, an author's bio, a marketing and promotions plan, a sales hook, and a summary of all of the chapters. I am finding writing this sales tool a lot harder than writing the actual book. But I am persisting. A number of good books on how to write book proposals are available through the public libraries. The guru on the subject is Michael Larsen and I met him at the conference.

I have also purchased several books which profile individual agents – the best of which is Jeff Hermann's yearly guide. The process is not easy but I do plan on writing more books. It is a rewarding and fulfilling experience in spite of the financial drawbacks and I would sincerely recommend it to anyone.

Happy writing!

(Snakes ... continued from Page 22)

end of the day, I suggested that it be taken home and the seven-year-old procurer of snakes set the jar on the back counter while he got ready to catch the bus. After all the children had lined up and left, the jar with its occupant was still there! It had been forgotten in the rush. I checked that the air holes were still open, gathered up my marking for the evening and left. Surely, the boy would take his snake home the next afternoon. I would put the jar into his hands myself.

In the morning, I came early to my classroom. The jar was empty. The snake had escaped. It had to be in the room. I checked all the obvious places, the waste basket, sneakers in the cloakroom, and under my desk. No snake. Then, I started on the pupils' desks. I felt inside each desk among all the paraphernalia that grade ones collect hoping I wouldn't feel the cold dry scales of a coiled-up reptile. It was impossible to look in the desks because they were too close to the floor. It was a mystery where that snake had got to until I remembered the art cupboard at the back of the room. It had open shelves for all kinds of paper.

And, of course, there it was coiled up on a pile of red construction paper! Courageously, I reached it and it wound itself around my wrist. Heart pounding, I carried it to the empty jar and gently eased it off my arm into it and screwed the top back on. I avoided looking at its beady eyes and flicking tongue. With a satisfied sigh, I continued preparing the lessons for the day albeit with shaking hands.

Now, that wasn't so bad, was it? Oh, you say, even so, you wouldn't want to comb baby snakes out of your hair! Neither would I, that's just waaaaay too creepy!

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(Retired, Tired, Hired... continued from Page 15)

a dust jacket, I must use a dust cover. The mylar dust covers come in different sizes to accommodate the various book sizes. Nothing is standard in this work. Because books come in all sizes and shapes, tape, dust covers, and laminate sheets also have different sizes to accommodate that book size. When I wrap and tape a book, or laminate a pocketbook, I must be certain that I have chosen the correct size. Sometimes, the library's name is stamped on the top of each book (try that on thin, narrow books - little space!). I also must separate books according to the branch of that central library, which means stamping a branch label with the date, a week in advance of processing said order. Some libraries have rush orders, which demand a 24 hour turn-around for processing. These may be best-seller orders and must be completed quickly before other orders!

Some libraries have a standing order of mass market: another kind of rush for the end of each month. Again, it means that I or another processor, must stamp the library's name on a certain page, as designated by the library, place bar codes in the correct area of the book, verify that the spine labels are designated correctly, place a coloured label on the spine according to genre and level of reading, plus security patches.

At times, I help in taping together boxes and packing the books to be shipped, especially if there is a back-log of books to be shipped. Invoice numbers, number of boxes, and name of library are written on each box. Or, if many books arrive, I also shelve the books, in alpha order according to the order sheets, on the designated shelf for that library. The warehouse can be rather crowded with a lot of books piled high on skids, let alone on the book shelves! When this happens, there is very little space to move around, or to move the carts so that the truck driver can bring in the orders. Or, if a library returns some books - for whatever reason - which have already been processed, yes, I unprocess them, using a handy little scraper and Goo-Gone (neat stuff). Or, if the order has a book or books missing, it is my duty to find it/them, either on the designated shelf, on the cart, or even in the other warehouse. This is time-consuming!!

Another responsibility is inventory - yes, counting books or order numbers! Time-consuming again, as the inventory counting can take an entire day (although I do count the French books because no one else can read French)! It is not just books which I process. There may be CD, and/or DVD orders involved. This is a particular process necessitating manual (with scissors or a cutting board) dexterity (thank goodness for Kindergarten cutting and pasting!). Affixing labels, bar codes, writing the bar code number on each CD, in a certain area, putting them in

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the correct order and in the correct hard case demanded by that library; all that takes time and careful measuring and manipulation. The cutting and pasting is for the original boxes to be re-vamped to fit a hard plastic case. This can be rather difficult in measuring and cutting correctly - either with scissors or a very sharp cutter. Most of this kind of cutting can be a “guesstimate situation”.

There are two areas for this company. The first is the actual book warehouse where all the books are received and stored; plus the showroom, plus the data processors and the customer relations people. The second is the Cataloguing and Processing department in another building close by. I forgot to say that I do work with other processors in the second warehouse. There are 4 in the front office area (with 5 cataloguers), and another and myself in the back where the books are stored and the packing is done - a total of 6 processors. We have large desks, plenty of room to process the books and to keep all the “utensils” of the trade.

A final job is cleaning around our area. With all the cutting, laminating, covering, etc., a lot of paper stuff finds its way on the floor. So, every so often, sweeping, tidying and carrying out the garbage are demands placed upon my co-worker and myself (general housekeeping). However, I do have a 30 minute lunch and a 15 minute break (if I want it). Most of the time I have a snack while working, making certain that I leave no traces of that snack in or on a book. Careful, careful!

And that is my day job, which I am enjoying! Quite different than teaching or the other responsibilities connected to being a Department Head. No exams to mark, no lessons to plan, no parents' complaints, no new programmes or textbooks to examine! - which is exactly what I said to my fellow workers when they asked me if I were bored! Not, not and not! My mind remains active but in a different field of work. Just great, thank you very much!!!



Book of Remembrance

(For the period July to November, 2009)

We remember with fondness

Keith Allan

Peter Carmichael

Emerson Lavender

Myra Millson

Winifred Rolph

Enid Ursel

Louise Bailey

John Grosso

Lydia Lencz

Hugh Ortwein

Peggy Sandham

Joseph Walsh

Evelyn Carleton

Kenneth Jackson (April)

Lelia Lindsay

Cameron Robertson

Norma Stewart

Changing Lives in Malawi

By Bev Bowra

On April 23, 2009 our 12 member Sweat Equity team departed from Pearson Airport for Zomba, Malawi, Africa. Our team, consisting of Rotarians from Hamilton and Toronto, embarked on a 2 week work experience planned for us by 2 charitable organizations, **Dignitas** and **Emmanuel International** based in Ontario. After 24 hours of flights and a van ride from Blantyre, Malawi, we arrived at Annie's Lodge in Zomba, our home from which we ventured daily to complete community projects with the locals at preselected sites.

The project organizers who provided transportation to the work sites in the surrounding countryside gave us the opportunity to choose our daily tasks. These include cleaning and painting 8 school classrooms, refurbishing a drilled well on the school grounds, organizing 700 recently acquired books in the new library, presenting school supplies to the students, participating in sanitation lessons, short teaching experiences in several classrooms, a hospital visit to see doctors and nurses identifying and treating HIV/Aids patients, painting 2 new village based buildings and accompanying trained village women on daily trips on foot/bicycle to several villages to check on patients living far from the hospital.

My wife, Marg received great appreciation from the school principal for organizing the library books. I was rewarded



by the enthusiasm of the kids when we journeyed to several schools and presented them with new soccer balls donated by my Lakeshore Club. We had many memorable experiences.



The school where we worked had 1600 students who walked bare-footed from up to 5 kilometers to arrive at 7:30 a.m. for a 5 hour day. There were 8 teachers with over 200 students in each class. There was

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little evidence of school materials with teaching mainly by rote. Teachers lived on the school grounds in 2-room houses and earned the equivalent of \$120 per month. In year 7 and 8 many girls stayed home to help their mothers.

Many orphans were being housed, fed and protected by older village women since their parents had died from aids and diseases contracted from bad water and primitive sanitation. Each morning when we arrived in the villages to do our tasks we were greeted by locals with song and dance. We joined in and then went to work with our new friends helping us.

We were pleased to see that our organizations were training locals and employing them in tasks so that they take ownership and pride in the projects. We hope we did our part to improve life in the Zomba District. For Marg and me it was a very rewarding and life-changing experience.

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Pictures and Excerpts from

Reflections on India North and South

By Ken Ellis

Based on a month long tour of India in February of 2009 that Ken and his wife Louise took. For the full textual account of this excellent article go to the RTO/ERO District 15 website.



A wonderful home stay with a family in the Kerala Backwaters - an area of some 700 small islands interconnected by waterways like canals - was a highlight of the trip in the Kerala area. The wide waterways, reminded us of Venice with water taxis, ferries and small canoes except instead of tightly packed European buildings, here there are the most idyllic pastoral scenes with small houses spaced out on the

banks with brilliant green rice paddies behind.

We also learned much about religion here, especially Hinduism, as we visited various working and decommissioned temples. For the newcomer it's difficult to comprehend the system. There are, for example, millions of names for deities. Even experts don't know them all. This is because there



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are regional language names as well as personal family ones. It seems however after much talking to local guides that the religion can be traced back to 3 deities and



their consorts (recall that Christianity talks of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, not to mention Mary and all the Saints.) The main Hindu deities are Brahma, the Creator, and his consort Saraswathi; Vishnu, the Maintainer and Protector and his consort Lakshmi; and Shiva, the Destroyer, and his consort Parvati. These deities encompass the main life forces. They all have symbols and some images and have many arms holding symbols of their power such as Shiva's trident. They also have a symbol of their transport such as Brahma who rides a swan.

In Bundi in eastern Rajasthan, we stayed in a wonderful small hotel with a garden and concrete patio courtyard. After visiting an historic palace overlooking this "blue city," we participated in Holi, the Festival of Colours, one of 2 big Hindu celebrations (Diwali, the Festival of Light is in November.) In the run-up to Holi, small piles or bags of iridescent coloured powder such as violet, yellow, green and blue, called "gulal" are sold on the street. The traditional idea we were told, was to buy 2 or 3 bags of colours which you feel represent you. When Holi starts, you spread small handfuls onto friends and even strangers. They in turn do the same to you. Thus you mix colours with your community. This is where the fun begins. Holi atmosphere, especially for children, is a mixture of the excitement of Canadian kids at Christmas and Halloween - the latter element involving a bit of mischief. We began by buying used clothing in the market (clothes get covered with colour). We started with our group in the concrete courtyard and spread colours on each other. It quickly deteriorated (as is custom) into a disorganized mirthful riot with colours spread on the face, in the hair and even by squirted water guns and buckets. (I was totally blue at the end and one of the Swedish ladies had pink in her hair that was still there at the end of the trip.) All this was accompanied by much laughter as people suddenly got a surprise colour attack. It took several days for the colour to come out. In the street over the next 2 days there was evidence of people having been "attacked." Our jeeps were even ambushed by children on rural roads. They blocked the road with branches and demanded a "colour exchange" or a small fee in order to pass the blockade. It was all

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in good spirit, however. They never sprayed water for example when we told them powder only. Everywhere people would joyously shout out “Happy Holi” as we passed. In all, the experience gave us a sense of belonging to a community since Hindus all over India celebrate this festival with children getting time off school.

As we got ready to leave India we felt only then had we the time to reflect on the wondrous educational experience it had been. Perhaps the following best encapsulates our feelings. We had many images in our heads

before coming here of crowds, dirt, history, heat and wandering cows. All this we did encounter and it became part of the experience, but there is something we have noticed whose import we have not yet digested. You see cows placidly walking amongst traffic or nearly brushing you as they pass with their doleful eyes. Feral dogs wander with each other in playful packs or lie on the dirt streets amongst the goats, people and cars. It’s like they all, people and animals, co-exist in harmony.

The other morning at dawn as we left our hotel, we saw 2 cows lying down in the middle of the road with a feral dog curled up for warmth with them. Later, we’ll ruminate more about the significance of all of this, but for now I think Tennyson had it right in his great poem “Ulysses”:

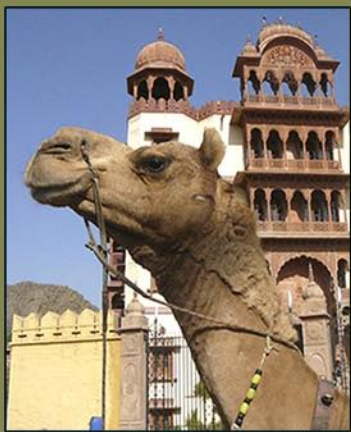


*I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro’
Gleams that untravell’d world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!*

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Reflections on India



Changing Lives in Malawi

