

REO HALTON HERALD

District 15

September, 2017

Blooms for Africa

*Never doubt that a small group
of thoughtful, committed citizens
can change the world.*

- Margaret Mead



Connecting

With our Nation's Past
by Ruth Nicholson
page 34



With Nature
by Soraya Rench
page 38



With Historic Places
by Marie Schaefer
page 36



President's Report

By Claudia Stewart



Greetings fellow retirees. Did you have a memorable summer of 2017 adventure? Cruising in the Mediterranean, hiking in Spain, visiting one of the national parks of Canada for free, waterskiing on the lake at your cottage? Please share your adventures with us. We love to hear about our members' experiences. Please send articles for the next issue of the Halton Herald to **Nanci Wakeman**, our Halton Herald Coordinator, at nanci.wakeman@gmail.com.

Micki Clemens has been hard at work finding an intriguing guest speaker for our upcoming fall luncheon so take a look at her Program Committee Report. The centre page of the September Halton Herald is where you will find the registration form, which you send with your cheque, to **Lynda Kozak**, our newest program committee member.

Colton Roberts has written about an upcoming opportunity to learn more about the RTO/ERO benefits package. In association with District 13, Hamilton-Wentworth Haldimand, Colton has planned an event for which you can register to answer any benefits questions. Colton and the Health Services Committee are looking for a member or two to provide practical assistance with tickets and registration for the event as well as to offer suggestions for planning wellness workshops for 2018. It is very helpful to have a number of people sharing their ideas, taking a role in planning workshops and finding speakers for presentations.

Some of you reading this issue are brand new members of RTO/ERO District 15 and as such you are our best ambassadors to help others learn about the advantages of RTO/ERO membership. If you attended our *"To Hell With The Bell"* brunch, share some of your impressions of the experience with readers of the Herald as well as with your teaching colleagues who may be approaching retirement.

As autumn approaches and you resume your volunteer activities, please consider trying your hand at an RTO/ERO District 15 opportunity. We are specifically looking for an individual or a couple of people with some political awareness, knowledge, and interest to join the RTO/ERO District 15 Board to keep us informed about the government's movement to limit defined pension benefits - a move that could be very detrimental to seniors generally. As our stated provincial goal is to be the voice of seniors, RTO/ERO recognizes the role we play in influencing government agencies to protect the pensions of all seniors. Can you help the board keep

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

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

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

informed and up to date on the progress of this issue? Please contact me through our website district15rto-ero.org. Look for the "contact us" button.

Table of Contents

Committee Reports	Pages
Archives	27
Awards	31
Book of Remembrance	26
e-Newsletter	30
Health Services	12
New Members	11
Pension	27
President's Report	3
Program	13
Recreation	9
Recruit/Member Services	13
Tours	39
Web master	26
District 15 Events	
Annual General Mtg	14
Calendar of Events	25
Contact List	20
Distinguished Service Award	8
Fall General Meeting	22
Foundation Report	21
Health Seminar	17
Scholarship Winners	19
Upcoming Program Events	16
Articles	
Blooms For Africa	32
Bob Williams	6
Freeman Station	18
Making Connections	34
McMaster Aging Portal	18
Mexico	40
Spice Up a Party	10
We Get Letters	5

Dave Wright, our esteemed recreation director, has a list of fall activities you may be interested in attending, so check out the Calendar of Events. We are looking for an individual or a team of people to plan future activities and fun events – golf, a snooker match, a trip to a baseball game - anything you and other members may enjoy doing. Dave, who is retiring as Director of Recreation after many years of volunteering, has agreed to coach and share his wealth of experience with the person or team who will take on this portfolio. Please contact me through our website district15rto-ero.org. Again, look for the "contact us" button.

Response to our Tours director, **Jan Murdoch's** presentation about the tour to Australia in 2018 has been very exciting. You can learn more about it in her report.

The 50th anniversary for RTO/ERO is a reason to celebrate in 2018. District 15 is looking for a few members to demonstrate ways our members support the communities where we live. If you can tell us about a volunteer activity that helps others in Halton, please let me know about what you are doing. Statistics show that over 70% of retired educators do some sort of volunteer work after retirement. We should celebrate those efforts and inspire others to become involved. Volunteerism helps us gain experiences and friendships that enhance our lives and increase our sense of wellbeing and enjoyment in our retirement. Contact me at district15rto-ero.org.

I am very happy to be able to represent District 15 as your president this year and look forward to welcoming you to our luncheons and events.

We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



I would like to acknowledge in this issue the following members who sent holiday cards to my Hamilton address while I was in Florida last winter. They were not recognised in the April issue.

Sue Rietschin: sent her yearly report along with her Christmas card. She said she and husband Jurg, travelled to New York city to visit a new set of twin grandkids. This was followed by a driving trip to San Antonio, Texas; then another to New York, Vermont and Quebec. Their third trip was to Switzerland and Bavaria. In June, Sue cycled from Guelph to Long Point on Lake Erie with a group of 12 women.

Fern Tinney: wrote “Thank you for your greetings and letter. I appreciate getting RTO information.”

Mary Thornton: also said she appreciated receiving the Christmas greeting letter sent to all members living outside of Halton.

Helen Van Sickle: included a Christmas letter in her holiday card. She said she has had a “pretty boring year as I am confined to a wheelchair in a nursing home.” She says she now has four grandchildren and always looks forward to seeing them.

Since then we have had a dry spell with only one letter coming to me. The next issue of the Herald comes out in January, 2018. Why not start that year off by sending me an e-mail (pgnish@gmail.com) or a letter (153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8M 2K4 or even just call (905-547-1628) by November 15, 2017 to let us know what is happening to you these days. Your friends and colleagues love to read this column. You can add to their pleasure by jotting a few words and sending them to me for inclusion in the next issue.

Cindy Durdan: wrote, “Well, after 47 years in Burlington, my husband John and I are embarking on a big move to Niagara-on-the Lake. Reading your letters in the Halton Herald, it seems we could almost start a chapter down there. We are looking forward to this new adventure, but at the same time know we will miss the wonderful city of Burlington. We raised both of our children here, saw grandchildren born here, and enjoyed all the wonderful activities this community offers families. I enjoyed all of my teaching career in Burlington and Kilbride, and made so many lasting friendships, which I know will continue.

Thanks for all the work you put into this publication and I know I will continue to enjoy it as a connection to Halton.”

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

Bob Williams-a Lifelong Learner

By Marina Lloyd - Chair Goodwill Committee

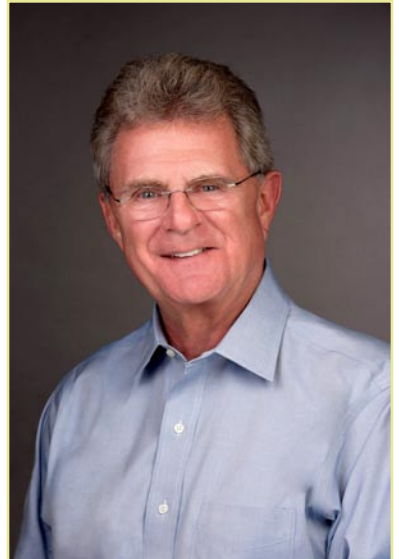


In September 1970, 26-year-old Bob Williams walked into Lord Elgin HS, eager to take up his first teaching assignment. He'd graduated from McMaster and the University of Toronto, majoring in business and economics. Now it's 2017 and he's eager to begin a new career, not in a classroom, but still enriching the lives of others.

There have been many career moves as Bob walked through the past 47 years. From developing courses in marketing, economics and law at Lord Elgin, to a headship in business studies at Oakville Trafalgar HS, he went to the board office. The next 23 years saw his roles range from Coordinator of Business Studies, to Consultant responsible for Leadership Development, to Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Human Resources with responsibility for coordinating staff development, to Superintendent of Human Resources to successfully applying for the position of Director of Education, a position he held for nine years before retiring from the Halton Board.

During the next five years, we find Bob consulting to the Ontario Ministry of Education, boards and private sector corporations on policy, governance, publishing and information technology, until he was contacted by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association to act as Director of Labour Relations, where he spent 11 years consulting with all public boards and leading collective bargaining sessions on behalf of the boards in tandem with the ministry.

This brings Bob to 2013 and perhaps now he is ready to retire - again?? But no - his passion for learning and contributing his skills to the community remains strong. He had long been an admirer of the work of Carl Jung and began four years of post-graduate studies in clinical psychology with the Ontario Association of Jungian Analysts. He is now qualified to take clients as an Advanced Candidate in Train-



(Bob Williams...continues on Page 7)

(Bob Williams...continued from Page 6)

ing and is specializing in therapy dealing with the issues of retirement, aging and loss. He rents a counselling office in downtown Toronto and has a new website: www.bobwilliams.life. His friends always knew he was Jung at heart!

Still, he finds enough hours in the day to volunteer with Peter Marks, a faculty member in the University of Toronto School of Social Work and author of **Conscious Care and Support**. Bob works with Peter to implement programs in school boards and community living agencies across the province - programs which are designed to significantly improve the lives of people living with developmental disabilities, with an emphasis on those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Bob describes this as “the most important professional learning program I have ever been associated with.”

There’s much more to say about this lifelong learner. Bob was born in Kentville NS. His father’s work took the family first to Toronto and then to London where he spent his high school years at London Central HS. As a child, he was filled with curiosity, always wanting to find out how things worked in this world. He entered science fairs, peered into telescopes and microscopes and poured over books. He also played several sports. Today, he’s still active in at least one sport - plays golf twice a week - and he’s still an avid reader. The book read most recently, is Julian Barnes’ *Sense of An Ending*, which he describes as “one of the best novels I have ever read.”

His six grandchildren, who range in age from 4 to 23, play an important role in Bob’s life. He’s lived in Toronto for the last eight years and so can spend more time with the three who also live in Toronto than with the three who are in BC, although there are regular trips to Vancouver.

Travelling is another means of discovering how the world and its people work. He’s visited so many interesting places. You may have read an article in the January 2007 issue of the Herald titled “Bob Williams in Africa.” Last January, he travelled to South India and Sri Lanka. A river cruise has taken him from Moscow to St. Petersburg with stops along the way. And after spending time enjoying the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, he travelled north to the Scottish islands and south to Cornwall. Bob is looking forward to the family’s annual visit in March to Maui.

Years have passed since Bob worked in Halton but I’m sure former students, teachers, principals and administrators would appreciate any opportunity to reconnect with him. He can be contacted through his website. A few years ago, he was thrilled

(Bob Williams...continues on Page 8)

(Bob Williams...continued from Page 7)

to be invited to a gathering of former principals and administrators.

I met Bob for the first time as he shared stories of his life and his work for this article. I could have listened to him, and learned from him, for hours. He is justly proud of having made positive contributions to other peoples' lives and I have no doubt he'll continue to do so for many years.

Recipient of 2017 Distinguished Service Award

Submitted by Phyllis Kingsley

The recipient of the 2017 RTO/ERO District 15 Distinguished Service Award is Past President **Carolyn Hilton**. Before her retirement, Carolyn Hilton worked with the HDSSB, ending her career as a principal at St. John's School in Oakville. In 2012 she joined the RTO/ERO District 15 Board of Directors as a Member Without Portfolio and then very quickly got involved with other aspects of the Board's work. In 2013, she became second V.P. and by 2015/16 was the President of our organization.



Even though Carolyn has been a board member for only 5 years, she has been very involved in committee work that is essential to the success of District 15. For three of those five years, she chaired the Awards Committee and was the board member behind our Provincial STO award of \$4000 for the Chiedza Child Care Centre in Zimbabwe. This year she has worked closely with a group of our members to apply for a grant for the restoration of the Freeman Station and we are hopeful that this application will be successful too.

In addition, she has been a member of the Program Committee for 4 years, was on the Committee that revised our District 15 Constitution in 2013/14, helped to organize the last two Retirement Planning Workshops held in our District and was on the editing committee for The Halton Herald.

Carolyn is, above all, an excellent team player: she is always ready to help where help is needed, she approaches situations with positivity and a "can do" attitude, she is committed and dependable, and a good problem solver. Thank you Carolyn for all your contributions to the functioning of our District in the past five years. Phyllis Kingsley nominated Carolyn for this award.

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

Recreation Committee

By Dave Wright



Grand River Dinner Cruises has been owned and operated by the Albin family of Caledonia since 1978. This past June was the second time we have gone on their lunch cruise.

Transportation on the river and settlement along its banks is very significant in the history of Southern Ontario. Before we embarked for the cruise and a good lunch there was a video presentation of the story of the Grand River and entertainment by the **Blazing Fiddles**. The Albin family founded this group of four very accomplished musicians to give atmosphere to the country setting. The boat captain gave us a personal commentary of his knowledge of the river and the people who live and farm along its banks. It was a very peaceful way to spend a summer afternoon.

The Stratford Festival musical *HMS Pinafore* was up to the standard we expected. All the players had strong voices and the choreography was fun to watch. Reading the program booklet before the show, I noted that during the First World War, productions of Gilbert and Sullivan were popular in the prison camps in Germany and were presented in a civilian detention facility near Berlin from 1914 to 1918. The director of this year's production, 100 years after the height of hostilities in Europe, designed the set to resemble one of the estates in Britain that was converted into a convalescent hospital during the war. Inmates in their hospital garb and nurses and doctors in their uniforms were quickly transformed into sailors of Her Majesty's Royal Navy and ladies of fashion as they sang, "We sail the ocean blue...."

Not to miss is the political satire of Gilbert's time in England when the bookstore founder W.H. Smith became First Lord of the Admiralty with no sea experience, and in a time of war, the director of this production gave the Pinafore character, Sir Joseph Porter, a "hairdo" that has become all too familiar south of our border. If you like Gilbert and Sullivan you can still see this version until Oct 21st.

Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance has been on stage for 16 years and has always been good entertainment. The production this past June was outstanding. Wanda and I had front row seats so we had a close- up view of the show. **Marg Daniels**, the new president of the Burlington Footnotes, said the actors might have looked better from further back. I think they looked very, very good from where we sat. District 15 members in the troupe are **Marg, Penny Hambly, Kate Lowe, Judy Sloan, Joan Wilson and Butch Rogers**. Butch doesn't dance but has not forgotten how to sing a love song.

(Recreation...continues on Page 10)

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

(Recreation..continued from Page 9)

We are very supportive of RTO/ERO District 15 performers and artists and will continue to list events that feature them. In November we will see the Clarkson Musical Theatre's *White Christmas* under the musical direction of **Jenny Peace**. We will watch for **Darcea Hiltz's** Halton JAZZ Singers' future engagements and **Virender Paul Maden's** art and photography shows.

Upcoming events are listed on the calendar and the website: district15.rto-ero.org and will be highlighted each month in the e-letter. If you don't get the e-letter, **Jan Murdoch** needs your e-mail address.

A Little Something to Spice Up a Party

Submitted by Marilyn MacLennan

Spicy Black Bean Salsa

Makes about 8 cups

2 tbsp lime juice

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 tbsp olive oil

1-2 tsp minced canned chipotle chilies (smoked jalapenos in a can with sauce)

2 tsp red wine vinegar

1/2 tsp ground cumin

1 14oz can of black beans, rinsed and drained

2/3 cups corn kernels (thawed if frozen) (or 1 small can)

2/3 cup chopped tomatoes (preferably plum or roma tomatoes)

2/3 cup chopped red onion

1/2 cup chopped red pepper

1 large ripe hass avocado peeled, pitted and diced



Whisk first 6 ingredients in a large bowl to blend. Gently stir in remaining ingredients. Serve with firm tortilla chips or serve as a topping for tacos. The vegetables add a freshness to the creaminess of the beans and the avocado. Chipotle chillies are hot so adjust to your liking. They add a rich smoky flavour to the salsa. If you don't want any heat, add 1-2 teaspoons of sweet smoked paprika.

Welcome New RTO/ERO District 15 Members!!!

Our membership is now over 2700. Below are the names of retired teachers and other education staff who became members since April, 2017. Please welcome them and invite them to join you at one of our many activities.

Brian Ablard	Laura Agro De Rosa	Lucia Alexiou
Lyne Babin	Christine Balkwill	Georgina Barbosa Tousignant
Sara Bauer	Patricia Boschi	Kathryn Braga
Deborah Brooks	Diane Bryer	Terill Caldwell-McCann
Johanna Causarano	Anne Clifton	Jean Connor
Janet Dahlinger	Lois Dickson	Carol Dineen
Suzanne Dubroy	Anne Duckworth	Hilary Duignan
Helen Elmer	Heidi Feldner	Elsa Ferguson
Gwen Fitzsimmons	Ahmed Ghobarah	Sandra Gorlick
Joanne Graham	Laurie Graham	Brenda Greiss
Paul Grossman	Sergio Grubisa	Boris Hofman
Cindy Horan-O'Brien	Monique Jolicoeur	Margaret Kelly
Michael Koyanagi	Richard Lachance	Julienne Lahaie
Beverly Leedale	Anne Leius	Elizabeth Leonard
David Lewis	Barbara Long	Lorraine Longden
Andrea Longo	Ann MacDougall	Nancy MacKenzie
Kathleen Manneke	Connie McAlister	Margaret McCarter
Coleen McParland	Bari Mizzi	Janice Niven
Roisin O'Hara	Sergio Orlando	Patricia O'Sullivan
Nicole Ouellette-Panabaker		Angela Paccione
Carol-Ann Patterson	Jeff Pilszak	Antonietta Pizzingrili
Kathryn Raleigh	Susan Reimer	Julie Rogers-Shermet
Deborah Ruegg	Wolfgang Schnittker	Deborah Shackleton
Joyce Straughan	Marylynn Swagerman	Donna Taplin
Beverley Tass	Mary Ann Taylor	Vera Teophil
Shona Thorton	Denise Tonon	Linda Toth
Vanessa Vathy	Mary Williams	Yvonne Williams-Yeagers
Marianne Wilson	Mee Wong	

Health Services Committee Report

By Colton Roberts



A lot has been happening this spring. We had the first presentation of our health plan to RTO/ERO District 15 members. We met jointly with Hamilton District 13 at the Waterfront Banquet Hall and Conference Centre in Hamilton on a beautiful May day, with 64 District 15 members in attendance.

For those who were unable to attend but would like to do so in the near future, there is another presentation planned for **October 17th at St. Naum Church Hall, 1150 Stone Church Rd. E., Hamilton** from 10 am to 2 pm. Please see the advertisement elsewhere in the Herald for details about the seminar. This event is targeted at those of our members who are presently in the health plan and who want to know more about its provisions. We expect to offer the seminar again in the spring of 2018, in Halton this time. It has been great to work with another district on this undertaking. As far as I know, this is the first time that two districts of RTO/ERO have co-operated in this way for our members.

I am pleased to announce the addition of a much-needed new member of the RTO/ERO District 15 Health Committee, **Paul Harper**. You will see a short message from him about the usefulness of the McMaster Aging Portal which has a vast range of well researched articles of interest to retirees. Paul and I will be working with the District 15 Program Committee to provide a series of wellness topics. Look for them to begin in the coming year. If you would consider joining us on the Health Committee, please feel free to contact me at coltonroberts328@gmail.com. We would welcome your help and ideas.

Also, for those of you in the health plan, I hope that you are availing yourselves of Best Doctors and Eldercare as need arises. If you have not looked at Venngo to enjoy its savings, I would encourage you to do so. I have already found some very good bargains at restaurants and saved 20% on admission to Ripley's Aquarium for my family, a substantial help when they were visiting.

Puns for Educated (Medicated) Minds...

1. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
2. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Recruitment & Member Services Committee

By Marilyn MacLennan



- We added 71 new members to RTO/ERO District 15 since April
- A number of the new members had attended the **Wine and Cheese** event in April
- The **“To Hell with the Bell”** breakfast is booked for Thursday, September 7 at 10 a.m. at the Quality Suites Hotel. New members are informed of the event in the welcome letter they receive from RTO/ERO District 15.
- The **Retirement Planning Workshop** will occur on October 4 at St. Vladimir’s. If you know of people wanting to retire in the next 5 years, please direct them to the provincial website for registration.
- RTO/ERO continues to grow with now close to 76,000 members
- FYI – RTO/ERO District 15 has 78 members over the age of 90
- Please continue to spread the good word of the benefits of RTO/ERO membership to your educational friends and former colleagues who have yet to retire.

Program Committee

By Micki Clemens



PROGRAM CHAIR: With the generous support and encouragement of **Penny Hambly**, Past Program Chair, and the members of the Program Committee, I have accepted the position of Chair of the RTO/ERO District 15 Program Committee for 2017-2018. I look forward to planning opportunities for our shared socialization with the added zest of interesting and stimulating speakers, presenters, activities, and events that will engage our individual and community interests. **STAY TUNED!!!**

SURVEY SHEET: As my first task, I circulated a survey sheet to all participants present at the AGM on May 8 and received considerable feedback on the past year’s luncheon events. An invitation was included to recruit interested members to join the Program Committee. We joyously welcomed **Lynda Kozak** and **Paul Harper** who offered to join our merry band. Webmaster, **Jeannie Woodcroft**, cleverly converted this paper survey into an electronic version and **Jan Murdoch** kindly posted the link to this website survey in her E- Newsletter of May 30. Thanks to all who took the time to respond.

(Program..continues on Page 14)

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

(Program..continued from Page 13)

SOUNDS OF THE AGM: The AGM meeting and luncheon on May 8 was attended by 60 of our members. The **Golden Horseshoe Chorus** entertained enthusiastically with A Cappella versions of familiar songs like “Mr. Sandman”, “I Love Coffee, I Love Tea”, “Under the Board Walk”, and “Shaboom, Shaboom”, to name just a few of their tuneful toe-tapping renditions. The group leader at one point cajoled and coached all the audience members into singing along in, not only three, but four-part harmony!!! We sounded quite marvelous indeed!



PEOPLE AT THE AGM:

Your RTO/ERO District 15 Executive 2017-18



Carol Pashkievich Claudia Stewart Micki Clements Barbara Borthwick Moira Plexman
Treasurer President 1st Vice-President Secretary Past President

Familiar Faces in Attendance



(Program..continues on Page 15)

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

More Familiar Faces



(Program..continues on Page 16)

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

(Program..continued from Page 15)

UPCOMING PROGRAM EVENTS: Please reserve these **THREE DATES** now on your annual calendar so that you won't miss these exciting events.



October 30, 2017 - ***FALL FANFARE***

Meeting and Luncheon - Burlington Convention Centre
Burlington



February 26, 2018 – ***WINTER WONDERLAND***

Meeting and Luncheon –Burlington Convention Centre
Burlington



May 7, 2018 - ***SPRING STREAMERS***

AGM Meeting and Luncheon - Rattlesnake Golf and
Country Club
Milton

IS THE 4TH WALL OF THE THEATRE BEING DISMANTLED?

For our ***FALL FANFARE*** on OCT. 30, our special Guest Speaker will be Tim Carroll, the new Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival Theatre in Niagara-on-the- Lake.

Formerly Assistant Director of the historic Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, England, Carroll has begun to implement his vision of a much more interactive type of theatre in NOTL and has achieved considerable critical success this past spring and summer with his innovative approaches to *St. Joan*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *Me and My Girl*, *The Madness of King George*, and *Dracula*.



Photo Credit: David Cooper

T. C., as he likes to be called, has stated that, "I believe the deepest way we can carry on with Shaw's work is to make the theatre the kind of two-way experience he believed it should be."

So, come out and hear Carroll relate his reasons for breaking down the 4th wall of the theatre and whether this approach of eliminating barriers between performers and audiences is the wave of the future.

N.B. See the flyer and registration form in the centre of this booklet. We anticipate a sold out house!

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



Health Seminar

For RTO/ERO Health Plan Members

- Date:** Tuesday October 17, 2017 10am – 2 pm
- Cost:** \$20 for District 15 members, includes an early-morning snack and fabulous lunch.
- Location:** St. Naum of Ohrid Macedonian Church
1150 Stone Church Rd E, Hamilton ON L8W 2C7
(just east of Upper Ottawa)
- Speaker:** to be announced

For all travellers, the RTO/ERO Health Seminar is a must!
Discussion items include: Plan Specialties, Best Doctors, Venngo, Stability clause and everything else you need to know. What makes our plan the best!

Contact: Colton Roberts – RTO/ERO District 15 Health Representative

Please forward your questions for the presentation to Colton. Please use e-mail if possible to coltonroberts328@gmail.com or call 905-335-0027.

Please provide the following information:

- your first and last name, e-mail address and telephone number
- the number of people attending
- dietary restrictions, if any
- the last 4 digits of your RTO/ERO Plan health card number

This workshop is being sponsored jointly by
Halton District 15 and Hamilton District 13.

***** Please register by Oct. 1, 2017**

McMaster Optimal Aging Portal...

Membership in RTO/ERO has its Privileges

By Paul Harper

An excellent resource that I truly appreciate as part of my membership in RTO/ERO is the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal. I receive articles from this portal through e-mail on a weekly basis. The portal is of great importance to all of us, as there are hundreds of articles, website reviews, and blog posts which deal with popular topics related to healthy aging. Most important for me is that each article is rated as to its validity, reliability and usability. For example, each article shows how it meets three key criteria:

1. Evidence-based - is the information reliable, based on scientific research?
2. Transparency - is it clear who developed the resource and how?
3. Useability - is the information easy to understand and use?

Each article is given a rating for each criterion and then an overall rating score out of five. Think of it as stars; the more stars out of five, the better the rating for the article.

When I click on an article I can see who wrote the article, what type of article it is and the article's keywords so I can browse topics, the date it was rated, and an article summary. In my opinion this is a very important tool, because I find so much on the Internet is questionable and with the topics provided I appreciate knowing before I read them how reliable, transparent and useable they are to me. Membership in RTO/ERO has its privileges and this is one that I really appreciate.

Canada Day at Freeman Station

By Claudia Stewart

Claudia Stewart, Marina Lloyd and Jeannie Woodcroft attended the open house at the Freeman Station located beside the fire hall on Fairview St. in Burlington. Friends of Freeman Station is a very active group of people, including many RTO/ERO members, who have raised money, recruited volunteers and trained enthusiasts to restore and preserve the 1908 building which served as the local train station in Burlington for many years.



(Canada Day.. continues on Page 19)

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

(Canada Day.. continued from Page 18)

Friends of Freeman Station have applied for the RTO/ERO Service to Others grant to develop an interactive presentation for visitors to learn about the importance of the railway station to the history of Burlington and Canada generally. The event was hosted by Friends of Freeman Station President, Brian Aasgaard. Honoured guests included MP and Minister of Democratic Institutions Karina Gould, MPP and Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport Eleanor McMahon, Mayor Rick Goldring and Councilor Marianne Mead Ward.

RTO/ERO members who volunteer with an organization like Friends of Freeman Station may also apply for this award.

Halton's RTO/ERO Scholarship Winners



Meghan Downey: Parents Maureen and John Downey are extremely proud of their daughter's accomplishments. Meghan graduated from Kilbride Public School and L.B. Pearson High School in Burlington. She has a B.A. Sc from Guelph, 2014.

Meaghan is excited to be heading off to teach in China this summer as she works towards the achievement of Part One English Language Learner, Additional Qualification. Currently she is taking 2AQ courses, ELL and Special Education. In addition, she is going to be taking an AQ in Mathematics later this summer. She wants to pursue her dream of being an elementary teacher. Her family and friends wish her well!



Katie McQueen: Katie graduated from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science, where she was awarded the University Medal for achieving the highest academic standing in her program.

She will be working for a year and will be applying to attend the University of Prince Edward Island in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program for the Fall of 2018.

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

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

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

Committees

Archives	Judy Sloan	905-336-5538
Awards	Penny Hambly	905-639-6193
Book of Remembrance	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
Communications		
Website Coordinator	Jeannie Woodcroft	905-315-0581
E-Letter Coordinator	Jan Murdoch	289-271-9817
Newsletter Coordinator	Nanci Wakeman	905-823-2564
Newsletter Editor: Peter Gnish - Design: Cate Roberts		905-547-1628
Editing: Pam Ahrens, Catherine Briggs, Nanci Wakeman		
Proofreaders: George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae, Eleanor McCulloch, Jordan Palmer, Ray Smith and Nanci Wakeman		
Goodwill Chair	Marina Lloyd	905-637-6030
West Convenor	Ruth Roberts	905-634-9255
East Convenor	Warren McBurney	905-845-8219
North Convenor	Marg Megelink	905-877-7135
Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish	905-547-1628
Health Services	Colton Roberts	905-335-0027
Committee Members	Paul Harper	
Membership/Recruitment Chair	Marilyn MacLennan	905-628-8353
Committee Members:	Judy Sloan, Claudia Stewart	
Pension	Jim Baker	905-639-1292
Political Advocacy	TBA	
Committee Member:	Darcea Hiltz, Maureen O'Toole-Bujold	
Program	Micki Clemens	905-847-2452
Committee Members:	Paul Harper, Lynda Kozak, Mary Lyons, Moira Plexman, Claudia Stewart, Carolyn Hilton, Colton Roberts,	
Recreation	David Wright	905-639-5093
Committee Member:	Janet Carter-Wright	
Tours	Jan Murdoch	289-271-9817
Committee Members:	Joy Bennett, Barb Borthwick, Maureen Downey, Susan Hoika, Linda Kittmer, Marji Peglar, Jeannie Woodcroft	

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

Foundation Report

By **Moira Plexman, District Foundation Rep**

On March 1st I attended a memorial service for our oldest member, **Edith Grace Bielby** who passed peacefully in her 107th year. Her memorial service celebrated a life well lived. Edith taught for 30 years with the Burlington board and was very active in her retirement. She was a Past President of RWTO and a lifelong member of UCW Appleby United Church.

It was evident that Edith, at the age of 106, could well appreciate the vision of the RTO/ERO Foundation “to enhance the quality of aging adults.” It was Edith’s wish that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the RTO/ERO Foundation for Gerontology.

The RTO/ERO Foundation is asking you to share the vision....

Imagine a Canada where seniors get the care and support they need, where, when, and how they need it. A Canada where we have a better understanding of the different dimensions of aging and more health professionals are trained to apply their knowledge.

And envision a rising number of seniors who play an active role in the things that matter to them. Seniors who are part of daily life – around their neighbourhoods, as volunteers, in the workplace and across generations.

For more in-depth information on the current work of the first Foundation Chair, Dr. Paula Rochon, please visit the RTO/ERO website where you can watch her video presentation. Please consider adding the RTO/ERO Foundation to the list of charities that you support.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION POLICY

It is the policy of RTO/ERO HALTON DISTRICT 15 that all advertising and promotion to or by its members must have prior approval by the District. In this context Advertising and Promotion includes signage, verbal presentations, handouts, distributed material and display table material. Publication of any advertisement by an outside group in the Halton Herald or other District 15 printed material, on the District website or e-letter or at any District function or event does not constitute endorsement of the product or service by RTO/ERO Halton District 15.

**YOU ARE INVITED...
TO THE FALL FANFARE!!!**

**RTO/ERO HALTON DISTRICT 15
Fall General Meeting & Lunch
Monday, October 30, 2017
Burlington Convention Centre
1120 Burloak Drive
Burlington, Ontario L7L 6P8**



Our guest speaker will be TIM CARROLL, the new Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival Theatre in Niagara on the Lake. His talk will focus on his innovative vision for the future of this iconic Canadian theatre.

Cost:

\$33.00 for RTO District 15 members

\$37.00 for guests/ non-members/ spouses

Registration: 11:30 am

Lunch: 12:00 pm with the speaker to follow.

Cash Bar will be available.

RTO/ERO FALL FANFARE

Monday, October 30, 2017

Registration Form:

Please Print:

Name: _____

Tel# _____ Member _____

Email: _____

Vegetarian meal required _____ Food allergy _____

Guest Name: _____

Tel #: _____ Member _____

Email: _____

Vegetarian meal is required _____ Food allergy _____

Enclosed is a cheque payable to:
RTO/ERO District 15
in the amount of :.....

Please forward by mail by **October 10, 2017** to:

Lynda Kozak
491 Underwood Drive
Oakville, ON L6L 5P1
Telephone: 905-827-8459

Contribute to the Herald!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in January, 2018.

- **Share a line** with our readers and let them know what you are up to.
- **Send a Letter to the Editor** on any topic that concerns you.
- **Write an article** on any topic that may interest your retired colleagues. Please try to limit your article to a maximum of 1000 words. The full version of longer articles will be published on the District website.
- **Share a funny story** with our many readers.
- **Provide us with pictures** to share with our members.

Send your article or correspondence to the Newsletter Coordinator, Nanci Wakeman by e-mail: nanci.wakeman@gmail.com or by mail to 1393 Clarkson Rd. N. Mississauga ON, L5J 2W6 or Phone: 905-823-2564.

Deadline - November 15, 2017.

IF YOU ARE MOVING or IF YOUR ADDRESS INFORMATION or YOUR E-MAIL INFORMATION IS INCORRECT

Contact Dianne Vezeau at the Provincial RTO/ERO office
In Writing: 18 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7
By Phone: 1-800-361-9888 Ext. 223 or 1-416-962-9463 Ext. 223
or by e-mail at dvezeau@rto-ero.org
or Contact Marilyn MacLennan by telephone 905-628-8353
or by e-mail at maclennanred@sympatico.ca

**District 15
Oakville
Breakfast
Club**



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

Calendar of Events: September 2017 to May 2018

- Sept 28 Breakfast at Moe's Family Restaurant, 467 Speer's Road, Oakville.
9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Oct 6 Shaw Festival, Niagara-On-The-Lake. Musical, *Me and My Girl*
2:00 p.m. Cost \$59.00. Contact Janet Carter-Wright at 905-336-5328
or jcwright@cogeco.ca.
- Oct 20 Aldershot Players Dinner Theatre. West Plains United Church,
Burlington. Comedy, *Key for Two*. 6:30 p.m. Cost \$40.00.
Contact Dave Wright by Sept.15th.
- Oct 27 Breakfast at Wimpy's, Upper Middle Rd. and Appleby Line,
Burlington. 9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Oct 30 RTO/ERO District 15 Fall General Meeting and Luncheon. See the
details and registration form on Pages 22/23.
- Nov 23 Drury Lane Theatre, 2269 New St., Burlington. Musical,
Into the Woods. 8:00 p.m. Cost \$28.00. Contact Dave Wright by
Sept. 1st.
- Nov 26 Clarkson Musical Theatre, Meadowvale Theatre, Montevideo Drive,
Mississauga. Musical, *White Christmas*. 2:00 p.m. Cost \$31.50.
Contact Dave Wright.
- Nov 30 Breakfast at Moe's Family Restaurant, 467 Speer's Rd., Oakville.
9:00 a.m. Contact Paul Durnan at 905-630-2285.
- Feb 22 Drury Lane Music Hall, 2269 New St., Burlington. 8:00 p.m.
Cost \$28.00. Contact Dave Wright by Dec. 1st.
- May Stratford Festival. Musical and cost TBA. Contact Dave Wright
by Dec. 1st.

Dave Wright, Chair of the Recreation Committee

Contact Information: 905-639-5093 or davidwright16@me.com

Webmaster Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Greetings from your District 15 Webmaster.

I hope that you are enjoying the new format of our website, <https://district15.rto-ero.org/>, and are learning to navigate around to the various pages of information.

If you should wish to contact members of RTO/ERO District 15's 2017-18 Executive or Board please check the secure **Contact Us** link found at the bottom of each page of the website.

Just select the appropriate role in the box 'Topic'. When you wish to return to the 'Home' page, select the blue rectangular RTO logo in the upper left of each page.

Micki Clemens, Chair of the Program Committee, requested that a **Program Feedback** questionnaire be posted on the website in order to help the committee plan for the coming year. Please assist the Program Committee by completing this anonymous form (not more than once). It can be found under the main menu 'News' and submenu 'Program'.

Please promote viewing the website with member-friends and colleagues. Feel welcome to forward to me any news or content that you wish to be included on your RTO/ERO District 15 website.

Review the calendar of events and download program registration forms there. Remember you can stay connected when you travel by going to our District 15 website!



Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Lynn Ablard | Margeret Armstrong | Edith Bielby |
| Bruce Boettger | Patricia Boyle | Ollie Bristow |
| Hilda Darcie | Robert Duckworth | Jean Hamilton |
| Annie Hyland | Antonine Landry | Roderick MacKenzie |
| Serge Mayeur | Dean O'Sullivan | Carol Smith |
| Peter Straughan | Elwood Taplin | |

Pension & Retirement Concerns

By Jim Baker



The Ontario Teachers Pension Plan for 2016 reported 175.6 billion in net assets with an 11.5 billion preliminary funding surplus. This represents a 4.2% increase over 2015. The plan is 105% funded.

77% of every pension dollar comes from investments and 23% from contributions. Since the active teachers pay ½ of the amount (11.5%) the taxpayer pays only 11.5%.

Facts of Interest to retirees of the Teachers Pension Plan

- 2017 is the 100th anniversary of the Ontario Teachers Plan and its predecessors
- Member services administer one of Canada's largest pension plans, with pension benefit payments of 5.7 billion in 2016
- There are 318,000 active and retired members
- The average age of a pensioner is 71
- There are 142 pensioners aged 100 and over

Health Concerns

Beginning September 15/16, seniors 65-70 years of age, are eligible to receive the shingles vaccine, free of charge, from their primary care giver.

Archives Committee

By Judy Sloan



I'm delighted to report that the following newspaper articles below have been added to our RTO/ERO District 15 Scrapbook recently.

On April 13, 2017, the Burlington Post wrote an article about *Meals on Wheels*, a charitable community service associated with the Burlington branch of the Canadian Red Cross. This not-for-profit organization delivers an incredible 17,445 meals annually across Burlington and Flamborough, thanks to the loyalty of 79 volunteers. One such volunteer, our RTO/ERO District 15 member **Helen Potocki** is shown in a photo next to the article checking her delivery list before heading out to deliver meals. Helen has been doing this for 15 years now. Clients of this service choose from hot or frozen meals that arrive each day at lunchtime. The former

(Archives... continues on Page 28)

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

(Archives... continued from Page 27)

includes soup, an entree and dessert for \$7.75 or less depending on the package, and the price includes tax and delivery. Weekly frozen meal packages are available for \$38.15. For those who are diabetic, need a low-sodium or low-cholesterol diet, gluten free or pureed food, special diets can be accommodated. The majority of clients are seniors, but the service is also of great value to those who are disabled, recovering from surgery or for individuals whose families are going on vacation. Not only does Meals on Wheels offer a nutritious meal, but social contact for those who might be isolated and peace of mind for families knowing that someone is making contact with their loved one daily. We commend you, Helen, for volunteering your time to such a worthy cause for so many years

The following month, the Friday, May 19 edition of the Burlington Post displayed photos of the 50th anniversary celebration at Frontenac Public School which had taken place the Saturday before. It was a chance to reunite with former teachers and classmates, reminisce about the good old days and find out how lives have changed over the years. In the photos our RTO/ERO members **Verna Lavergne** and **Janet Nash** are shown posing with one of their former students. Judging by the big smiles on their faces, Verna and Janet had a wonderful time meeting former students and fellow teachers again and taking a “walk down memory lane” with them.

I also attended a special anniversary in May. This was a 60th anniversary celebration hosted by two special people whom I am lucky to call my friends. **Wanda and David Wright** celebrated this special anniversary on May 21, 2017 at the Erie Beach Hotel (the same hotel where they had their wedding reception on May 20, 1957). They provided 69 people with a delicious four-course meal and an open bar. I think that I gained a few pounds. As you know, Dave has been the hard-working and enthusiastic Recreation chair of our RTO/ERO District 15 organization for many years. You can find all the Calendar of Events that he has arranged in our Halton Herald.

I asked Dave to give me some background history on how this wonderful marriage all came about 60 years ago (I was also testing his memory) and here are some of the facts. Dave and Wanda were students at Waterford District High School. Wanda was two grades behind him but they knew each other. In a small town everyone knows everyone else. Wanda actually asked Dave to a Leap Year school dance in February of 1952. He told me “it stuck.” Dave was off to RMC

(Archives... continues on Page 29)

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

(Archives... continued from Page 28)

in Kingston in September of 1953 and so they didn't see much of each other until Wanda came to Kingston in his fourth year at the college. She worked in Kingston and shared an apartment with the girlfriends of two of his classmates (cozy setup). They were married at Scotland United Church on May 20, 1957. Wanda's mom and dad and two of her cousins had been married at that church also and Wanda had been christened there as well. As I've mentioned, their wedding reception was held at the Erie Beach Hotel. They went back to the Scotland church again the morning of their now 60th anniversary celebration on May 21 and then on to the Erie Beach hotel to welcome their 69 guests. Their wedding photo was in the Hamilton Spectator on May 20 and next to it was a photo of them taken recently. They haven't changed. Below the photos there followed an inscription that read "Love and congratulations to a wonderful couple. We appreciate all you've done for the family and community. Blessings and best wishes for the future years." Congratulations Wanda and Dave. I couldn't have said it better!

On a sad note, I have received and added the obituaries of two of our members to our scrapbook. **Serge Mayeur** passed away peacefully at the age of 75, on Tuesday, February 7, 2017. Although he later struggled bravely with ALS and Parkinson's, Serge accomplished much in his lifetime. He was a master teacher of French and French Immersion in Halton. While at Pineland Public School in Burlington, he "pioneered" with few resources in the first years of the late immersion program and worked very hard to make this program a success. He always had a strong work ethic and commitment to his students. Serge also coached over forty teams and established the first school Terry Fox runs which raised over \$100,000 throughout the years for cancer research. After retirement he successfully refereed volleyball and soccer games for thirteen years. In fact he made a positive and lasting contribution to soccer and in particular the Halton Soccer Referees Association. Indeed, Serge inspired and touched so many lives positively that he will be sadly missed but never forgotten by so many.

On February 24, 2017, one of our centenarian members, **Edith Grace Bielby** passed away peacefully in her 107th year at Tansley Woods Long Term Care. Edith was born in Brussels, Ontario and at age eight moved to Wingham, Ontario. After graduating from high school she attended Toronto Teachers' College. She was a supply teacher in Toronto for two years before heading north to Melissa, Ontario where she met and married her husband. They then moved to Hamilton and later to Burlington in 1959. Edith taught at both Lakeshore and Mountain Gardens

(Archives... continues on Page 30)

(Archives... continued from Page 29)

Public schools before retiring in 1974. Upon retiring she was an early founder of the Retired Women's Teachers Organization and was involved for many years serving as president and secretary. Edith was also very artistic. As an artist she could "turn her hand" to painting, sketching, sewing, knitting and cooking. Many of her original water colour paintings adorned the walls of her home and later the rooms of her retirement and long term care residences. After her husband passed away, Edith moved from her family home of 55 years to Heritage Place Retirement Home in Burlington. She thrived there, enjoying daily exercises, card games, sharing memories, reciting poetry and jokes. Edith moved on to Tansley Woods LTC for the last three years of her life. While there she continued on with scheduled activities always having a plan for each day and also participated twice in "*Stride to Turn The Tide*" National Walk for **Grandmothers to Grandmothers** campaign which helps to raise funds for grandmothers who are raising their grandchildren in sub-Saharan Africa. People who knew Edith describe her as always having a positive attitude, a great sense of humour, ready wit and a graceful acceptance of change. She was truly an amazing woman who believed in living and enjoying each day to the fullest. Edith, you may be gone but your spirit will live on because you have left behind by your examples, a remarkable role model for us to follow. Thank you for this.

That's all for now but please keep those newspaper articles and photos coming to me at 1446 Brenner Court, Burlington Ont. L7P 2Z2. You may also contact me by e-mail at judymsloan@yahoo.ca or by phone at 905-336-5538.

e-Newsletter Report

By Jan Murdoch

The e-letter is sent to members who supply RTO/ERO District 15 membership committee with a current e-mail. If you are not currently receiving the e-letter it may be that you have changed service providers and have not completed a change report. Your service provider may have changed the process it follows for receiving mass e-mails. You may have to check your spam folder or you may have to identify the e-letter as a safe site. Many people have altered their e-mail address to a generic e-mail to avoid some of these identified problems. Examples of these e-mail address are gmail, yahoo, hotmail, msn, me.com or icloud.com.

If you are aware of any reunions or special events that members are involved in, this information may be shared in the e-letter. All information must be submitted by the 20th day of the month prior to the release of the e-letter.

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

Awards Committee

By Penny Hamblly



As the new Awards' Chair, I thank **Carolyn Hilton** for all her work as the previous chair. I also congratulate her on being the recipient of the District 15 Distinguished Service award presented to her at our May 8 AGM.

Each year **RTO/ERO** provincial offers 25 scholarships of **\$1,500** each to students who are relatives of members, (child, grandchild, niece, nephew, grandniece or grandnephew, son-in-law, daughter-in-law or step child) Students who are enrolled in their last year/semester of a program at a recognized Canadian university or college are eligible. Applications may be found on our District 15 or Provincial RTO websites.

Congratulations to this year's RTO/ERO District 15 winners: **Meaghan Downey** sponsored by **Maureen Downey** and **Katie McQueen** sponsored by **M. Robb McQueen** who were each awarded the \$1500.00 scholarships. You can read more about them on our District 15 RTO/ERO website and on page 19.

Johnson Insurance also funds **\$1000** scholarships to members' children/grandchildren in their first year of university or college. The 2017-2018 Scholarship Application accessed by the sponsoring member's membership number on the Johnson website will be coming soon.

Annually, RTO/ERO provides funds of up to **\$4000** to Districts for educational and/or community initiatives at the local, provincial or international level that support the concept of "Service to Others" in the form of a **Service to Others (STO) Grant**. The application from *The Friends of Freeman Station* submitted by **Ruth Miller**, which was approved at our April 24 Board meeting, has been submitted for the **2017- 2018 Service to Others Grant**. We are hoping that this excellent project will receive the grant.

More Puns for Educated (Medicated) Minds...

1. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
2. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
3. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

Blooms For Africa - The Power of Community

By Cate Roberts

Photos by Peter Gnish and John Luna



Teachers by nature understand the importance of giving of themselves to help and benefit others and willingly volunteer their time and expertise every day. So why would that change in retirement!

When **Pat Dickinson** (Halton) and **Ann Craig-Howarth** (Mohawk) heard a CBC radio broadcast eleven years ago about the Stephen Lewis

Foundation campaign they decided to become involved. They were motivated by the challenge for Canadian Grandmothers at a grass roots level to develop initiatives to raise money to help African grandmothers who have had to assume the responsibilities for raising their grandkids - their own children have been devastated by HIV/Aids.

So, ten years ago, they started organising local garden tours, *Blooms for Africa*. When **Joanne Dear** (Peel), this year's organiser, appeared while we were working in the yard last year and asked whether we would be part of the 2017 project and donate our garden for two evenings, we, of course, agreed!



When she heard about the project, **Joyce Thompson-Frank**, a former Halton colleague, good friend and an accomplished artist, volunteered to add pieces of her art work to further beautify our gardens! Not only that, but to entertain the folks who toured the selected 15 gardens in the Gage Park area of Hamilton,

musicians young and old, agreed to perform!!! Our neighbour John Luna, a professional photographer, took pictures. Local shops sold tickets, art galleries and

(Blooms..continues on Page 33)

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

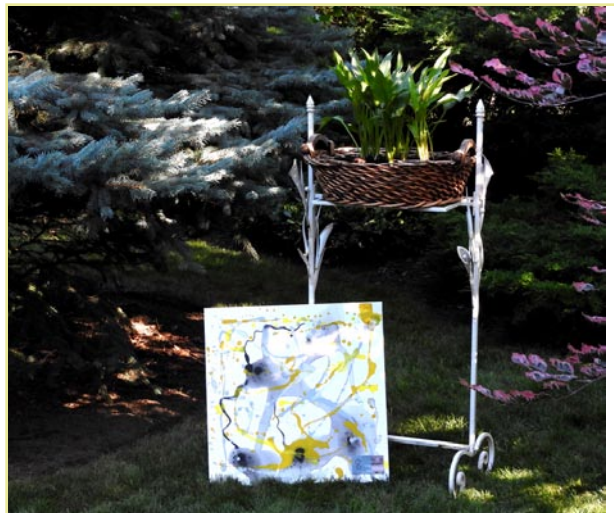
(Blooms..continued from Page 32)

restaurants got involved, firms put up ads and contributed their expertise and individuals became docents!

The result? The activity was a huge success – the hours of work by the organisers resulted in over 500 passports sold, (we had around 400 people visit our garden) raising close to \$11,000! And all because two women rallied others when they heard a radio broadcast that asked them to help in a seemingly helpless cause!!!

That’s how the volunteer snowball grows and why we must never doubt Margaret Mead’s observation on how the world can be changed “by a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens.”

(Blooms..continues on the back cover)



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

Volunteering - a Way of Life!

You read on the previous page how one of our members (and her friends) are making a positive impact on the lives of others through their volunteer efforts. Now the Halton Herald is inviting you to share your story about your volunteer efforts. So, get writing and send in your piece. Each participant will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Hortons – good enough for a coffee or hot chocolate and a cookie!

1. A picture is worth a thousand words. So submit a photo - either colour or black and white. Include a brief description explaining how the photo relates to the theme of “Volunteering - a Way of Life.”
2. Write an article or an anecdote of no more than 500 words.
3. Send the entries
 - By mail to Peter Gnish, to the Florida address below during the winter
5260 South Landings Dr. Unit #309 Fort Myers Florida 33919
 - By computer, as an attachment to an e-mail message to pgnish@gmail.com.
4. Entry deadline is November 15, 2017.
Questions? Contact me at pgnish@gmail.com.



Making Connections!

In the last issue of the Halton Herald we invited you to send in an article and photos of the connections you have made that have had an impact on the quality of your life. We received three responses - they follow. As a Thank You, each of the respondents will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Hortons.

A Surprise Connection on July 1, 2016

Canada Day and Memorial Day in Newfoundland

By Ruth Nicholson UE

We had no idea what a special day was upon us this past summer. My husband, David and I were in Corner Brook, NL the day The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was to unveil a memorial to honour those lost one hundred years ago at the Battle of Beaumont Hamel, France. Princess Anne would also present new colours to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at St. John's the next day.

(A Surprise..continues on Page 35)

(A Surprise..continued from Page 34)

At Corner Brook, the monument was installed outside the Forest Centre at Grenfell Campus, part of Memorial University. The university, itself was founded in 1925 as a living legacy to every member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who died during the First World War. The men of this regiment were streamed towards a particular tree that still stands today, known as the Danger Tree.



About 80 men were killed in this initial failed attack on the German front lines. That was only the beginning of their losses that day. Only 68 men out of approximately 800 were able to answer the roll call the next morning. They were either killed, missing or wounded. This battle affected families from nearly every cove and inlet of Newfoundland. The monument shows the few stark limbs of the Danger Tree with barbed wire wrapped around. Around the tree are large, blue forget-me-not flowers (see photo page 2).

Interesting that Prince Charles had presented the First Battalion with their new colours in 1983. This time Princess Anne was presenting new colours to the First and Second Battalions. The colours had been in many parades and had tears so were looking poorly after 33 years of service. Important elements make up the overall design. The Queen's and the Regiments' colours are used. Three new battle honours are featured to reflect the Royal Newfoundland's participation in the Battle of



Detroit in 1812, at the Mau-mee in 1813 and in Defence of Canada from 1812-1814. How amazing. I'm now connected to these regiments and this day more than I could possibly have known! Isaac Ferriss UE, son on my Loyalist ancestor, Joseph Ferriss UEL had received a service medal for his participation at

(A Surprise..continues on Page 36)

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

(A Surprise..continued from Page 35)

the Battle of Detroit and he was also at the Maumee. He was only 17 years old and my sister Susan McCloskey Hutchins UE and I had honoured Isaac Ferriss by unveiling a new War of 1812 plaque for him on May 23rd, 2015.

I now understand that the British troops who fought with General Sir Isaac Brock at these battles were not necessarily from Britain; they were also from Newfoundland, which was a British colony until 1949.

How wonderful that David and I had planned a trip to the western side of Newfoundland. Canada Day will always have an even richer meaning for me after this extraordinary experience in Newfoundland.

•*Research from articles in The Western Star newspaper, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, June 29, 2016*

Connecting With History

By Marie Schaefer

All those years ago, sitting in a classroom staring at words on a page ... if only I had been able to travel then. The sailors, explorers and tradesmen, that we read about in those texts, would have become more of a reality in my young mind.

We arranged to do a two week tour of the region of Costa del Sol both in Spain and Portugal with 42 other people from all parts of Canada. We flew from Toronto, to Paris and then to Malaga. Our accommodations were in one hotel for the first week and from there we went on various excursions. Then for the second week we moved to another hotel in Albufeira, Portugal and went on more adventures.

We traveled up winding roads into the mountains to see white buildings with tiled roofs; many layered on top of each other and nestled into the hill-sides. One of these villages was Mijas where donkeys, once used to haul goods up the mountains, now give taxi rides to the tourists who come to see the old churches, olive mills and grape presses that depict the former trades and traditions of the village.



(Connecting..continues on Page 37)

(Connecting..continued from Page 36)



On another day we travelled by bus to see humongous caves at Nerva, discovered only recently in 1959. Skeletons of cave peoples and pottery were found there. Now wonderful musical concerts are held in these caves with lighting that changes to enhance the

natural sculptured walls.

After touring a farm that produces olives and processes them, we were taken to lunch in local homes near there. Ladies of the village prepared a typical noon meal in their homes, and treated us as their guests. We all appreciated this special experience to get to meet and enjoy the company of the local people.



Of course you can't go to Europe without venturing into the huge Gothic churches with towering pillars, ornate carvings, and tombs of explorers like Christopher Columbus. One such church that we toured was the 15th century Cathedral in Seville, the largest Gothic Church in Christendom. On another day we toured the Alhambra palace near Granada which was built in the 13th century (see photos page 2). This Morrish masterpiece, with intricately

(Connecting..continues on Page 38)

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

(Connecting...continued from Page 37)

carved walls and ceilings, eventually became the Royal Court of Ferdinand and Isabella from where Christopher Columbus received his royal endorsement for his expedition.

In Sagres, out on the very windy tip of southern Portugal, a fortress is being reconstructed where Prince Henry the Navigator

established a school for sailors to study navigation and astronomy. Many ships sailed from there to discover and map the west coast of Africa.

The tour of the Rock of Gibraltar was interesting, not only to see the monkeys there, or to go shopping in the exclusive British stores, but to hear how Canadians helped to build 35 miles of tunnels inside the huge rock during the second world war. In these tunnels guns and ammunition were stored. They were also used as barracks and a hospital.



As well as connecting with history which we had studied years ago, we met and enjoyed the company of others from Canada, and now we hope to maintain some of the friendships we made on our wonderful journey.

Connecting With Nature

By Soraya Rench

Walking along the river in Canmore I love being connected to snow on mountains, ice in river and breathing in the clean crisp air (photo page 2). It makes me feel refreshed and thrilled to be sharing this outdoor experience with my daughter and her husband and my fur 'babies' or Grandpets.



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

Tours Committee - Culinary Delights in Asia

By Jan Murdoch



In Hanoi one is reminded of the many years of French influence in the architecture and cuisine of Vietnam. A wonderful cup of coffee with a baguette or croissant can start the day off well. A visit to the local market offers a reminder that the Vietnamese eat everything - anything that moves can be considered a culinary delight.

There are a few monkeys on an island in Halong Bay that the locals are trying to protect but anything else is fair game. Rats, snakes, beetles, cockroaches or spiders can be fried in a delicious sauce and enjoyed at the table. Hot pots or soups can be a treat at any time of the day; noodle and vegetable



soup appeared each morning as an option for breakfast. Often you could get a bowl of broth and then select the items that you wanted in it.

Barb Borthwick enjoyed her experience with shrimp.

Len Rideough took the time



to enjoy duck a l'orange, an Asian delicacy and **Ernest Murdoch** decided on some west-

ern food at McDonald's. Perhaps we should be advising the Canadian branch of McDonald's that local beers help quench the thirst when eating fries. While in Siem Reap, I tried a lobster. The challenge of getting to the meat inside was compounded by the sharp spikes on its shell. Tasted great but had sore hands by the time I was done.



The food throughout Asia was fantastic, although rice remains the staple. Everywhere we went we could definitely see the international influence affecting the menu, especially in the larger cities. However, my advice to anyone considering a trip to Asia, is to eat only cooked meats and vegetables, eat fruit that you peel yourself and never put ice in any of your drinks.



(Tours...continues on Page 40)

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

(Tours...continued from Page 39)

The next trip in the fall of 2018 is to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. We have an interesting itinerary, which you can examine on the RTO/ERO District 15 website, exploring some of the highlights of each country. Just head for the travel section on the left side of the home page.

Although there are local wines in both Australia and New Zealand I have my sights set on trying some of the local beers. Kangaroo Island will ensure that we see some of the native animals and our boat cruises will ensure that we see some spectacular land and water features. I am not sure if this new destination will offer culinary delights but I am optimistic that the food will be fabulous. We have three groups departing on various dates during October 2018.



My Journey from the Realm of the Gods to the Underworld

By Wayne Bridle



This past February Carol and I decided to try a land based vacation – we went to the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. The Peninsula is a very flat landscape made up of limestone rock. For this reason there is a lack of lakes and streams – the water is travelling underground toward the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.

This has had a profound influence on the people who occupy this region (the Mayans) and relates to my journey. The Mayans needed access to fresh water and

(My Journey...continues on Page 41)

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

(My Journey...continued from Page 40)

the only access to water was through scattered openings in the surface rock. These openings are called Cenotes. Mayan communities located close to these openings. This landscape also had an influence on their spiritual view of the world around them. Life was divided into three levels. One level was the ground upon which they lived; a second was the realm of the gods who occupied the sky above them and the third was the mysterious realm that the cenotes represented. They considered these openings to be the entrance to the underworld.

Carol and I have always been interested in learning about the cultures that we visit and to this end we decided to travel into the interior and meet the Mayan people. We joined a tour that took us to the ruins of Ek Balam in the jungle. It was here that we learned many things about the Mayan culture. We walked through their local spiritual centre and discussed what life was like. We learned that they viewed anyone who was born with any form of deformity as having special abilities and would be able to converse with the gods and so they were destined to become a priest. One of my pictures is of a relief found on the main temple (page 43). Here one can see that the person on the left appears to have a short, right arm – this is probably why he is a priest. We also learned that since the gods existed in the sky there was a desire to get close to them in order to commune with them so the Mayans built pyramids. Priests would ascend the pyramid in order to speak with their gods and get help in the daily matters of their lives below.

I leave the level of everyday life and begin the ascent up the temple steps. I have been forewarned that the steps are small because the Mayans are a small people and their feet are proportional to their size. I have included a picture of Carol standing beside a Mayan woman that displays this. I find the ascent to the realm of the gods to be quite the workout and decide to take a rest on the first level of the temple (about half way up). With renewed determination I again step onto the stairs and continue my trip to the top. The view is breathtaking. I can see for miles (km?) over the surrounding jungle canopy. I can understand why the Mayan priests would feel close to their gods. Now for the journey back down.



I envision doing a “header” down the steps. So I watch what other people are

(My Journey...continues on Page 42)

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

(My Journey...continued from Page 41)



doing. Some are going down on their butts. I decide to side-step taking one step at a time. Another man beside me also decides that this is a safe approach to descend the steep, uneven steps. Slow but steady we make it back to the level of daily life. My journey continues.

I have been SCUBA diving for 49 years.

I have been in shipwrecks, in a submerged steam locomotive and under the ice but I have never explored a cenote – I could not pass on this opportunity. I made arrangements for a guide to take me into the Mayan underworld. I was very impressed with my guide's desire to preserve the wonders of this new environment. We quickly went over the rules – no knife (he didn't want a diver to be tempted to use it to break off one of the many stalactites or stalagmites) and no snorkel was required since there would be no surface (we would be under solid rock). We suited up and began our descent. I was immediately struck with how much it looked like a fantasy world. The water was so clear and the Sun's rays streamed down from the jungle above. As we descended deeper and further underground the sunlight faded away and we had to rely on our flashlights to illuminate the darkness around us. We eventually descended to a layer called a halocline, fresh water meets salt water that has come in from the Caribbean – the two do not mix. As we pass through the halocline everything becomes blurry then becomes clear again as we drop into the salt water below. At this point we come across a sign that warns us not to enter the cave system ahead – people have died doing so. If we turned out our lights it would be totally dark – there are about 70 feet of rock between us and the jungle floor above. Eventually we pass under the area where we had parked and rise into a cavern. Here we can remove our mouthpieces and masks. We talk about the amazing artwork around us created by the many stalactites and stalagmites. I see two large columns a few feet apart and my guide tells me that they are roots systems that are created by vegetation in the jungle above. Plants have sent their roots down through cracks in the rock in search of fresh water. It is time for my visit here to come to an end. We put our masks back on, descend back to the bottom and make our way back to the cenote entrance.

This has been an experience of a lifetime - an ascent up to the realm of the gods followed by a descent into the underworld, an experience I will not forget.

(My Journey...continues on Page 43)

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

Mexico

From the Realm of the Gods

to the Underworld



