



RTO
ERO
District 15

HALTON HERALD

September, 2020



Angkor Wat, Cambodia

Watercolour by Joyce Frank...Page 37

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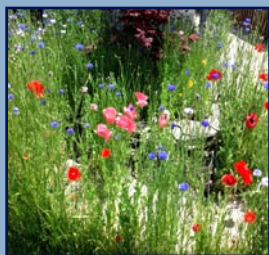


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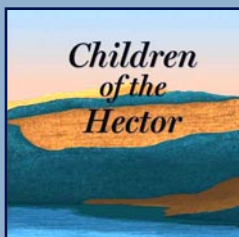
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President's Report

By Micki Clemens



Well folks, the announcement of my departure as President, delivered in "My Final Report" (Halton Herald - April, 2020), seems to have been a trifle premature!

As the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions curtailed our Annual Meeting in May, all RTOERO districts were advised that their respective Executive teams would remain in place until elections could be held either with members at an in-person meeting or through a virtual meeting. So your District 15 Executive, supported by our Board members, continues to serve!

As I prepare this report in July, plans for holding our Annual Meeting for 2020 are still undecided! As soon as we know what will be possible in the fall months, we will communicate in September with all our members via the website, Facebook, and *Rapport*. If you do not currently receive *Rapport* you may wish to send your email address to membership@rtoero.org. Our E-newsletter is distributed monthly but only to those members who have provided their current email contact information to the RTOERO office. Charles Tabone (Director, Information Technology) and his staff handle the circulation of this communication to our District 15 members. Don't miss out on breaking news and information about events at RTOERO District 15; update your contact information right away!

So what ADVENTURES have we encountered in these past few months? What ACCOMPLISHMENTS have been achieved, and what CHALLENGES await our district in the coming year 2020-2021?

ADVENTURES

When COVID-19 struck, the RTOERO District 15 Board became embroiled in the cancellation of our spring activities and events. From our regular Board meetings that needed to become virtual sessions, to the cancellation of the annual Stratford theatre trip, to the cancellation of our Annual Meeting and Luncheon, and to the several social events that had to be shelved, there were so many disappointments!

To enable the RTOERO office to keep district presidents updated on

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key issues and their impact on our local districts, Martha Foster and Jim Grieve instituted Zoom conference calls that involved all district presidents from across Canada. We have had FIVE of these sessions. Sharing information on how different districts were coping has been instructive and most beneficial, if somewhat time-consuming.

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Subsequently, RTOERO offered to provide its secure Zoom platform to individual districts that wished to hold their own Board meetings in virtual sessions. District 15 took advantage of this technological opportunity and conducted the April 21 and June 2 Board meetings in this fashion. It was great fun to "meet up visually" to conduct our Board business, even though we were restricted to about an hour for our proceedings.

In June, RTOERO made yet a further announcement that they were going to invest in virtual resources for all districts at no expense to us!

They have:

- provided Office 365 for all presidents to facilitate Outlook for emails.
- set up dedicated RTOERO email addresses for all district presidents. Mine is president15@districts.rtoero.ca.
- established a secure ZOOM account for each district, including a toll-free phone-in number for those that cannot connect visually.

All these resources will enable districts to set up their own virtual board sessions which will have unlimited time constraints. We will then have the capacity to organize and schedule a virtual Annual General Meeting later in the

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year if that becomes necessary. We have been told that we will be trained and enabled to conduct electronic voting on issues relevant to our district. The district Zoom account could also be used, in future, to provide Goodwill services and for other social connections with district members. One-to-one training from RTOERO staff is available on all these new tools and, in the fall, I and others on our Board will definitely be immersed in an active learning mode!!!

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The RTOERO District 15 Governance document, approved at our Annual Meeting last May 2019, had to be further refined to comply with new terminology and other additional changes that was instituted by the RTOERO Governance structure. A new version, now dated May 2020, was approved by our Board on June 2, 2020 and will come forward at our next Annual Meeting for your review and a vote for final approval. It will be posted on the RTOERO District 15 website prior to the Annual Meeting for everyone's perusal.

Additional Zoom conferences were scheduled and conducted by RTOERO. **Carol Pashkievich** and I participated in the finances session with Ewa Romanski and **Jeannie Woodcroft** and I attended the virtual communications session with Stephanie Martin, Sylvia Link and Charles Tabone who updated us on the new RTOERO website and delineated a timeline for our District 15 website to undergo its promised renewal. Jeannie will be working with Charles on this website transformation. A third Zoom session was held for **Patricia Mateja** and I to work with Kayla McKenzie to establish the protocols for our Facebook page. Patricia has made great strides with this platform so that our district will have a social media presence that resonates with our members. When our District 15 website is upgraded later this year, our Facebook page will be linked directly to this website.

At our June 2 Board meeting we paid tribute, first of all, to **Marina Lloyd's** amazing contribution to our district (sending a Brant Florist "Secret Garden" planter basket to her home). You will enjoy reading on Page 19 the wonderful tribute to Marina that **Claudia Stewart** compiled and prepared. It is our regular tradition to gift the retiring board member with a RTOERO inscribed pen and we hope to present this memento

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if we have an in-person meeting this fall. Otherwise it will be mailed to Marina. We also extended a hearty welcome as **Toni Pizzingrilli** stepped into the role of Goodwill Chair. Congratulations to Toni!!!

The process for selecting the Academic Spirit Awards was a different one this year. With over 72 applications in total from both boards of education **Marilyn MacLennan** provided each member of her jury with a set number to read. We held two Zoom sessions to review and discuss our top choices and concluded with awarding our two \$1000 scholarships to incredibly deserving students. Read the report on Awards for the names of the two lucky graduates who will be this year's recipients.

The Board of RTOERO District 15 approved a new application from **Jeannie Woodcroft** for the RTOERO Project Service to Others. This new project, for Able Sail in Burlington, was submitted in June to the RTOERO committee and we should hear about the grant award later in the fall. If successful, the grant would be used to fund new sails for the flotilla of boats used to provide sailing experiences to those with physical or cognitive disabilities.

In May the **Goodwill Committee** sent "Thinking of You" cards to members 80+ in all three areas (West, East, and North) to connect with and to reassure individuals that we were thinking of them during this stressful time. During this crisis one thing remains constant and that is the need to feel connected.

Keeping the welfare of others uppermost in our minds, District 15 made one donation of \$2000 to the Halton area food banks and a second donation of \$1350 to the Stratford Festival. The Board decided to approve this latter amount as a donation to support this performing arts organization rather than seek reimbursement of our District 15 subsidy for the performance of *Chicago* after the cancellation of the show.

We also have "rebranded" a couple of our events. Instead of "To Hell with the Bell", RTOERO District 15 will recognize and celebrate new retirees at the "Beyond the Bell" breakfast event. Active teachers looking ahead to retirement and seeking further information will be invited, not to an ordinary "Wine and Cheese" event, but to an exciting "Sip,

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Savour, and Learn!" experience! The format of these future events is still pending.

As for Board positions, we are delighted to announce that we have a new **Archives Chair, Blaine Adams**, who has stepped up to fill this position now that **Patricia Mateja** is our Social Media Manager. Blaine Adams has taught History, French and computers in British Columbia, Toronto and Halton (1975-2000). He worked in Africa as a volunteer with IVS (International Voluntary Service). Prior to that, immediately after graduation, he worked as an historian for Parks Canada on the reconstruction of the Fortress of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia. In that capacity he was involved in maintaining and adding to the archives of the fortress. He also did research in France and wrote published reports for the reconstruction. ([Parks Canada - Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History No. 18](#))

CHALLENGES

RTOERO is developing its strategic plan for 2021-2025. An initial direct input was provided from over 2000 volunteer members. This feedback process provided an opportunity for the RTOERO central office to refresh the organizational vision – that of a healthy, active future for every member of the education and retiree community.

Now individual districts have received an invitation to provide input into the budget process and we will use a Budget Input Form so that we can submit our Board's feedback by August 31.

We are hoping that we may fill a projected vacancy on the District 15 Executive team before we hold our Annual Meeting. In the April issue of the *Halton Herald* we announced that there will be an opening for a First VP on the Executive as **Jerry Powidajko** will be assuming the role of President while I transition to Past President. Offers from interested parties are most welcome!

Colton Roberts is still searching to recruit a willing volunteer to shadow him for a year to assume the Health/Benefits Chair in a year's time. And the position of Chair of the Social Committee is now open as **Claudia Stewart** has moved to the role of Chair of Political Advocacy.

Jeannie Woodcroft, after contributing her significant digital expertise

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in the role of Webmaster for District 15, has indicated she is retiring but will mentor a new volunteer as we renew our District 15 website throughout the fall. Jeannie has provided a vital communications service for District 15 and has exhibited strong commitment, dedication and diligence to ensuring that District 15 had a website that was attractive, relevant, informative and provided a valuable conduit for our members to additional RTOERO resources. See Jeannie's Webmaster report on Page 33.

Please consider contributing your time and abundant talents to support your District 15 team! Contact us at district15halton@gmail.com

CONCLUSION

Recent events in the United States and reports surfacing in Canada have revealed the daunting presence of racism in our society. Certainly for all of us, it is a time to listen, to learn and to educate ourselves to welcome diversity, insist on equity and demand inclusion. District 15 is committed to recognize and to fulfill these goals across our Board and in all aspects of our dealings with our members. Here is one quotation to help us all reflect on our own position.

“The mind unlearns with great difficulty what it has long learned.”

...Seneca, Roman philosopher

With the continuation of some COVID-19 restrictions and the projected threat of a second wave, all District 15 Board members are keeping safe and healthy by observing the provincial and federal health recommendations. It is our wish to continue to support our members when the need arises but we still rely on your help: **PLEASE GET IN TOUCH**. Please contact any member of the Goodwill Committee when members are celebrating a special anniversary, milestones or special achievements or when they are facing challenges in life or may be in need of a friendly phone call.

Most especially, please notify us if you learn of a death of a member or a family member. Unfortunately sometimes we learn of a death some months afterwards and it is our wish to send condolences in a timely fashion. You can contact any Board member through the Contact page on our website or send an email to district15halton@gmail.com.

Thank you for reading. Please remain well, and we hope to be able to connect in person once again very soon!

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Social Committee Report

By Claudia Stewart

On March 6th 2020, which seems like a thousand years ago, our last social event took place. Eight people attended to play **Bingo Bowling** at the Burlington Bowl. See the photos below. Five of us stayed for lunch in the cafe. Everyone enjoyed the competition.

We had hoped to offer this kind of event again in the fall but COVID hit so RTOERO advised that we cancel all events until further notice.

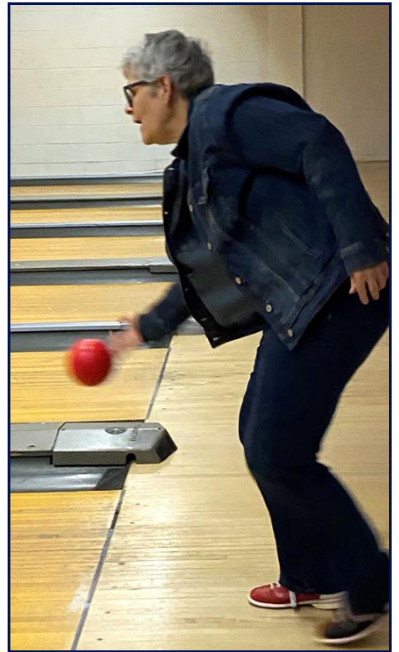
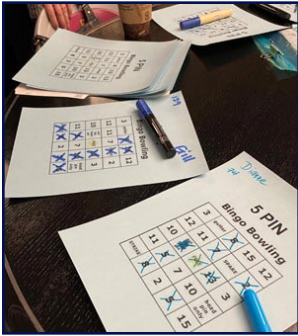
Attendance at our events has been very disappointing. I would like to thank the members of the Social Committee who have been very creative and generous with their time and suggestions for exciting and unusual events. To **Diona Szczerbak, Marilyn MacLennan, Lynda Kozak, Carol Pashkievich, Dave Wright**, my sincere gratitude for all of your efforts on behalf of District 15 members and especially myself. We are looking for a new Social Committee board member and, of course, inventive members to join our committee when we are able to safely design events again.



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Get the *Halton Herald* Electronically!!!

To date 170 members have made the environmentally friendly choice to receive our magazine electronically only. This has resulted in savings of more than \$350 in printing and mailing costs. If you would like to change your subscription preference from print to online only please e-mail **Peter Gnish** at pgnish@gmail.com.

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We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



Although we were “closeted” for the better part of the summer with lots of time to write, I only received messages from 3 members - maybe it was the heat. Anyway, why not bring the rest of us up to date with what is going on in your life? Send me an e-mail (pgnish@gmail.com) or a letter (153 Fairleigh Ave. S. Hamilton ON L8M 2K4) with a few details. We would love to hear from you. We did hear from the following:

Micki Clemens who wrote to say she liked the cover of the last *Halton Herald* saying that she and Sharon Anderson, “...took beginner watercolours this past fall at the Dundas Valley School of Art. We both enjoyed it and Sharon really got hooked on internet videos of various techniques. She even created 10 Christmas cards to send to her close friends and I was one of the lucky recipients. I have been a bit slower to develop my technique but I do enjoy the pastime very much! I love to try and capture the outdoor landscapes with their various hues of colour - trees, vegetation, sky and water. My one big challenge is to try to achieve a recognizable bed of iris which is one of my favourite flowers. Visiting the RBG gardens when the iris beds were in flower truly inspired me.”

Nancy Taylor sent me e-mails expressing her concern over the COVID virus and its effect on cruise ships. She and her husband finished a cruise earlier this year. She went on to say, “My husband and I are cruisers of the Holland America Cruise Line and have built up many trip points and collected our lovely coasters that all regulars receive at a beautiful luncheon on board the ship with the captains and a few other crew people. Now I worry about whether or not we ever want to cruise again??? Will we want to take a chance?” She goes on to say “My chest feels so tight now” the more she thinks about the spread of the virus. But, on a more positive note, she writes “...we have pictures of the greatest arrival today.. it happened in our back yard... the little family of foxes, the babies specifically, have all come out from under our shed today... it has been so cute to get our mind on nature and its marvels instead of the news... but we are hanging in and getting into a routine of this new way of life....”

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(We Get Letters...continued from Page 11)

Peter Saberton e-mailed me to say that he had been in touch with a friend out of the past, Ted Swift, who was the Art Coordinator in Halton years ago. He and his wife, Cathi, who also taught in Halton, now live in Coboconk. Peter wrote "As I look back over my lifetime, I treasure the many friends that I made and with whom I am still in touch. High school, water polo, swimming, university and teaching all produced friends that I still cherish. Unfortunately, some have passed on. The *Herald* allows us to keep track of our fellow teachers. I look forward to each edition. To the staff: Keep up the good work!"

RTOERO District 15 Halton Academic Spirit Awards – 2020

By Marilyn MacLennan

This is the second year RTOERO District 15 Halton has offered these awards on behalf of all our members. Graduating high school students from the Halton District School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board were invited to apply for these \$1000 awards and one winner was selected from each board. The selection committee reviewed 66 applications from the HDSB and 6 from the HCDSB – all worthy candidates. The criteria for selection included:

1. A graduating student who will attend college, university or an apprenticeship in September 2020
2. Good academic performance but not necessarily "the elite"
3. Commitment to studies and service to others
4. Has overcome an obstacle during high school
5. Financial barriers may be taken into consideration.

Halton Catholic District School Board Winner

Heather Aylward from Bishop Reding Catholic Sec. School in Milton. She is an honours student who has overcome difficulties and will be going into Health Sciences at McMaster University. She is a competitive swimmer and has found time to train others as well as give back to her school in many ways.

Halton District School Board Winner

Laura Mowbray from Nelson High School in Burlington

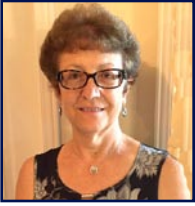
In spite of health issues she is an honours student and has been very involved in helping her school and community. She plans to attend the University of Waterloo in Honours Health Studies with an ultimate goal of working in the health care field.

Two magnificent winners.

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Goodwill Committee Report

By Toni Pizzingrilli



In June 2019 I was thrilled to attend my very first RTOERO District 15 Board Meeting as a Member at Large in order to observe and become familiar with the overall workings of the Board. In particular, to experience and gain understanding of the role of Goodwill Chair that **Marina Lloyd**, with the assistance of the Goodwill Convenors (**Ruth Roberts, Judy Rose, Susan Spencer, Warren McBurney and Peter Gnish**) so expertly managed for the past two decades. This meeting was the first step in my RTOERO District 15 learning journey.

In the January issue of the *Halton Herald* I shared my experience of **“The Joy of Giving”** Workshop that I had attended in September 2019. This workshop (the second step in my journey) provided an excellent overview of the compassionate and caring outreach work of the Goodwill Committees in all the RTOERO Districts. It was at this workshop that the new RTOERO Committee Guidelines were distributed. Shortly thereafter, a Summary of Goodwill Practices were received from all the Districts. These are two very valuable reference resources to assist us in carrying out our Goodwill activities.

Subsequently, I have continued to broaden my overall knowledge and understanding of Goodwill and particularly of the role of Goodwill Chair by shadowing Marina and working closely with her and the Area Convenors in reaching out to our Super Seniors in District 15. Connecting with our members has always been a priority of the Goodwill Committee and it has been even more vital during the challenging and unprecedented times that we are currently experiencing. Whether it was a card to honour a birthday, a “thinking of you” message, a holiday card, a get well or sympathy card, flowers to celebrate a milestone birthday or a phone call to ask, “How are you doing?” the Goodwill Committee members reached out in the hope of bringing some joy, comfort and good cheer to our members. On a side note, I am happy to share that we will be receiving new note cards with the new RTOERO logo! A welcome addition indeed!

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In the coming months, dare I say years, the thoughtful and caring work that Marina and the Goodwill Committee have done to date will continue as we further implement the new National Goodwill Guidelines and as we look for additional best practices to add to our current repertoire of activities.

In order for us to expand our present activities and do even more to enhance the well-being of our Members we need your help. I kindly and enthusiastically invite anyone who would like to volunteer some of their time to join the current Goodwill Committee to contact me or any other member of the Goodwill Committee. Contact information is provided on the newly revamped RTOERO District 15 Website (thanks to our wonderful Webmaster, **Jeannie Woodcroft**). We would be more than happy to hear from you even if it is just to give you further information of what the volunteering would entail. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work".

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Marina, the Goodwill Committee Convenors and the entire RTOERO District 15 Board for the support, encouragement and guidance they so willingly gave me over the course of the year to ensure that I would feel comfortable and confident in taking on the role of Goodwill Chair. I look forward with great anticipation to working with the Goodwill Committee members and together continuing the acts of **Caring, Compassion, and Celebration**.

Contribute to the *Herald*!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in January, 2021.

- **Send a Letter to the Editor** (pgnish@gmail.com) on any topic that concerns you or **share a line** with our readers and let them know how you are doing and what you are up to.
- **Write an article** on any topic that may interest your retired colleagues. Please try to limit your article to a maximum of 750 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.
Deadline - November 15, 2020.

Health Benefits Committee Report

By Colton Roberts



The new reality of our COVID-19 pandemic is certainly affecting our lives a great deal. Where we once interacted face-to-face, now we have become too familiar with terms such as Skype, Facetime and Zoom when we wish to converse with one another. Social distancing is the norm. Anxiety and other negative effects of prolonged isolation, whether alone or in the nuclear family unit, are too commonplace. If there is an emotional issue you are facing or family members are facing look to see how these can be alleviated. Reaching out to others is one of the best assurances of getting through this strange time with our bodies and minds intact. For anyone who may feel the need for emotional support, even as the restrictions are easing, call a friend or a health professional depending on the need.

For district health representatives the pandemic has made virtual experiences the main means of learning details. To that end, the annual District Health Representatives Benefits meeting has been scheduled for October 5th and will be presented in the form of a webinar. This is an opportunity for District Representatives to take thoughts about potential changes to our benefits plan to the RTOERO Health Benefits Committee in Toronto for consideration for future years. If you have any thoughts on this issue, please contact me.

The District Health Seminar for Halton and Hamilton is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 17th. Our tentative plan is to present this seminar using Zoom. As you can imagine details have yet to be finalized. There will be no cost for this event since it will be done virtually but registration will be needed so that you can be included in the email invitation to attend the meeting. Please have an eye on the September and October *Rapports* and on the District 15 website since final details of date and registration are not known at the time of writing this report.

If I can be of any assistance in answering questions, do not hesitate to contact me at district15.rto-ero.org

Best wishes to all as we move through these most unusual times.

RTOERO District 15 Halton Contact List

NOTE: Recently, the RTOERO has advised all their Districts of the need to protect the personal security of our Executive and Board members and our District members in our publications. You may contact us in TWO ways.

1. To contact any of the Board members listed below, please use the following email address: district15halton@gmail.com. Indicate in your message, the individual Board member or members to whom you would like the message to be directed.

2. Go directly to our Contact Page on our RTOERO website, <https://district15.rto-ero.org>, and submit your inquiry. Any contact information included in the committee reports found within this publication appears with the approval of the individual author.

Executive 2020 – 2021

Past President:	Claudia Stewart	President:	Micki Clemens
1st Vice President:	Jerry Powidajko	2nd Vice President:	Brad Fisher
Secretary:	Dianne Visschedyk	Treasurer:	Carol Pashkievich
Member Emeritus:	Jim Baker		

Committees

Archives	Blaine Adams
Awards	Penny Hambly
Book of Remembrance	Toni Pizzigrilli
Communications	
Webmaster	Jeannie Woodcroft
<i>Rapport</i> Coordinator	Brad Fisher
Newsletter Coordinator	Nanci Wakeman
Newsletter Editor: Peter Gnish - Design: Cate Roberts	
Editing: Nanci Wakeman	
Proofreaders: Micki Clemens, George MacRae, Marilyn MacRae, Eleanor McCulloch, Jordan Palmer, Ray Smith	
Foundation Champion	Moira Plexman
Goodwill	Toni Pizzigrilli
West Convenor	Ruth Roberts
East Convenor	Warren McBurney
North Convenors	Judy Rose and Susan Spencer
Out-of-Region Convenor	Peter Gnish
Health Benefits	Colton Roberts
Committee Members: Paul Harper, Toni Pizzigrilli	
Membership/Recruitment Chair	Marilyn MacLennan
Committee Member: Claudia Stewart	
Member Without Portfolio	Susan Stavins (New volunteer July 2020)
Political Advocacy	Claudia Stewart
Committee Members: Bev Balch, Olga Shewchun, Paul Sousa	
Program	Jerry Powidajko
Committee Members: Penny Hambly, Paul Harper, Lynda Kozak, Toni Pizzigrilli, Moira Plexman, Colton Roberts,	
Social	Vacant
Committee Members: Lynda Kozak, Marilyn MacLennan, Carol Pashkievich, Diona Szczerbak, David Wright	
Social Media Manager	Patricia Mateja

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New! Halton District 15 Facebook Page



**District 15
Halton**



RTOERO District 15 Halton has a new way to communicate. Your district has a **NEW** Facebook page. If you currently have a personal Facebook page type RTOERO District 15 Halton into the Search bar and then look for the page with the apple logo displayed above. Otherwise go online and search for www.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict15Halton. Check us out frequently to see what your District 15 Halton is doing.

THIS COULD BE YOUR NEXT BIG THING!

Why not UPGRADE and ENERGIZE your COVID 19 routine with a new pursuit? Join our Board of District 15, put your skills and knowledge to use on behalf of others and find new friends!

We require the following VOLUNTEERS to fill available positions on the board so we may continue to conduct the work of RTOERO optimally for our local district. Visit the District 15 website for full role descriptions. Contact us at district15halton@gmail.com

BENEFITS AND HEALTH – Colton Roberts will mentor and teach you all you need to know about advising our members on the RTOERO Group Insurance and Benefits.

FIRST VP (pending Annual Meeting) – Participate on the Executive and Board and work with the President and others on assigned tasks. Jerry and Micki will be there for ongoing support.

SOCIAL – Help design the social events that will shape the future in District 15 when we are able to meet in-person once again. Claudia guarantees her support for you.

WEBMASTER – Work with RTOERO staff and Jeannie this fall 2020 to transition to the new digital platform and then maintain our website.

Claudia Stewart - Awarded the District 15 Distinguished Service Award

By Penny Hambly

RTOERO District 15 is pleased to announce that **Claudia Stewart**, who was nominated by **Moira Plexman**, has been awarded the Distinguished Service Award. The following is taken from **Moira Plexman's** Nomination form.

"It is an honour and distinct pleasure to nominate **Claudia Stewart** for the Distinguished Service Award. Claudia joined the RTOERO District 15 Board as a Member Without Portfolio in 2015 after she retired. She has served as Membership Chair, Second Vice President, First Vice President, President, Past President and is currently Political Advocacy Chair and also on the Social Committee.



As Past President, Claudia diligently fulfilled the task of leading the Governance Committee in its delicate revision of our Constitution. In addition she took on the role of Chair of the Social Committee. With her leadership she and the creative members on her committee broadened our recreational opportunities in exciting and novel ways.

Serving on the RTOERO District 15 Executive in various positions Claudia demonstrated her proactive service to our district in running the Board meetings, attending Pre-Senate meetings, participating in Provincial Senate meetings and always being alert to raise questions of the provincial presenters.

Claudia is always one of the first Board members to volunteer for projects such as "High Tea for Super Seniors" and was the prime leader in suggesting various events to celebrate the Provincial 50th anniversary of RTOERO in 2018. In my opinion Claudia has enhanced the reputation of RTOERO District 15 by openly and generously donating her leadership, knowledge, skills, time, energy and joy to the substantial benefit of our members."

Congratulations to Claudia Stewart on being awarded the Distinguished Service Award which is well deserved!

A Tribute to Marina Lloyd - *In recognition of her contribution to the Goodwill Committee of RTOERO District 15*

By Claudia Stewart

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.” Muhammad Ali

This is a quotation from someone as different from Marina Lloyd as it is possible to be; yet the quotation exemplifies her contributions to the members of District 15 RTOERO in a very powerful way. Marina’s strongly held value of helping others and contributing to her community are legendary here in Halton.



While she is a very quiet, modest person preferring to work behind the scenes, Marina has made care for our RTOERO members and the recognition of them through cards, messages, gifts and personal visits into a high art form. Marina has tirelessly and consistently striven to ensure that our members know we are thinking of them. She has demonstrated abundant kindness, compassion and dedication to her role, always reminding us to pay it forward to those we meet as we share this earthly journey. Families have expressed their gratitude for the gentle kindness and benevolent caring she has demonstrated for their loved ones.

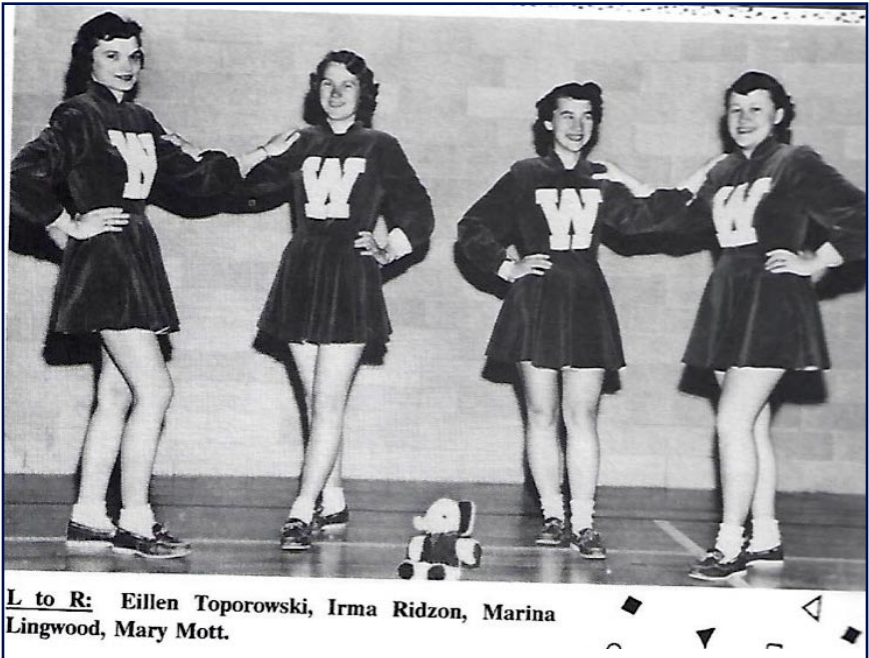
But that is far from all there is to the story of Marina’s contributions to others, not just in her community, but around the world. Are you curious to know how she developed these qualities and more about the various kinds of contributions she has made beyond the Goodwill Committee of District 15 RTOERO?

Marina grew up on a farm in Norfolk County. She merely had to walk down a hill and across the field to her one-room school for her elementary classes. She attended Waterford District High School where she completed Grade 13 and demonstrated her enthusiasm and support for her classmates by being on the cheerleading squad. Two friends she has known since high school have maintained their staunch friendship over these many years. **Dave Wright** and **Marilyn Branch** were both pleased to contribute to this article with many compliments on Marina’s fine qualities and ability to engage with others.

(Marina..continues on Page 20)

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(Marina..continued from Page 19)



L to R: Eillen Toporowski, Irma Ridzon, Marina Lingwood, Mary Mott.

Marina graduated from Hamilton Teacher's College. While there, she made a friend with whom she shared a wonderful adventure after her second year of teaching in St. Catharines. She took a year's leave of absence and travelled to Germany to meet her friend who was teaching at a Canadian Airforce Base. At the end of that summer she flew to London, England, and applied for a teaching job. She was assigned to a school in London's East End where she had a class of forty students, all seven-year old boys. Her boys had such strong Cockney accents that Marina and the students had difficulty communicating at times. However, she enjoyed the challenging experience very much and no doubt learned as much from them as they from her. When the year ended Marina returned to Canada to her teaching position in St. Catharines.

The following year Marina accepted employment with the Halton District School Board. She worked for Alex Balfour, the principal and former ETFO President of District 15, as a Grade 3 teacher at Oakwood Public School. One of her students was Moira-Jane Balfour, now **Moira Plexman**, RTOERO District 15's current Foundation Champion and former President. While at Oakwood, Marina and **Ken Lloyd** were married. They will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary this year. As a stay-

(Marina..continues on Page 21)

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(Marina..continued from Page 20)

at-home mother with four young children, Marina decided to make a dream come true and enrolled in extension classes at McMaster University. She attended classes one night a week for twelve years, finally graduating with a degree in Classical Civilizations.

Her first step back into Burlington classrooms was as a para-professional, working with **Carol Martin** at W.E. Breckon School. She returned to full-time teaching in 1981, sharing a class with **Carolyn Cooper** at Mohawk Gardens for five years.

During her working years Marina was active in several community organizations including the Burlington Baptist Church, Citizens' Committee for Pollution Control, Phoenix Place 2nd Stage Housing in Hamilton, Neighbourlink and the Canadian Federation of University Women.

When she retired from Pauline Johnson School in 1991 the students presented her with storytelling paraphernalia - an apron with many pockets for props, a brass candleholder and several books. She had no choice but to honour their gifts by becoming a storyteller with the Burlington Storytellers Guild.

At that same time Marina joined the Burlington Branch of the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario. She served as President in 1998-99 and received the Cora Bailey Award in 2010. She is a charter member of Burlington Ubuntu Grandwomen, one of hundreds of groups across Canada affiliated with the Stephen Lewis Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

Many of Marina's friends also wished to pay tribute to her stellar character and varied accomplishments. Here is a sample of their comments:

"I worked with Marina for more than 20 years when we were both members of the Board and in my capacity as the Out-of-Region Goodwill Convener when she was the Chair of that committee. I always found her to be very thoughtful and understanding with a respectful sense of what was in the best interest of our members - wonderful attributes for the Chair of Goodwill. She was also more than willing to give a helping hand when needed as evidenced to me on more than one occasion when I was in Florida for the winter. For many years I wrote a Holiday Greetings letter to be distributed to the more than 600 out-of-

(Marina..continues on Page 22)

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(Marina..continued from Page 21)

region members in December. Because I was in Florida during some of these years I would send Marina the letter by email. She had the letter printed, then she folded and stuffed it into the envelopes, pasted my return labels and the stamps before taking the huge bundle to the post office for mailing. It was my job - but since I was not in Canada to do the job she did it for me - the District 15 members could not be forgotten nor dismissed. What a woman!!!” - **Peter Gnish**

“Marina is quiet, gentle, well-organized and always willing to help out as needed.” - **Cecile Leach**

“Marina is known to me through the Burlington Storytellers Guild. Marina is a consummate storyteller using her voice connected to her heart to tell tales old and new that keep her audiences wrapt. Her style is old school, gracious, calm and filled with knowing. Marina sets the bar for excellence each time she tells for the guild. Her repertoire is vast and always captivating.” - **Suzanne Burchell**

Marilyn Ortwein and **Marilyn Branch** also contributed to the information in this article and the author wishes to express her sincere thanks to all for their contributions.

*“Work for a Cause not for applause
Live Life to express not to impress.
Don't strive to make your presence noticed just make your absence felt.”* Unknown

While Marina expresses great admiration for individuals who consistently demonstrate caring for others and involvement in community service, she, herself, truly represents the epitome of that form of grace. We are so very privileged to have had her working with us for over twenty-seven years on the Goodwill Committee, thirteen as the Chair, and on the Board of RTOERO District 15 Halton. Marina, your absence from the Board of District 15 will be deeply felt. Your contributions have been far-reaching and boundless in nature and we thank you for bestowing the gift of your service with RTOERO District 15. Your leadership and dedication are a lasting legacy for us all!

To return to our opening quotation, Marina, you have paid for “your room here on Earth” in so many ways and elegantly decorated it with your kindness!

Hobbies!!!

In the last issue of the *Halton Herald* we asked members to submit an article and a photo of one of their hobbies. We received four responses that are featured below. As promised, each of the respondents will receive a \$10 Tim Hortons gift certificate for their efforts. Thank you for taking part and adding a spark to the content of the newsletter.

Wildflowers In The City - Grown from 3 Packets of Seeds. By Gerry Blosser

In my younger years I spent some time on an orchard where I learned to appreciate the blossoming of the various fruit trees, and their fragrance. This was followed by many yearly trips through the Niagara peninsula at blossom time. Also, the



many trips to the Hamilton Royal Botanical Gardens gave me the desire to grow flowers for their fragrance and beauty. And, they do attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. My wife and I find all of this very therapeutic and soul enriching. I find it very satisfying and rewarding as a hobby. Every morning I anticipate which flower will open today. And with wild flowers, it happens that way.

A Passion For Writing By Pamela Edwards

As a retired Halton teacher since 2003, I've been very fortunate, first to be still here with most of my marbles and second, to have been able to indulge a passion for writing. In 2007 Lobster Press published my children's picture book, *Oliver Has Something to Say!* I have written another book, this time an adult novel and this time with co-author, Ann Louise Stevens, who was also a Halton teacher, before being drawn away into interior design.

Our book, *Children of the Hector*, is an historical fiction, based on the real life trials of Ann's ancestors, Hugh and Sophia Fraser, who immigrated

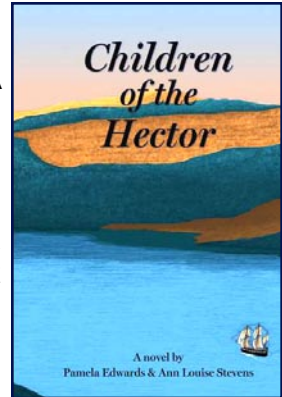
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(Hobbies..continued from Page 23)

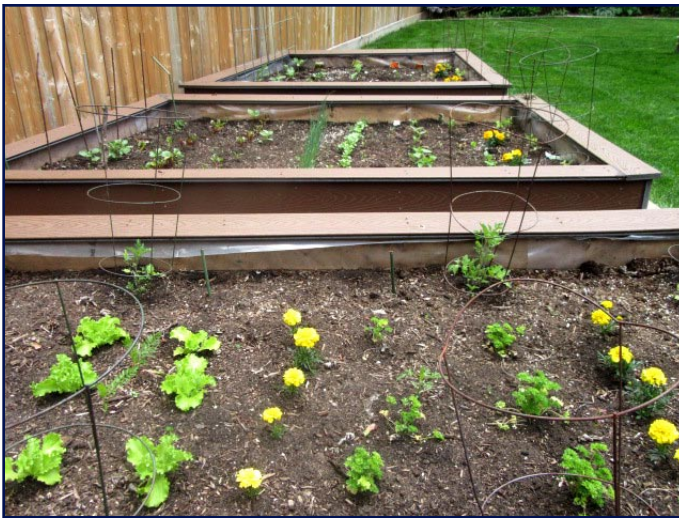
to Nova Scotia in 1773. Our novel dramatizes their lives and those of three subsequent generations of Frasers. Ann's research and a DNA test uncovered a family secret which underlies and propels the narrative.

Despite initial interest from two Maritime publishers, Ann and I decided to publish the book ourselves to retain control of the content. At the moment, it is available at a Burlington bookstore, A Different Drummer Books.

If interested, please contact us at:
childrenofthehector@gmail.com.



Gardening - So Relaxing and Therapeutic By Soraya Rench



Gardening is my favourite hobby - lovely hobby to be busy doing and to be in the fresh air. The photos are of my front porch planter, red & white geraniums for Canada Day (photo on page 2), a hanging basket now up on the pergola

(not shown) and the 3 raised wooden boxes of vegetables (above).

I look forward to planning the vegetable garden, to ensure crop rotation and a good assortment of new and reliable plants and seeds. The raised boxes make weeding and planting a lot easier on the back especially now in retirement.

(Hobbies..continues on Page 25)

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Cooking - FABULOUS GRILLED CAJUN CHICKEN

By Marilyn MacLennan

This time of being at home more, and my love of cooking have prompted me to explore my old recipe books, files and folders. I forgot how much I loved this chicken recipe. I first saw this recipe in 1997 in a cookbook called "*Hot Barbeque*" by Hugh Carpenter and Teri Sandison. I have adapted it slightly. It is wonderful, not too spicy, grilled chicken with a delicious Cajun herb sauce with amazing depth. Don't leave out the cream or vermouth – they are the "secret ingredients."

8 bone in chicken breasts or deboned thighs work as well – 2 thighs per person

Cajun Rub:

- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp each dried oregano and thyme
- 1 tbsp ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp packed brown sugar

Blend the ingredients together and rub on the chicken. Refrigerate and let sit for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.

Cajun Herb Sauce:

Combine in a bowl, mix together and put in the refrigerator until needed:

- 3/4 cup plain tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup whipping cream
- 1/4 cup dry vermouth (or white wine)
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 1 – 2 tbsp Louisiana hot sauce
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp fresh oregano
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme

Grill the chicken on the barbeque.



Make the sauce.

In a saucepan, on medium high heat, sauté 3 cloves of minced garlic in 1 tbsp of olive oil. When sizzling, add the remaining sauce ingredients that you refrigerated. Bring to a boil rapidly and cook until it thickens, enough to coat a spoon, 3 – 5 minutes. Serve the sauce with the chicken.

Awards & Service to Others Report

By Penny Hambly



I hope that when you read this edition of the *Halton Herald* you are all safe and well. I am looking forward to when we can all meet again in person.

Scholarships:

Congratulations to Anterra Vsetula Sheffield who won a Provincial RTOERO scholarship. Her grandfather, RTOERO District 15 member, **John Sheffield**, sponsored her.

Applications for the 2021 RTOERO scholarships should be available very soon. There are twenty-five scholarships of \$1500 available to students who are relatives of a RTOERO member (child, grandchild, niece, etc.) in their final semester of a post-secondary program in a university, college, or other institute, and who will graduate on or before September 2021. The application forms are on the Provincial RTOERO website and we will also have a link to it on our RTOERO District 15 webpage. The deadline to apply is at the start of 2021.

The Johnson Insurance \$1000 scholarship applications are closed for 2020. Johnson Insurance will notify the winners. Applications for students who have completed high school and are beginning their post-secondary education are eligible. Look for the 2021 scholarship applications in the spring of 2021 on the Johnson Insurance website.

RTOERO District 15 Board also offered two \$1000 scholarships called **The Academic Spirit Award** to one student from the Halton Catholic District School Board and one from the Halton District School Board. This year's recipients are **Heather Aylward from Bishop Redding Catholic Secondary School and Laura Mowbray from Nelson High School.**

Project Service to Others Grant: Each year RTOERO awards up to \$4000 to **Service to Others** projects. This year RTOERO District 15 submitted an application by our member **Jeannie Woodcroft** entitled **Burlington Able Sail**. It is a sailing program which runs in July and August at La Salle Park, giving sailing opportunities to individuals, ages

(Awards...continues on Page 27)

seven and up, with physical or cognitive disabilities. This program enables them to enhance their quality of life. The grant would be used to obtain funding now for the purchase of new sails, replacements and repairs to equipment to be used in the summer of 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the City of Burlington cancelled all the sailing programs at La Salle Park for 2020.

Distinguished Service Awards: RTOERO District 15 also presents **Distinguished Service** awards to members in recognition of their outstanding and/or long-term contributions to the work of RTOERO at the District or Provincial levels. This year **Claudia Stewart** has been given this award, which is usually presented at our AGM.

Membership Committee Report

By Marilyn MacLennan



We have had an eventful year. Here are some highlights.

As of June 30, 2020

Retired Members: 2938

Active Members: 78

To Hell with the Bell

This event was well attended last September by eager new retirees. They had a great breakfast, time to meet with District 15 board members and learn what we have to offer them. Due to COVID-19 this event will not likely take place on September 10. We discussed the name of this event and decided that it was time for a change. We will now refer to this welcoming event for new members as **Beyond the Bell**.

Retirement Planning Workshop

The October 2019 event was organized by RTOERO with District 15 welcoming participants and assisting with logistics. There were 105 people in attendance. Since March 2020, RPWs have been running virtually with great success. Our RPW is scheduled for October 14, 2020 and will likely be a virtual event. The Toronto office of RTOERO is monitoring the COVID-19 situation and will keep us updated.

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(Membership..continued from Page 27)

Wine and Cheese Information Session

We had a very appreciative crowd of education workers planning to retire this year. Participating were teachers, maintenance staff, office administrators, an educational assistant and an administrator. This was an excellent opportunity for us to provide information about RTOERO District 15 and the Benefits Plan. And we had it just one week before the pandemic was declared. This event will be renamed **Sip, Savour and Learn.**

Foundation Report

By **Moira Plexman**



The Foundation Newsletter – December 13 Winter Edition, highlighted Dr. Paula Rochon’s address to the fall assembly. In this edition of the Foundation Newsletter, RTOERO District 15 was applauded for conducting a district-wide End Isolation Campaign in October. I am sure that we will see other Districts engaging in campaigns similar to ours in the future.

The recent COVID 19 situation has certainly highlighted the many challenges faced by seniors across Canada. Seniors now, more than ever, need our support. Recently RTOERO sent out a mailing to the membership asking for donations. As always, I encourage you to support your Foundation. It is one way to help seniors who will benefit from the research and the various support programs being developed. Some day that senior receiving support might be you!



Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness

Barbara Buckley
Paula Graves
Pearl Krisfalusi
E May
Marjorie White
Robert Elliot
Hanna Watson

Helen Chryssafis
Donald Hawkins
Flora Litt
Anthony Tonegawa
Lila Whittaker
Barbara Little
Gerald Wiley

Mimi Gillies
Patricia Kibzey
Vera MacDonald
Dean Watson
Beverley Ziegel
Moira Perkovich

Political Advocacy Committee

By Moira Plexman



Fall 2019 Federal Election - Questions were provided to the membership to use at a political event or to send to their local candidates. All Candidates Meeting dates for the five ridings in Halton were also provided to the membership.

I had some informal discussions with members of the Oakville CFUW's (Canadian Federation of University Women) Issues Committee over the winter. We agreed there might be some common issues such as pharmacare and the environment of a federal election where we might wish to collaborate to sponsor an information event. Due to conflicts with dates/times followed by the arrival of the COVID-19 virus I have yet to attend a meeting. **Claudia Stewart** volunteered to attend a meeting on the environment in February. The purpose of connecting with CFUW was to be proactive in the event that a federal election was called. If we were offered funds from Toronto to collaborate to host an All Candidates Meeting, we would have a community partner and would be prepared.

The **“Dinner Party”**, held on March 4, was an important District 15 Political Advocacy event. District 15 was proud to support women locally and internationally at this sold out dinner. Since ETFO is the founding sponsor, many current teachers were there to support an event that is highly valued by its membership. By also being a sponsor, RTOERO District 15 received name recognition on the scrolling screen at dinner, in the table brochures and from the podium. Sponsorship of this event provides a unique marketing opportunity to current teachers who may not know about RTOERO District 15. Our sponsorship of the Dinner Party promotes District 15 RTOERO, assists women in our community and supports girls and women in Afghanistan. It is a win-win.

The **Annual April Pension Meeting** was cancelled due to COVID-19 but information was made available online.

The **National RTOERO Political Action Committee** met on February 20, 2020. Our area representative on this committee is Gail Anderson

(Political Advocacy...continues on Page 30)

(Political Advocacy...continued from Page 29)

from North York. A number of issues were discussed including the 2019 federal election, RTOERO support of education workers, the meeting agenda for PAC Reps and District presidents planned for September 20, 2020. The meeting also included discussion on topics that different members oversee. These included: clean water, climate change, elder abuse, the Ontario Health Coalition, and age friendly communities. I imagine future discussions may include pandemic preparedness, long-term care home inspections and practices and other elder care situations.

I am stepping away from the Political Advocacy Portfolio, but I know it will be managed with enthusiasm and diligence by **Claudia Stewart**.

Welcome New RTOERO District 15 Members!!!

Our membership is now over 2900 people. Below are the names of retired teachers, other education staff and surviving spouses who became members since April 2020. Please welcome and invite them to join you at one of our activities.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Evylin Aubin | Paige Bennett | Antonella Bernatchez | |
| Marion Bird | Patricia Birk | Lois Braunberger | Sonya Burns |
| Laurence Cain | Frederick Charles | Anthony Chryssafis | Michael Clancy |
| Heather Davis | Lucio Di Battista | Ann DiLeonardo | Anne Elliot |
| Catherine Fairley | Richard Folts | Margaret Goodyear | Marianne Goulden |
| Charlotte Hale | Deborah Hammond | Elizabeth Hawkins | Carole Hickey |
| Alexandra Hodgkinson | William Irwin | Karyn Kastelic | Barbara Kattis |
| Sherrie Kerr | Walter Kibzey | Judite Kokis | Thomas Leask |
| Dianne Lee | Carolyn Lewis | Krystyna Lyman | Kathy Maguire |
| Sharon Mann | Rita Marchant | Denise McCann | Ruth McCrae |
| Antonia Pinellit | Deborah Pitblado | Francine Porlier | Deborah Powell |
| Donna Pressner | Ulana Price | David Pugh | Brian Reed |
| Lucille Reed | Donna Rocco | Terry Roesch | Johanna Scheepers-Nevins |
| Shari Sonoda | Alessandro Sorgente | Karen Sousa | Kathryn Surina |
| Leslie Vande Kemp | Christine Watson | David Wilford | |

Archives Report - This Moment in Our History

By Patricia Mateja



What a challenging year this has been for RTOERO District 15 Halton!

It began with our annual celebratory breakfast, **To Hell with the Bell**, for new retirees, where President **Micki Clemens** introduced **Jerry Powidajko** as the First Vice-President for District 15. Our membership is nearly at 3000 members.

At the Fall Forum, the fresh, new **RTOERO logo** was revealed. This new logo is now used on all District 15 communications such as **Rapport**, our website page, <https://district15.rto-ero.org/> and our own District 15 Halton Facebook page, www.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict15Halton.

During the October Federal Election, questions designed to probe each candidate's position on key issues were posted on RTOERO District 15's website and published in the **Rapport**. Members were invited to raise questions with their political candidates in Halton.

District 15 and **Moira Plexman** were applauded in the December 2019 **Foundation Newsletter** for running a highly successful district-wide, "End Isolation Campaign".

This year, **Jeannie Woodcroft** successfully saw the completion of RTOERO District 15's award winning **Project Service to Others** – Crew – Goetz Landing – Bathroom Fixtures (Catch 18 Habitat for Humanity, Halton – Mississauga).

District 15 was proud to be a premier sponsor of "The Dinner Party", organized by WHAM, Women of Halton Action Movement, held on "International Women's Day", March 4, 2020 in support of women in our community, and girls and women in Afghanistan.

Information sessions for members such as the Retirement Planning Workshop and the Health Benefits session promoted continuous learning and active engagement. District 15 members who are part of the **RTOERO Health Benefits Plan** also received a new Health Benefits Booklet and Benefits Card.

(Archives..continues on Page 32)

(Archives..continued from page 31)

Several social functions were held throughout the year. Members of RTOERO District 15 were provided with opportunities to enjoy such outings as Bingo Bowling, theatre to see, The Addams Family, travel to Niagara for a wine tour, dinner, and a planned tour to view the Festival of Lights. Unfortunately, Bingo Bowling was our last scheduled event that took place prior to the shutdown due to COVID-19.

More than 80 attendees, attending the Winter Luncheon Meeting, enjoyed the melodic harmonies of the a cappella group, Cruisin', at the Burlington Conference Centre on February 25.

District 15 Board members held meetings using the platform, Zoom, and worked to refine the District 15 Governance Document to comply with RTOERO Governance wording changes.

These are but a few of the many 2019 / 2020 District 15 "moments" in our past year. All reports and news can be found in past **Halton Herald** newsletters or by accessing the website.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION POLICY

It is the policy of RTOERO Halton District 15 that all advertising and promotion to or by its members must have prior approval by the District Executive. In this context advertising and promotion includes signage, verbal presentations, handouts, distributed material, and display table material.

RTOERO Halton District 15 may accept advertising for the following purpose:

- To offer information to members about programs, services, and products of potential interest and benefit.

RTOERO reserves the right to edit or reject any advertisement.

RTOERO districts do not accept paid advertising. Paid advertising is not permitted in district newsletters or on district websites. Districts are permitted to recognize sponsorships by trusted partners for events or special activities.

Publication of any advertisement by an outside group in the *Halton Herald* or other District 15 printed material, on the District website, or our e-letter, *Rapport*, or at any District function or event, does not constitute endorsement of the product or service by RTOERO Halton District 15.

WHAM!

By Moira Plexman

Women from RTOERO Halton District 15 attended the March 4th **Women of Halton Action Movement** “Dinner Party”. This was an important District 15 Political Advocacy event. Our sponsorship of the “Dinner Party” promoted RTOERO District 15 in the greater Halton community, assisted women in crisis in our community and supported girls and women in Afghanistan. Dinner party photo below:



L to R: Dianne Visschedyk, Penny Hambly, Toni Pizzingrilli, Carol Pashkievich, Marina Lloyd, Janet Carter-Wright, Moira-Jane Plexman, Claudia Stewart, Marilyn MacLennan.
Missing: Micki Clemens

Webmaster’s Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



What a surreal world we’ve been experiencing these last several months! Our lives have been turned upside down. I add my appreciation to our awesome healthcare professionals and essential workers. My condolences go out to all who have lost relatives and friends to COVID-19. I think that technology and social media have been a blessing during these difficult

times. I sincerely hope that you have been able to stay virtually connected with your loved ones and friends through various technologies such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, Facetime and other platforms. I wonder if you have been checking into District 15 Halton’s website more often for the latest news.



The newly re-designed RTOERO website complete with the bright colours and logos of

(Webmaster... continues on Page 34)

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

(Webmaster...continued from Page 33)

the re-branding has now been launched: hopefully, you have checked it out at rtoero.ca. All district websites will also be re-developed in keeping with this new website. The launching of the new district websites has been delayed due to COVID-19. Hopefully, District 15 Halton's new website will be a 'work-in-progress' in the fall and launched by the new year.

During this past year I have made the difficult decision to step down from my volunteer role as webmaster of <https://district15.rto-ero.org/>. We are now seeking a volunteer to take on the role of webmaster. If you are interested in learning more about the role I would be happy to discuss it with you. I would also be willing to work alongside you as a mentor, if needed, until you feel comfortable in the role. Please contact me or the President if you have an interest in becoming the webmaster.

Lastly, please remember to stay safe and keep connected by continuing to peruse District 15 Halton's news on our website.

Program Committee Report

By Jerry Powidajko



The Program Committee hosted very successful fall and winter luncheons and continues to plan for future events once clearer directions on distancing are in place. With that in mind, I would like to thank the current committee members: **Lynda Kozak, Paul Harper, Moira Plexman, Penny Hambly, Tony Pizzingrilli and Colton Roberts as well as Micki Clemens**. Their enthusiasm and hard work makes these events worthwhile and enjoyable! As always, we welcome suggestions and ideas for future speakers/presenters/events. Please e-mail to district15@gmail.com.

1. **The Autumn General Meeting & Luncheon** was held on Tuesday October 22, 2019 at the Holiday Inn & Suites, Oakville at Bronte. The guest speaker was Constable Matthew Rocca from Halton Regional Police. The meeting and luncheon were well attended with 85 registered participants. **Micki Clemens**, President RTOERO District 15,

(Program...continues on Page 35)

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

(Program...continued from Page 34)

welcomed the group and introduced **Jeannie Woodcroft** and **Penny Hambly** to present the RTOERO award “2019 Project Service to Others” grant of \$4000 to District 15 in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga and CATCH18. District 15 is happy to have been part of the project Crew-Goetz Landing - Bathroom Fixtures. Thank you to all those members who participated in the Build Day and in so doing making this grant a reality! Accepting for Habitat for Humanity Halton – Mississauga were Len Walker and Melissa Fowler.

Guest Speaker: Constable Matthew Rocca

Our keynote speaker, Matthew Rocca, has been a police officer for the past eighteen years. His presentation covered frauds, scams, and safety as they relate to seniors in the Halton area. His best advice to defend yourself against a con artist...be your own detective. When you look at a scam, it's usually for financial gain and there is a sense of urgency and secrecy. Opportunists look for an easy way to make money. You always have to be careful how much information you divulge to others on the phone. Never give financial information to strangers. Ask questions. Distraction thefts are also a real problem when we become complacent. Trust your gut instincts! A lively discussion followed with Q&A's. If calling police for information on scams, etc., do not call 911. Call the regular line for all non-emergencies.

After the lunch participants were able to select one of three activities:

a) Line Dancing with Tammy Wyatt

Tammy, who has been instructing line dancing for over 26 years in Southern Ontario, had a number of members participate in the one-hour introductory session. Not only did they feel invigorated, they all left with a smile on their faces...and a spring in their steps!

b) Keeping Your Brain Healthy by Karen Robins

Karen Robins, who is from the Alzheimer Society, loves the expression “use it or lose it” and a healthy brain gets better at what we do more. Keep those neurons active and healthy. Try new things.

c) Thriving in the Years Ahead with Binu Dhindsa

Binu Dhindsa is passionate about helping others find their inner spark in life! According to readings, the biggest activity that promotes living longer was community and social interaction. Get involved!

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

(Program...continued from Page 35)

2. Our Winter General Meeting and Luncheon was held on Monday, February 24, 2020 at the Burlington Convention Centre. **Claudia Stewart** presented some of the many events planned for the coming year including 5 Pin Bingo Bowling, a visit to Mohawk Raceway with dinner, a visit to Stratford and a Grand River Luncheon Cruise. Updated information is available on-line at district15.rto-ero.org for these and other planned activities. Needless to say, a number of the events had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. Regardless, Claudia urged all members to get involved with the executive and committees in which they have an interest.

Our feature performers were a cappella sensation - ***Cruisin'***. They performed many great Rock, Pop, Gospel classics in Cruisin's unique a cappella vocal style. Cruisin's sets had the group laughing, clapping, singing along and most of all, smiling!! Their songs, skits, stories and ability to involve the audience made for a fun-filled afternoon!

3. Our AGM Spring General Meeting and Luncheon was to be held on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at Rattlesnake Point Golf & Country Club with Keynote Speaker: Catherine Gildiner. Unfortunately, with the outbreak of COVID-19, our spring AGM had to be cancelled. We continue to work and plan for future events.

CHANGE IN CONTACT INFORMATION

- If you are moving OR
- If your mailing address has been changed or is incorrect OR
- If your e-mail or phone number has changed or is incorrect

You need to let RTOERO know in one of the following ways:

- E-mail RTOERO at membership@rto-ero.org
- Phone RTOERO 1-800-361-9888
- Contact Marilyn MacLennan (District 15) with the change maclennanred@sympatico.ca
- Use the contact form on the District 15 website – choose Membership

You will need your RTOERO membership number when contacting the RTOERO office.

How many years do you hold on to a dream?

By Cate Roberts

When I was thirteen my parents and I went to a travel agent. While the adults finalised plans, I browsed through the display posters and found two magical places I knew I had to visit. Both posters stayed on my bedroom walls throughout high school. One was a detailed map of France. The other was a photo of an exotic temple in a far-away jungle unlike anything I had ever seen. The French explorer Henri Mouhot rediscovered the partially destroyed site in 1840 and described it as “grander than anything left to us by Greece or Rome.” The photo was of Angkor Wat, Cambodia!

While France and many other countries in Europe seduced me and became easily accessible over the years, Cambodia was elusive. Everything about it seemed designed to spark a romantic curiosity. The facts that I gleaned intrigued me.



Originally built in the first half of the 12th century as a Hindu temple and political centre of the Khmer kingdom, Angkor Wat spreads over more than 400 acres - still considered to be the largest religious monument in the world. And, although it was originally dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu, Angkor Wat became a Buddhist temple by the end of the 12th century - shrouded in a magical new legend that the god Indra had

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overseen the temple's construction - completed in just one night!

This legend is believable when you look at the design - the five towers - the highest 70 feet tall, recreating the five peaks of Mount Meru, home of the gods according to both Hindu and Buddhist faiths, while the 15 foot walls, built of sandstone and the wide reflecting moat below honour the surrounding mountain ranges and the sea. On the walls of the temple there are thousands of bas-reliefs which recount the key events and deities of both religions. Plus, many other temples (wats) were built in the vicinity by subsequent kings.



And then, the Angkor empire fell in the early 15th century and the sites suffered significant damage from forest overgrowth, earthquakes and brutal civil war.



Which is why, although travelling had become regular - even addictive, and we had toured many regions of the world, Cambodia and Angkor Wat remained elusive - until this year, when Peter (Gnish) and I spent a month travelling with Joyce and

Lloyd Frank to discover Angkor Wat and several other fascinating sites in both Cambodia and Vietnam. Wonderful memories not only personally experienced but captured in Joyce's paintings and in Peter's photographs!!!



So, how long do you hold on to a dream? I guess, until you realise it!

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Stilt Houses, Tahas River, Cambodia...Watercolour by Joyce Frank

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