

Remembering...



In This Issue...

A Tribute to Colton Roberts
page 8



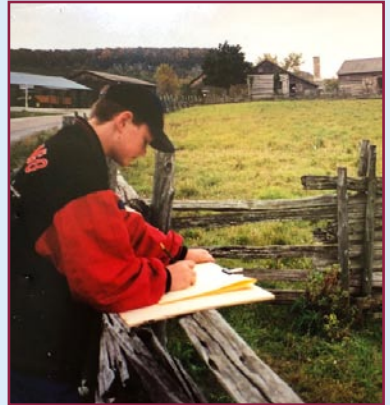
Jim Baker Celebrates His 95th
page 17



**A Home For
Teddy Bears**
page 22



**Magic ...
at the McMichael Gallery**
page 31



7 Years On The Road
page 34



Sanibel, An Island to Love
page 37



President's Report

By Jerry Powidajko



As I read the summer edition of the RTOERO Foundation newsletter this statement stood out. "Hope makes everything possible." Hope is something each of us holds within and sometimes shares with others. As an organization it was our hope to overcome some of the obstacles that COVID-19 presented and to continue to serve our members in traditional and new ways.

I am fortunate to be following in the footsteps of Micki Clemens who has been our President for the last three years. Micki has worked with energy, dedication, and fortitude in spite of the pandemic and the limitations it has placed on us as an organization and on our ability to serve our members. That being said, we were able to modify our delivery and support and continue to put the District 15 members first in our work!

Our inability to meet people in person has made our print and virtual sites even more important. **Jeannie Woodcroft** continues to manage our website keeping the information relevant and up-to-date. All district websites will be converted to a new digital platform (Wordpress) and training will be provided by RTOERO over the summer. Jeannie, along with **Carey Mollenhauer** who is the incoming Webmaster, will be involved with the training and will have the new site ready by the fall!

As well, District 15 Halton created its own Facebook page as a way to stay in touch, share information, and promote and celebrate events with all members. Thanks to the work of **Patricia Mateja**, our Social Media Manager, we are up and running. Please visit our site at www.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict15Halton

Brad Fisher continues to work tirelessly to co-ordinate our electronic newsletter, *Rapport*. Published multiple times a year, this is a great collection of pictures, news and stories focusing on RTOERO District 15 Halton. I know Brad would appreciate submissions for possible inclusion sent to rapportd15@gmail.com.

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

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

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

Table of Contents

Committee Reports	Pages
Awards	28
Benefits	24
Book of Remembrance	30
Foundation Report	29
New Members	27
Political Advocacy	15
President's Report	3
Program	13
Webmaster	30
District 15 Events/Items	
Academic Spirit Award	26
Contact List	21
District 15 Board Response	11
Jim Baker Celebration	17
Meet Carey Mollenhauer	31
New Sails	15
Tribute to Colton Roberts	8
Articles	
A Home For Teddy Bears	22
Magic at McMichael	31
Richard Remembers	19
Sanibel	37
Seven Years on the Road	34
We Get Letters	6

The *Halton Herald*, our newsletter, comes out three times a year in print form with the amazing work of **Peter Gnish**, Editor and **Nanci Wakeman**, Copy Editor. Although we do send the *Halton Herald* by mail members are invited to consider receiving their edition of the *Halton Herald* newsletter electronically. If you would like to save a few trees please send our Editor, **Peter Gnish**, an e-mail stating that you no longer wish to receive a paper copy in snail mail but would like to enjoy the *Herald* digitally. Send your e-mail to District15Halton@gmail.com.

Our Program Committee has also shifted from in-person presentations to virtual meetings using platforms like ZOOM and Webinars. This year we were pleased to present Carole Bertuzzi who guided us through her personal strategy to remain buoyant in these turbulent times.

Tracie Michaud did a Webinar on Tea Appreciation covering the legend and history of tea to tips and tricks...and to think I just throw my tea bag in the pot! Dan Cooper shared many of his pictures and stories that were part travelogue, part intriguing and amazing displays of some of the bizarre plants and flowers that can be found in Southeast Asia, like the giant Rafflesia flower, the quivering Black Bat lily and the Sexy Pink heliconia.

David Chapman's presentation on Wild, Weird and Wacky Weather combined Ontario's weather uniqueness, power and beauty all wrapped into one. With

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



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

his stories and photographs, the audience was truly entertained!

Communications is only one small part of who we are. The strength of the organization is made up of all the volunteers who work passionately each and every day. I am pleased to present the Executive Officers for the 2021-2022 year:

PAST PRESIDENT	- MICKI CLEMENS
PRESIDENT	- JERRY POWIDAJKO
1ST VICE PRESIDENT	- VACANT
2ND VICE PRESIDENT	- BRAD FISHER
SECRETARY	- DIANNE VISSCHEDYK
TREASURER	- CAROL PASHKIEVICH
MEMBER EMERITUS	- JIM BAKER

Also I would like to present all the Committee Chairs:

Archives – Blaine Adams

Awards, Community Grants & Scholarships – Penny Hambly

Benefits – Bonnie Cummings

Communications:

Halton Herald Editor – Peter Gnish

Halton Herald Copy Editor – Nanci Wakeman

Rapport – Brad Fisher

Social Media – Patricia Mateja

Website – Jeannie Woodcroft and Carey Mollenhauer

Foundation – Moira Plexman

Goodwill – Toni Pizzingrilli

Membership – Marilyn MacLennan

Political Advocacy – Claudia Stewart

Program – VACANT

Social – VACANT

As you can see our strength is our people. But we do have some vacancies that are calling out your name!!! Please feel free to contact us if you are interested or would like more information about any of the committees/positions above.

We are looking forward to working with you in the coming year.

We Get Letters, E-mails & Calls

By Peter Gnish



Although we were all somewhat confined to our homes due to COVID over the past several months there were not many members who sent me notes to post here. Thanks to those who did. How about you? Why not send me a quick e-mail update on what you are doing? Send it to pgnish@gmail.com by November 15th so the rest of us can be brought up to date on your status.

Teresa Culpepper wrote to say “Thank you so much for the recent e-copy of the *Halton Herald*. I always love reading through it and seeing what everyone is up to and what is new. This has been a most challenging year for everyone, I’m sure. The hardest part for me is not being able to “hang out” with my little Munchkins (my niece’s triplets). We Facetime almost every week and celebrated their 5th birthday in December on ZOOM. It was great fun, but it’s just not the same as being able to hug them and cuddle with them. I was fortunate enough to spend the month of August with them - a couple of days each week before we went into lockdown. I do send them craft packages every couple of weeks - they love crafts! Lately, they have been doing their crafts while we are on Facetime so it is really cool - almost like being there with them! They are being homeschooled at the moment because too many children in their SK class were sent home with coughs and colds - luckily, no one had COVID at this point!

All in all, I can’t complain! My husband and I are healthy and just waiting for Peel to get their vaccinations going for people over 65! Patience has certainly become the key word of the year! Thanks again! Stay safe – stay healthy! God bless to all!”

Angela Paccione telephoned me to say she really enjoyed reading the articles in the *Halton Herald* – in particular she was intrigued by **Matilda** - since she has many teaching materials stored. She wondered if there was some way of getting them to teachers in Africa or other countries who might be able to use them.

In a later e-mail she wrote “On another note, I’ve been thinking about my grade 4,5 and 6 teachers lately and I haven’t been able to find any

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

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

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

information on them. I have already made contact with my grade 7 math teacher and we correspond via e-mail. It's so great to talk and catch up with my childhood teacher and see what he's up to. He was so surprised to hear that I had gone into teaching and had already retired from teaching. Through our correspondences he inquired about my hobbies and sports since he knew I was a pretty athletic student who excelled in baseball. He was also equally surprised to hear that in my forties I picked up Tae Kwon Do and have achieved Second Dan (2nd degree black belt). I told him that I was also very surprised with my achievement and had only recently tested for my 2nd degree during my first year of retirement.

One of the teachers I'm trying to contact is Mrs. Brenda Down. She was my grade 4 and 5 teacher. The last time I saw and spoke to her I was in teacher's college at Brock and that would have been 1980-1981. She was living in Milton and had remarried and went by the name of Brenda Baker. Her maiden name was Brenda Miller and she taught at Pine Grove Public school from 1967-1971. Another teacher is Mr. Donald Henwood and he taught at Pine Grove from 1969-1972. He was my grade 6 teacher. I would greatly appreciate any help ...in my search for these two teachers."

If you can help Angela in her search you can e-mail her directly with your information at angela.paccione@cogeco.ca.

Butch Rogers sent an e-mail to say, "Just to let you know about Jeanne Stoness. She was Rae's wife. He was a Superintendent in the Jim Morrison era. Jeanne also taught in Halton. She was the Librarian at T.L. Kennedy in Peel when I was a Vice-principal there. I just learned to-day through the TLK former teacher news that she died last July in Florida from injuries received in a car accident. I am sure there are many of the older former Halton staff who would remember her.

Even though I left Halton in June, 1974 I enjoy the *Halton Herald* and the news that is in it. The last issue points out how uncertain life is as you get older. The September issue had a note from **Peter Saberton** and the January 2021 issue reported that he had passed away. I am still reasonably healthy and trying to keep as active as I can.

Keep up the good work."

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

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

(We Get Letters...continued from Page 7)

Dick Scott submitted this e-mail: "As friends of **Bryce Leggatt**, you may be aware that he passed away recently following a long and challenging illness. A group of his friends have decided to create a lasting acknowledgement to recognize the significant, life-long commitment Bryce had to charity, sports, and good sense and, in part, to have a touchstone memorial to a good man and a sincere friend.

Sandy White, the owner of Lowville Golf Club, where Bryce worked and played, has agreed to the group placing a memorial bench, complete with a commemorative plaque, at the first tee. The area is open and accessible to visitors not playing golf. The proposal will require a commitment of about \$6,000. You are invited to share in this memorial by making a contribution to the fund set up to complete this proposal. If you wish to contribute use either of the following options:

By e-transfer: To **Rodney Collard**. E-mail: rodcollard5@gmail.com. It has auto deposit so no password needed. Or by a cheque payable to: Rod Collard, **481 Townsend Avenue, Burlington, Ontario, L7T 2B2**

Nancy Sorensen sent a message to say, "Great edition of the *Herald!* Aren't people wonderful! Gambling all to live in an RV, making a Canada Cup quilt and mats made from plastic milk bags! The ingenuity of older folks never ceases to delight and amaze me."

A Tribute to Colton Roberts

Compiled by Micki Clemens, Past President, through an interview with Colton

RTOERO District 15 Halton - Volunteer PAR EXCELLENCE

Colton Roberts, our former Chair of the Benefits Committee, stepped down from that role on May 31, 2021. He had indicated to the board his wish to retire about two years ago but, in his inimitable and generous fashion, was determined to carry out his duties until a replacement was found and mentored in the role.

Colton has proven to be a volunteer without equal! Joining RTOERO in 1998 upon retirement, Colton became involved in many of the RTOERO sponsored events including wellness days, wine and cheese sessions, retirement workshops and program events. He served as V.P. and then RTOERO District 15 President from 2005-2007. In 2009 he received the

(Tribute...continues on Page 9)

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

(Tribute...continued from Page 8)

RTOERO Project Service to Others Grant for his project called **Upgrades to Homes of the Poor** in Patzun, Guatemala. The project involved installing a high-efficiency wood cooking stove as well as a cement floor in the homes of the most needy inhabitants and painting the walls to improve the living conditions for these families. In 2010 he was presented with the Distinguished Service Award for his dedicated service as a volunteer to RTOERO District 15 Halton. Colton remained on the Board for 17 years. He has always been ready to volunteer for any project that needed help. He has been involved continuously in the Program Committee and assisted our High Tea Committee as well as fulfilling his role as Chair of the former Health Committee, now newly named Benefits Committee.

His service to his broader community is exemplified in his volunteer work with his church-sponsored activities. He supports the **Meal in a Bag** program at Wellington Square United Church and has volunteered his time giving tours at Joseph Brant Museum and Ireland House. During the 18 months of COVID-19 he has worked arduously at cleaning the grounds of the Ireland House Museum that fortunately backs right onto his property.

Colton was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia and remembers sliding down the steep hill to school on a sled in the wintertime! He was interested in expanding his view of the world and took up stamp collecting and corresponded with a pen pal from New Zealand for several years. Car models played a role in his childhood and he still remembers vividly their first family car, a 1936 Pontiac. This fascination with unique and interesting cars is still evident in his life today.

Moving to Ontario in 1953 Colton's family experienced life on the Beach Strip in Hamilton for three months before moving to Fruitland. He remembers helping out as a youngster and teenager on the fruit farms in the area, particularly that of E. D. Smith who lived just down the road. He became adept at thinning and pruning peach trees. Colton was the eldest of three brothers and his youngest brother still lives in Kitchener. Colton married his wife, Susan, in 1967 and they settled in Burlington. Their first house was on Cornick Drive and then they moved to the home near the former Ireland Estates that he still occupies after Susan passed away.

(Tribute...continues on Page 10)

(Tribute...continued from Page 9)



His favourite photo captures them together part way up the escarpment off Guelph Line. They were the stars of an amateur movie, *Mark of the Lion*, being filmed in the fall of 1971.

Their children are close. His daughter, Carolyn, is in London, Ontario and his son, Jim, lives in Epson, New Hampshire. Colton's closeness to his family has led to his research and investigation into the family ancestry. Colton has found evidence that he may be descended from William Brewster who arrived on the Mayflower and that the original family came from Georgia to Halifax as late Loyalists. His travel goal is to take a trip with his daughter to Scotland next year visiting Glasgow and Edinburgh to continue re-



searching his family roots. In addition, Colton has a passion for jigsaw puzzles and classic cars. He loves to go on long drives in his Corvette and to spend time restoring a Cooper Mini.



Colton's teaching career spanned 13 schools in Halton plus leadership positions serving as President of the Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation (OPSMTF) not once but twice! He remembers Jim Singleton becoming the first Director of the new Halton District School Board when all of the Halton townships were amalgamated.

Colton has been characterized as "the kindest, most compassionate, most generous human being you could ever meet" and the epitome of RTOERO's motto, "Service to Others". To honour him our Awards Chair, **Penny Hambly**, delivered the gift of an inscribed Cross pen plus a new RTOERO bronze pin to mark his tremendous contribution to RTOERO District 15.



We will deeply miss Colton's presence on the Board. We wish him all the best going forward with his many varied interests, with caring for his children and grandchildren and we hope to see him in person at future RTOERO District 15 events.

Response to Indigenous and Muslim Events

By Micki Clemens

At the RTOERO Forum on May 31 the Chair of the Board, Rich Prophet, read the following statement to all the cross-Canada participants:

“We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the devastating discovery on the site of the Kamloops residential school in British Columbia. We cannot begin to fathom the pain this news has inflicted on the Indigenous community in British Columbia and beyond.”

RTOERO has joined many other organizations across Canada in lowering our flag to half-mast in remembrance of the 215 children whose graves have just been found and to remember all Indigenous children who did not return from residential schools. We pay tribute to the survivors and their families. As an organization, we are committed to continuing to support the work of Truth and Reconciliation.”

Subsequently, at the beginning of our regular District 15 Board meeting on June 10, as Past President, I read this same RTOERO statement and then added this additional reflection after learning of the horrific attack in London, ON. *“We, in District 15, wish to acknowledge the heaviness of heart we have all experienced at the recent news of the deliberate murder of the four members of the Muslim family in London, ON. Our thoughts also embrace the young boy who survived and all those impacted by the attack.”* Our Board members were invited to pause and reflect on these two events in silent thought and recollection.

On our agenda under New Business, there were three proposals for donations to go to worthy charities to support Indigenous causes. After exploring the suggested possibilities our District 15 Board determined that we would donate \$1000 apiece to the following charities:

Legacy of Hope Foundation – a national Indigenous-based charitable organization based in Ottawa. The goal is to educate Canadians about the history and impacts of the Residential and Day School Systems and the subsequent Sixties Scoop, and the effects that they continue to have on Indigenous peoples today. The LHF works with teachers, school boards, and universities, policing agencies, governments, banks, unions and private businesses to help meet these goals with a unique and comprehensive collection of resources, exhibitions, workshops and research reports. Learn more at: legacyofhope.ca.

(Response...continues on Page 12)

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

(Response...continued from Page 11)

Woodland Culture Centre – a complex in Brantford consisting of an historical museum, three art galleries and a library. The goal is to preserve and promote the diversity and history of Indigenous peoples and provide the community with an opportunity to experience Indigenous culture. Learn more at: woodlandculturalcentre.ca

Grandmothers Voice - is a group of unified Indigenous women in Halton creating a safe, secure community that advances education, knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures and practices. It offers a series of workshops in Indigenous education and reconciliation for schools and organizations to share and learn from one another. Learn more at: grandmothersvoice.com

Since the tragic event in London occurred a couple of days before our RTOERO District 15 Board meeting, it is our intention to explore ways of supporting the Muslim community in Halton before our next Board meeting in September. RTOERO itself confirmed a strong commitment in its Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to make our organization a supportive and engaging place for members and staff by deepening awareness of diversity, equity and inclusivity as well as by increasing the understanding of the perceptual, institutional and psychological processes that impact how the members and staff engage and interact.

The actions outlined in this RTOERO focus area for Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity are designed to serve our organization which is committed to going beyond mere compliance in order to build a truly aware, diverse, equitable and inclusive RTOERO culture.

ADDENDUM: There is a growing body of literature – novels, memoirs, poetry, graphic novels, picture books and non-fiction – through which writers are giving voice to the experiences and histories of Indigenous experiences in Canada. Here are a few titles to explore:

Indian Horse - Richard Wagamese; *Seven Fallen Feathers* - Tanya Tagala; *The Marrow Thieves* - Cherie Dimaline; *Five Little Indians* - Michelle Good; *The Inconvenient Indian* - Thomas King (non-fiction); *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act* - Bob Joseph (non-fiction); *Phyllis's Orange Shirt* - Phyllis Webstad (For ages 4-6).

Program Committee Report

By Jerry Powidajko

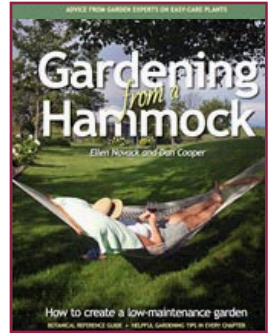


RTOERO – DISTRICT 15 ZOOM PROGRAM EVENTS FALL 2021

A ZOOM link will be sent about a week before each of the presentations. Please mark your calendars

1. Gardening From a Hammock - Dan Cooper

In this second presentation by Dan Cooper on **Tuesday, September 28 at 11 a.m.** he will show us how to create our own low-maintenance gardens and still find time to relax in the hammock. His entertaining 45-minute presentation is inspired by his book **Gardening from a Hammock** and features plant suggestions, gardening tips, plant combinations for low-maintenance gardening and much more.



The selections of easy-care plants were chosen by well-known gardening experts including Paul Zammit, Dugald Cameron, Marion Jarvie, Marjorie Mason, Lorraine Flannigan, Frank Kershaw, Martin Galloway and Jim Lounsberry among others.

The **Gardening from a Hammock** presentation:

- features lovely photographs of easy-care plants by award-winning photographer Paul Zammit and other professional photographers
- teaches our members about water conservation and drought-tolerant plants
- gives tips on how to minimize weeding and cut down on the time spent on the chores of gardening so that we have more time to enjoy our garden

For more information about **Gardening from a Hammock** go to: <http://www.gardeningfromahammock.com>.

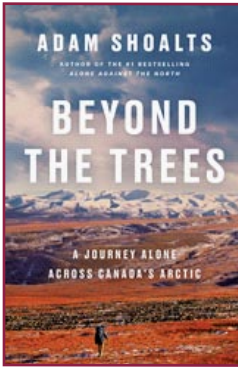
2. Journey Across the Arctic - Adam Shoalts

Please join us on **Tuesday, October 26th at 11 a.m.** for a compelling presentation from Adam Shoalts, a professional adventurer and national best selling author. Adam will be sharing his long solo wilderness

(Program...continues on Page 14)

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

(Program...continued from Page 13)



journey to the Arctic. He has been described by the CBC “as one of the greatest living explorers.” Adam is best known for his long solo wilderness journeys including crossing nearly 4,000 km of Canada’s Arctic alone. His award winning books include *A History of Canada in 10 Maps*, *Alone Against the North* and *Beyond the Trees*. His brand new book, *The Whisper on the Night Wind*, will be released in October, 2021. Here is a link to the book page on his website for ordering books:

<https://adamshoalts.com/literature/>.

3. Time to Appreciate Ontario Wine? - Ted McIntyre



Please join us on **Wednesday, November 24th at 11 a.m.** for an engaging and informative presentation, **Time to Appreciate Ontario Wine?** Professional sommelier and wine expert, Ted McIntyre, will be sharing his top picks for Niagara wineries and he will introduce us to some Niagara winery owners. Ted will also demonstrate how to properly sip and taste wine.

Although Ted McIntyre is one of Canada’s best-travelled and most award-winning golf writers and has edited most of the nation’s leading golf publications over the past 25 years, he began to turn his attention to wine writing a decade ago and has annually produced a list of the 36 Best Wines for Under \$18. Based in Oakville, ON, and holding an honours degree in political science from McMaster University, he is on the invitation list for virtually every major wine event that comes through Toronto. These events include private lunches and dinners with some of the world’s most famous winemakers, such as Italy’s Alberto Zenato and Chile’s Aurelio Montes. When Australia’s famed Taylors Wakefield Wines launched its \$1,000 Legacy wine in Toronto two years ago Ted was among the 20 people invited. He is also a huge fan of Canadian wines, from the bold reds of the Okanagan Valley to the seductive Pinot Noirs and evocative Rieslings of Niagara. Ted is also a stickler for pairing the proper glass with a wine.

Check out his website: <https://www.thelushlife.ca/>.

Twitter: @TheLushLifeTed @tedbits or YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuGm8YP7TWS-zbYrBR!mRWQ>

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

New Sails for Burlington Able Sail

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Thanks to District 15's successful 2020 Community Grants award of \$4000, Burlington Able Sail (BAS) has purchased and received 3 new sets of sails emblazoned with the RTOERO District 15 Halton logo. While COVID-19 restrictions may have put a tight lid on activities and gatherings at this time of writing in May, BAS is planning to run a modified sailing program over

the 2021 sailing season. It will be in full compliance with provincial and municipal COVID-19 health guidelines. Hopefully, on reading this, you can visit LaSalle Park Marina and see BAS's refitted Marlin 16 sailboats flying our logo. It would be an uplifting experience to see our logo waving in the gentle breezes on Burlington Bay. Wishing you fair weather!

Political Advocacy Committee

By Claudia Stewart



In May I met with Karina Gould, MP for Burlington, to discuss ways to integrate Long Term Care (LTC) into the Canada Health Act. Karina is well versed on the issues involved in the situations in LTCs. She believes that we must not let the issue of standards of care in LTCs wither away. We must keep the issue in front of our membership and politicians, especially in the event

of an election. Here are some questions to consider:

- How is the provincial government working with the federal and municipal governments to establish national standards for LTCs?
- What are we doing to ensure that sick pay for staff in LTCs is a benefit?
- How are we dealing with the very important issues of increasing staffing of LTCs and paying them a living wage?
- How do we ensure that a principled body regularly carries out inspections of LTCs?
- Will the Canadian government advocate for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons to raise awareness and find solutions?

(Political Advocacy...continues on Page 16)

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

(Political Advocacy...continued from Page 15)

Here are websites/videos where you can learn more about the issues of Long Term Care and developing a seniors' strategy for the future.

ACER-CART Retiree Health Event held June 3. Videos are available for viewing and sharing here: <https://acer-cart.org/june3event/>.

The speakers in this video are Dr. Samir Sinha, the Director of Geriatrics at University of Toronto, Johns Hopkins University and Dr. Steve Morgan, UBC SteveMorgan@UBC.ca, School of Population and Public Health. Some of the issues that popped out were that life expectancy has substantially increased from 51 in 1900 to 82 years in 2020. What strategies have we put in place to help Canadian seniors to live a life of dignity and wellness as they age? The average Canadian with no pension plan has \$3500 in savings at retirement; this makes income security a real issue. We are becoming more aware of the need to develop a National Seniors Strategy with all levels of government.

www.nationalseniorsstrategy.ca

Pillars of Activities for a National Seniors Strategy:

- 1) Independent Productive Engaged Citizens
- 2) Healthy Active Lives
- 3) Care Closer to Home
- 4) Support for Caregivers

Fundamental Principles Underlying a National Seniors Strategy are:

Access, Equity, Choice, Value, and Quality

In Ontario there are 40,000 people on wait lists for LTCs. How can we provide adequate home and community care - virtual long term care?

The high cost of medicine is not included in our universal health care in Canada but is in most other countries with health care systems. How can we make universal health care include pharmacare? There have been 5 High commissions on pharmacare all saying the same thing. If the federal government invests in pharmacare Canadians can save enough money to fund universal daycare.

I attended a webinar from RIPP Research Institute on Public Policy.

Dr. Carolyn Hughes Tuoby presented - *A Federalist Path to LTC Reform*. She suggests developing a plan to pay for long term care similar to the Canada Pension Plan. Interesting statistics:

1. Canada will soon be a super-aged society.
2. 20% of our population will be over the age of 65 by 2024. The number of young people is declining.

(Political Advocacy...continues on Page 17)

(Political Advocacy...continued from Page 16)

3. In Canadian LTC homes: 81% of the Canada's COVID-19 deaths, 70% of residents are women, 90% of paid staff are women, a high percentage of whom are racialized or newcomers.
4. 7% of Canadians account for 81% of all COVID-19 deaths

Despite older people being most at risk for COVID-19, none of the countries with the highest rates of COVID-19 deaths reported cases by age and sex. None of the LTC homes reported deaths by age and sex. The health gap disproportionately impacts older women. Yet older women are the invisible majority within the health system.

If an election is called over the next few months please consider volunteering to be on a team of members who will coordinate an all candidates meeting to allow all parties to speak to these issues, as well as issues about environmental stewardship.

Jim Baker celebrates his 95th birthday!

Compiled by Micki Clemens, Past President, with thanks to Jan England for providing Jim's biographical and professional background.

On July 27 a number of the Board members of District 15 Halton and several additional district members participated in a special celebration for Jim Baker's 95th birthday. With the cooperation and collaboration of his daughter, Jan England, we arranged an event to surprise Jim



(Jim Baker...continues on Page 18)

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

(Jim Baker...continued from Page 17)

with our gifts and cards and balloons at his condo in Burlington.

Jim was a former member of our District 15 Halton Board and served as our local President from 1989-1991. He remained on the Board until 2017 serving as Chair of the Pensions portfolio. In addition he served as the President of RTOERO in Toronto from 1998-1999. Here are some interesting facts about Jim's background, education, career and family.

Jim was born in Toronto on July 29, 1926 and grew up as one of 11 children. In younger days, he delivered newspapers, unloaded trucks, made deliveries on his bicycle, and worked as a tour guide for sightseeing tours in Toronto. He attended Victoria College at the University of Toronto and played on their football team. After his teacher training at the Ontario College of Education he taught in Parry Sound and Walla-ceburg prior to moving to Burlington.

Between 1954 and 1968, he taught English and Geography at Burlington Central H. S. and became head of their Guidance/Student Services. Jim was promoted to Vice-principal of Nelson H. S. in 1968 while his daughter Jan was still a student there. In 1971 he moved to Aldershot H. S. as Principal. His second daughter, Marsha, attended that school during some of his years there. He was Principal of G. E. Perdue between 1980-1985 and then chose to retire.

In terms of his community service, Jim has been a proud Rotarian since 1975. He was treasurer of the local chapter for nine years, hosted exchange students, and was a constant fixture in assisting with the annual lobster fiesta. He served on the board of his condo building for about ten years and looked after the weekly bridge and euchre nights for several years. He has been a longstanding member of Wellington Square United Church and was involved in several capacities including chair of their Christian education, member of the building council, an usher who distributed communion, as well as being a member of their committee for a new candidate for the ministry.

Upon retirement, Jim took his love of geography to a new level and became a world traveller, planning both land and sea cruises and enjoying his travels with friends and family. He continues to play bridge, loves movies, theatre, and the opera, and remains an avid reader.

(Jim Baker...continues on Page 19)

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

(Jim Baker...continued from Page 18)

In addition to his two daughters, Jim has four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He has a proud legacy in education. His daughter, Marsha works in Human Resources for the Halton DSB and his daughter, Jan, and her daughter followed in his footsteps and became teachers as well. A life of service and wide and deep accomplishments - congratulations to you, JIM BAKER! As Jim said, "I was truly happy to see so many former RTO associates. I didn't anticipate anything like this and I truly appreciated it. I hope to see you in another 5 years. I appreciate the shirt and cap representing RTOERO and these gifts will help me to keep fresh my memories of my experiences with RTO."

Richard Remembers...

By Richard Szymczyk

For the last 10 years or so, I've been hidden in the country I call my Northumberland's Bermuda Triangle - almost impossible to find surrounded by a woodlot on 3 sides, and my corn and soybean fields on the other. In the community I helped fight massive wind turbines, spent a few years as vice-chair of the Township Police Board, as a Board member of the Art Gallery of Northumberland and assisted in rewriting the constitution and bylaws. I relax by firing up my Massey Ferguson tractors and bulldozer, dig a little hole here, dig another, fill them and generally re-landscape without damaging the environment.

In my "spare" time I began to rummage through my vast holdings and came across the former Glenwood School (Burlington) Visitors' Official Opening sign-in book given to me years ago by the school's last principal who found it on the office shelves before the school was demolished. The school opened in October, 1947. Visitors' signatures include Annie Wood - after whose family the school was named and which was situated on their farm. Florence Meares, Herma Bailey, first principal Morrell Acheson, many teachers, Inspector Lorne Skuce, many local families, and even my name was there!! Over the next several years there were visitors from all over the country and world, believe it or not, from China, Norway, Denmark and more. The reason was that Glenwood was evidently Ontario's first consolidated school with eight classrooms, huge open windows all overlooking Guelph Line and with an auditorium and office in a central core. The walls were post-war plywood (used to build Spitfires), heating was hot water with under-floor piping!!

(Richard...continues on Page 20)

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

(Richard...continued from Page 19)

Locust Lodge is the historical stone building still there on the property at the junction of Queensway Drive and Glenwood School Drive. The original Wood farmhouse is across the road and was the residence of Florence Meares when she taught at Fisher's Corners School and for years thereafter.

I just remembered. I think I'm the only person who was a student with teacher Florence at Fisher's (46/47), years later as a teacher with principal Florence at Lakeshore (64/65) and later as a principal with school trustee Florence!! She was a wonderful mentor... as I'm sure many of her "flock" will remember. When she retired I commissioned Robert Bateman to paint Fisher's Corners School as a gift of our years-long history. Robert started it but with little time to spare had a Lord Elgin art student, last name Peachey, finish it. But Robert's work is part of it!! The Peachey name is on bottom right of painting. To my knowledge it still hangs in the hallway of St. Christopher's Anglican Church on Guelph Line. Florence attended there and I believe Fisher's was used as the original site of this church before building the current edifice.

I plan to offer the visitors' book to either the Burlington Historical Society or museum if they're interested. But, perhaps it is a treasure only to me. And, by a strange coincidence, Glenwood was my first school when I was appointed Principal in '68!

This is just one of innumerable memories of my years in Burlington and Halton! I hope some of you mature, not old, colleagues can remember and identify with a few of these memories. Let me know at prof2u@live.ca. All will be answered.

Contribute to the *Herald*!

The next *Halton Herald* will be distributed in January, 2022.

- **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.
- **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, 2021.

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

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. Please 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 2021 – 2022

Past President: Micki Clemens
1st Vice President: Vacant
Secretary: Dianne Visschedyk
Member Emeritus: Jim Baker

President: Jerry Powidajko
2nd Vice President: Brad Fisher
Treasurer: Carol Pashkievich

Committees

Archives

Blaine Adams

Awards, Community Grants and Scholarships

Penny Hambly

Book of Remembrance

Toni Pizzigrilli

Communications

Webmaster

Jeannie Woodcroft

Assistant: Carey Mollenhauer

Rapport Coordinator

Brad Fisher

Halton Herald Newsletter Coordinator

Nanci Wakeman

Halton Herald 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 Convenors

Ruth Roberts and Marina Lloyd

East Convenors

Warren McBurney and Dianne Visschedyk

North Convenors

Judy Rose and Susan Spencer

Out-of-Region Convenor Catherine Fadyshen

Health Benefits

Bonnie Cummings

Committee Member:

Colton Roberts

Membership/Recruitment

Marilyn MacLennan

Member at Large

Susan Stavín

Political Advocacy

Claudia Stewart

Committee Members: Bev Balch, Olga Shewchun, Paul Sousa

Program

Jerry Powidajko

Committee Members: Micki Clemens, Penny Hambly, Paul Harper,

Lynda Kozak, Toni Pizzigrilli, Colton Roberts, Susan Stavín

Social

Vacant

Committee Members: Lynda Kozak, Marilyn MacLennan, Patricia Mateja

Carol Pashkievich, Claudia Stewart, Diona Szczerbak, David Wright

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

A Home for Teddy Bears

By Teresa Culpeper

At 18 months old I received my first teddy bear with a red and white plush body and a rubber face. I named him Terry. Winding a key in his back, he played Brahms Lullaby. Terry went everywhere with me. When I was seven, I watched the garbage man pick up our can with a very worn out Terry and toss him into the truck. Tears streamed down my face. I promised Terry I would never allow another teddy to be thrown out!

Six decades later, I am the proud owner of 879 teddy bears. Some I bought, others were bought for me. Still others, no longer having a home, were adopted by me, many from former students who felt they had outgrown their teddy bears but just couldn't see them thrown out! I understood completely, took them in and cared for them! What can I say?!

Most bears came to live with me during my teaching years. Holidays, birthdays and year-end saw many 'new' bears arriving to be introduced to their new family. Photos were given to the previous owners if they wished!



When my husband and I got married, there were no young boys on either side of the family so Pooky Bear acted as "ring bear." Auntie June in Nova Scotia told me to send his measurements - she made him a grey satin suit with a pink cummerbund and matching bowtie. Although Auntie June was unable to make it to our wedding, Mr. Pooky Bear's outfit arrived and fit perfectly! He matched my fiance's outfit and had his own chair at the reception!

Once, at my dentist, the conversation got around to teddy bears and how her young son had an allergic reaction to a bear he had recently been given. I offered to "adopt" George.



(Teddy Bears...continues on Page 23)

(Teddy Bears...continued from Page 22)

The next day, a very large blue bear was waiting for me! With help, I settled him into my little Hyundai Accent. My surprised husband just shook his head.

George wasn't my biggest bear! About a decade back, my husband was putting out the garbage. He came running inside saying, "Come quickly!" I figured he needed help picking up spilled garbage - you know husbands! Outside, he pointed up the street and said, "I think that's a bear sitting at the end of the neighbor's driveway. Go check it out!" I did and there was a ginormous bear. I walked all around him and couldn't find any problem. I rang the doorbell, introduced myself and asked about the bear. The gentleman chuckled and said absolutely nothing was wrong with the bear - it had been a promotional for Bad Boy and had been given to his new born son. The baby was the size of the bear's head and his wife told him no way, so out went the bear. I asked if he minded if I took him home. Smiling he said, "Go for it!" After some time, pushing hard, we got BB through the front door!



Five years ago, with Christmas holidays approaching, I got a brilliant idea. Instead of trudging out to the tree farm to chop down a tree I decided to build a Christmas tree and put all the Christmas bears on it! No loose needles to vacuum up, no kitty barf from chewed trees to clean, no bagging a tree, etc. I had access to the construction classroom so I made a 6 tier tree out of wood and dowel; glued green felt on it; attached hooks for lights. It's great! The Christmas bears sit all around. The angel bear sits on top with an evergreen scented sachet. Best of all, we just carry it upstairs after Christmas and put it in the bears' room until next Christmas. Who would have thought decorating could be so simple!

One year, my wise husband bought me a teddy bear kit for Christmas with the understanding that I could not buy (or adopt) another bear until I had made him! I don't sew! I accepted the challenge though and eventually Stitch got made! I had some help from my best friend who happens to be an avid sewer but no, she didn't sew but she encouraged



(Teddy Bears...continues on Page 24)

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

(Teddy Bears...continued from Page 23)

and supervised me, very closely. We were all proud! To celebrate, I went out and bought a teddy bear! I could write a book about my adventures with my bears but this is to be a brief description so I'll stop! I hope I have brought back happy memories of your childhood; your own teddy bears. May your hearts and homes always be open to them! They are your best friends – loving unconditionally, never judging, always keeping secrets. Best, they love to be hugged. And who doesn't need a hug, especially these days!

Benefits Committee Report

By Bonnie Cummings



I would like to thank **Colton Roberts** for his many years of service as Chair of the Benefits Committee. His expertise and knowledge have been invaluable in helping many members. We will miss him in this position! I will be your new Chair of the Benefits Committee. I have been working with Colton over the past year to prepare for this transition. I am thrilled that Colton will continue to serve on the Program Committee and he

has assured me that he will be available to help with my transition to Chair of Benefits.

I retired in February before COVID hit. I had many years of experience as a Health and Safety Rep for the high school I was in and was on the Joint Health and Safety team with the Halton Board as the alternate. I also served three years on the Provincial Health and Safety Committee. I have taken countless courses in Health & Safety & Benefits over the years. I am excited to be transitioning into this role as I have always had a great interest in this area.

I would like to highlight a few good news items. Claims to our plans due to COVID-19 decreased in 2020. The net surplus of \$17+ million will be transferred to the RTOERO Health Premium Stabilization Fund to offset future premium rate increases. Also, Royal and Sun Alliance (RSA), which insures RTOERO's travel plan, recognized a surplus in premiums paid for travel. A premium reduction of 3% was applied in 2021 to the Extended Health Care Plan.

The virtual seminar held on April 15th, with Steven Wong, was a huge success. We had 235 people attend! It was very educational and a

(Health benefits...continues on Page 25)

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

(Health benefits...continued from Page 24)

great reminder of all the benefits that can be accessed. Can't find your Benefits booklet? No problem - the RTOERO website has the most current copy of the benefits booklet available for download or on-line viewing. Just enter "Benefits Booklet" in the search bar.

You should have received an e-mail notifying you that the new claims portal is ready to use. Just a reminder to register for "My insurance" to access the new portal at Johnson.ca/benefits. Once registered you can access the claims portal by logging in at Insurance.johnson.ca and selecting "group benefits". If you are having problems you can contact Johnson by e-mail at digitalsupport@johnson.ca or by telephone 1-833-749-1324.

As things start to open up around the province, and with many of us vaccinated, you may be considering travelling once again. It is important to remember to always take your Benefit card with you. In case of an emergency all the contact information you will need is on the card. Stay safe and for those who can and are willing, happy travels. If you have any questions, please direct them to me at: bonniecummings.RTOERO@gmail.com

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 OR

If you have not been receiving electronic communication from RTOERO national or District 15, then your e-mail address is not receiving bulk e-mails. This may be solved by adding the following e-mail addresses to your contacts:

Rto_events@rtoero.ca; district15halton@gmail.com

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

- E-mail RTOERO national Membership Services at membership@rtoero.ca
- Phone RTOERO national 1-800-361-9888. Receive a call in a day or two.
- Contact Marilyn MacLennan (District 15) with the change using the District 15 e-mail address District15halton@gmail.com - use "Change in the subject line.

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

RTOERO District 15 Halton Academic Spirit Award

By Marilyn MacLennan

Three years ago, the RTOERO District 15 Board decided to offer a scholarship to one student from each of the Halton District School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board. This year we offered two awards per board.

Criteria for the awards:

- Be a graduating student pursuing post-secondary education at a recognized university, college or apprenticeship program in Canada the year following graduation.
- Demonstrate good academic performance, but not necessarily be considered “academic elite”.
- Demonstrate a strong work ethic, commitment to their studies and service to others.
- Have overcome obstacles to successfully graduate from secondary school.
- Financial need may be taken into consideration.

We are pleased to announce the winners.

Halton District School Board



Ethen Edwards: Georgetown DHS

Ethen is a young man confined to a wheelchair due to Muscular Dystrophy whose “spirit remains undaunted”. He has worked hard to excel in the school to reach his goal of attending Sheridan College in the Media Fundamentals Program. He plans to set up his own video editing business.



Aashta Vaidhya: Garth Webb SS

Aashta has struggled with the cultural expectations of a young woman. She worked hard to overcome personal doubts in order to be successful in school and in volunteer work. Her experience has led her to want to work to overcome biases, specifically in the health care sector. She will be attending Western University in Health Sciences.

(Spirit Award...continues on Page 27)

(Spirit Award...continued from Page 26)

Halton Catholic District School Board



Holly Marini: Notre Dame SS

Holly has been extensively involved in leadership activities at Notre Dame. She assisted Skate Canada coaches with on-ice training and won an award for her work. This money was used by her to help teach skating to underprivileged children. She has suffered inner ear surgeries and difficulties since she was very young. Her experiences have inspired her to pursue Pediatric

Medicine specializing in ENT. She will be attending McMaster University beginning with the Life Sciences Gateway program.



Mya Caverson: Notre Dame SS

Mya is a capable young woman who has struggled with anxiety throughout high school. She chose to channel her energies to give back to the school community in assisting younger students as an empathetic mentor, tutor and role model. She wants to continue helping people in the future as a medical doctor. She will be attending Western University in their Medical Sciences program.

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, 2021. Please welcome them and invite them to join you at one of our activities when we are permitted to gather once again.

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Claire Benezra | Mary Anne Carter | Paul Cianciolo | Helen Cruickshank |
| Paul Daignault | Gayle Etherington | Carla Favero | Sheila Fitz-Gerald |
| Larry Gatsos | Cat Hadala | Sally Hart | Julie Hunt Gibbons |
| Barbara Irvine | Lorna Johnson | Sophie Karman | Mark Kovich |
| Kimberley Krug | Mary Marshall | Pauline McRae | Kathryn Mooney |
| Justine O'Grady | Fernando Pinho | Sherrie Rain | Andrew Robertson |
| Alka Sahai | Paul Sanderson | Pauline Shelsen | Susan Slimmon |
| Arnold Stevenson | Beverley Taylor | Francine Tielemans-Deoni | |
| Patricia Whyte | | | |

Awards, Community Grants & Scholarships Report

By Penny Hambly



The Awards Committee is responsible for keeping you informed in three areas. All the details can also be found on our District 15 or RTO/ERO websites.

Scholarships

Johnson Insurance offers scholarships valued at \$1000 to members' children or grandchildren in their first year of university or college. Applications are usually provided in the spring of each year. Also RTO/ERO offers 25 scholarships of \$1500 to students who are relatives of a RTOERO member (child, grandchild, niece, etc.) Students who are enrolled in a post-secondary university, college, or other institution and are in their final year/semester of a program are eligible. Applications can be found on the national RTOERO and District 15 websites. These are available in the Fall of each year. Finally, our District 15 Board also offers a \$1000 scholarship, called The Academic Spirit Award, to one student from the Halton District School Board and one from the Halton Catholic District School Board who have experienced difficult situations. Applications are found on the School Board websites in early spring.

Community Grants (formerly Provincial Service to Others Grants)

Each year national RTOERO awards up to \$2500 in grants to community projects in which our members are involved. This year District 15 submitted an application for a project by member **John Mark Rowe** called Lucy Maude Montgomery in Norval. He is working with the Halton Museum to build information kits for students about the life of Lucy Maude Montgomery when she lived for a time in Norval and wrote some of her books.

Distinguished Service Awards

District 15 also presents Distinguished Service awards to members in recognition of their outstanding and/or long term contributions to the work of RTO/ERO at the District or National levels. This year the award was presented to **Micki Clemens**. The article on Micki Clemens will appear in the next issue of the *Halton Herald*.

Foundation Report

By Moira Plexman



The Mission of the Foundation is to fund research and invest in innovative programs to support healthy, active aging; with a special focus on helping end social isolation among older adults.

Each October the Foundation makes **Social Isolation Awareness** its focus. RTOERO District 15 members supported the **2019 Engage to End Social Isolation Campaign** by raising \$1170. In October 2020 District 15 raised another \$700. Many of our members also responded to the direct mail appeals sent out from Toronto. Seniors are the fastest growing age group in Ontario. Recently I read that by 2032 fully 25% of those living in the province of Ontario will be seniors. 2032 is actually not all that far away. In some ways our donors are “paying it forward”. Thank you for your support, generosity, and for your caring and compassion for others.

COVID 19 has certainly highlighted the many challenges faced by seniors across Canada. Seniors now, more than ever, need our support. Many of us lose friends or family members each year. One way to honour a departed colleague, friend or loved one is to make a donation to the Foundation in their name. Such donations help seniors who will benefit from the research and the various support programs being developed. Some day that senior receiving support might be you!

Each year the Foundation’s grant program funds research that works to understand and address the complex needs of seniors. Currently there are “304 geriatricians” in all of Canada. Put another way, “that is one for every 22,486 adults over 65”. The Foundation funds training in the areas of geriatrics and gerontology. In making these investments our Foundation is able to support future programs and address anticipated needs of seniors. As we have all seen, since the pandemic has confined us to our homes, and we have watched endless news stories of seniors all over the country who have not fared well due to situations beyond their control, “aging with dignity should not be left to chance.” Please consider a donation to the **Better Care Campaign**.

Webmaster's Report

By Jeannie Woodcroft



Now that the COVID-19 restrictions are beginning to lift it's great to be able to sit on a patio and have lunch or coffee with friends again! Hope is in the air for a better new year. We have much to be grateful for.

As your current Webmaster, I am particularly thankful for our member, **Carey Mollenhauer**, who has volunteered to be the new Webmaster when we launch our new RTOERO District 15 website. If you have been following the news from RTOERO, all districts will have new websites this year. As I wish to retire, District 15 has been advertising for a volunteer to take on the role of webmaster for the new website. I will work with Carey on the training sessions that hopefully will be taking place this summer and will mentor her as we make the transition to the new website which will be developed using WordPress.

Carey and I would like your input, please. What sections of the current website would you like to see continued on the new website? Are there sections that you think could be discontinued? Take some time this summer to peruse our website at <https://district15.rto-ero.org/> and send me your suggestions via District15Halton@gmail.com.

At your leisure this summer, take a walk down memory lane and view the photos of past events: <https://district15.rto-ero.org/pictures>. Review the great articles that were published in past issues of the *Halton Herald*: <https://district15.rto-ero.org/committee-news/newsletters>. Remember the Distinguished Service Volunteers that made District 15 a member-centred district: <https://district15.rto-ero.org/node/463>. Read the News and Updates section for items that you may have missed: <https://district15.rto-ero.org/news>.



Book of Remembrance

We remember with fondness

Nadeen Bender	Joseph Benezra	Margaret Daniels	Edith Danna
Joan Davis	James Etherington	Larry Forbes	Georgina Hoffman
Thomas Johnson	A MacKenzie	Cecile Mielzynski	Edna Morgan
James Peachey	Avril Playfair	Janet Purvis	Barbara Rennick
Barbara Stevenson	William Strangways	Helen Van-Sickle	Alan Winarski



Meet Carey Mollenhauer

Hi, my name is Carey Mollenhauer and I am very excited to begin my role as District 15 – RTOERO Webmaster. I retired from the Peel District School Board in 2015. During the last few years I have taken French Conversational Proficiency at Sheridan College. With one remaining course to complete, my French vocabulary has grown. I am a true lifelong learner. During the last two years with COVID isolation, I have taken courses of interest. I am now a certified Fitness Instructor, Personal Trainer, Wellness Coach and a Registered Health Coach. Being active is something I did while working in education. Although I haven't run any full marathons lately, I did complete a 30 km run in April. My fitness interest has led to a need to develop my own website and design my logo. I look forward to giving back to the profession in a retired capacity as the Webmaster.

Magic at the McMichael

By Nancy Sorensen

Missed opportunities during the pandemic affected everyone, including the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg. Year 2020 was the centennial of Canada's famous Group of Seven. Special exhibitions had been prepared, for Canadians to admire, to be followed by a select number of works to tour Europe.

As head of my school art room, about 100 Grade 7's went to the McMichael every fall. Telling my classes that this excursion was a crucial part of their art course, meant one hundred per cent participation. Parent volunteers helped chaperone. Bus and group lists were posted in advance and carved in stone. Making one change to accommodate anybody, would unleash a barrage of requests by students jockeying for a position to be with bosom buddies, not good on a field trip.

Students were well primed in advance to ensure maximum interest and understanding in what we were about to see and do: touring the gallery in the morning, lunch, afternoon outdoor sketching, a bit of time in the gift shop, then home. Sketches would be developed into their own landscape paintings. They would experience being "real" artists, emu-

(McMichael...continues on Page 32)

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

(McMichael..continued from Page 31)



lating the “en plein air” procedures used by the Group members themselves.

The McMichael sits on a beautiful property, where, on a clear day, you can see the CN Tower in the distance. Several of the Group of Seven are buried on the grounds, in a small clearing, quite fitting for them to be together as they had been in life.

Once, while looking for sketching opportunities, we happened upon an elderly chap, seated on a camp stool, sketch book in hand. His work was fast, sure, and absolutely marvellous! We watched for a few minutes, peppered him with questions, then left him to his work. Later we learned we had been chatting with McMichael’s artist-in-residence, A.J Casson, considered one of the original Group of Seven artists. Casson replaced Frank Johnston after Johnston left the Group to teach and work independently. Casson remained until the Group disbanded in 1933. You can imagine how thrilled we were to have met such an icon in Canadian painting!

Another time, during our annual Kleinburg visit, the gallery had a special exhibit by the founder of the Woodland school of painting, Norval Morrisseau, a well-known Indigenous artist. We had gathered in the main foyer for gift shop browsing, packing sketches, and preparing to get organized for a return to our buses. A fellow in a motorized wheel chair joined us in the foyer. Norval Morrisseau, himself! His painting days were over. Morrisseau was severely afflicted with Parkinson’s, hence, his lack of mobility. His hands shook so there were no autographs. How exciting to actually meet him! The gift shop sold a lot of Norval Morrisseau post cards that day.

In preparation for our McMichael trips, we studied painting styles displayed by various Group members. Lawren Harris’ bleak but beautiful Arctic works were easily identifiable. One of his earlier paintings, “Snow Fantasy” demonstrated his unique use of colour in a snow scene. One

(McMichael...continues on Page 33)

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

(McMichael..continued from Page 32)

day, a student brought to class, an art book from home. A coloured plate inside showed another snow painting by Harris, which we dubbed "Snow 2". Our impending gallery tour was featuring a special showing of Lawren Harris.

With one hundred or so students, we always took over the gallery completely. Our groups would often pass each other en route to other parts of the building, following the docent in charge. While listening to the presentation to my group, I noticed another of my student groups at the end of an adjacent gallery. What was happening? Such agitation

and fussing! Two girls broke away from the others and ran to me, all excited. A discovery had been made in the Harris exhibit. On display was another "Snow"! We didn't know there was a Snow 3. The docents made sure everyone had a good look at our big discovery.



One year, the English teacher across the hall from me was doing

her poetry unit and had each student write a poem about his/her painting. When we displayed the paintings in the halls, accompanied by the specific poems, it was a smash!

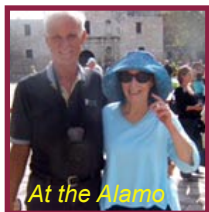
I was often asked why I went to the trouble (and, sometimes anguish) to, annually, visit the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. The Group of Seven is everywhere: offices, foyers, doctors' waiting rooms, banks. Have you checked out Burlington Toyota on Guelph Line?



Now, in their adult years, would these former students recognize a Group of Seven reproduction? Would they think? "Hey, I know that painting. It's by one of those Canadian guys." I hope so.

Seven Years On The Road – The Winter Months

By Gerry Blosser



At the Alamo

In the April issue of the *Herald* I outlined the goal my wife Marcia and I had of living 7 years on the road in our new motorhome with a car attached. Each fall we headed south to avoid the cold weather, criss-crossing the U.S. southern states spending 5 winter months travelling to sights we wanted to experience. Over the seven years we visited 24 states, clocked

53,000 on our motorhome and car. We would remain months in certain areas exploring the region by car, visiting relatives, and relaxing! If we moved, we only travelled a maximum of seven hours or 600 km per day. Our photos show the favourite venues where we happily returned yearly.

In Florida, Marcia loved visiting the gators in Collier Seminole State Park in the Everglades, and seeing the Lipizzaner horses' free show which happens once a week in their training grounds near Sarasota! We also stopped in Bradenton to visit the gentle, very social manatee.



In New Orleans, LA we would spend a week visiting the French Quarter, enjoying local restaurants, dancing in the street to the sound of jazz. Bourbon Street reminded us of the TV series, *Kookie, Kookie Lend Me Your Comb*. We loved to watch the barges and ocean ships plying the Mississippi River in the Port of New Orleans.

The RV park near San Antonio, TX provided a shuttle bus to the Alamo where we spent hours at the fort and museum, the beautiful Spanish Mission chapel with exquisite grounds and the famous Riverwalk.



Rockport, a fishing village on the gulf, is known for its famous oysters - celebrated with a parade the first week in March. In town, there is the beautiful historic Fulton mansion near the waterfront. Built in 1874 it had electricity and flushing toilets - rare in those days.

(Seven Years On The Road...continues on Page 35)

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

(Seven Years On The Road...continued from Page 34)



In Arizona, we left our motorhome in the quaint town of Williams and travelled by car to view the Grand Canyon, the Hoover Dam and Lake Mead. Later, we found a great RV park on the edge of an Arizona wildlife preserve where we stayed to hike the mountain trails



edged with flowering cacti. At the end of February, with the first raindrops, the desert comes alive overnight.

From Benson, we drove south to Tombstone to visit the Wyatt Earp homestead. Then it was on to Bisbee, north of the Mexican border, a unique town where gemstone mining still occurs. I especially enjoyed the Yuma area

where I was able to hike the trails in the Gila Mountains and view the vegetables growing in the surrounding valleys. The jewel of Arizona is Monument Valley, the 17,000 square kilometre reservation of the Navajo nation - not to be missed.



(Seven Years On The Road...continues on Page 36)

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

(Seven Years On The Road...continued from Page 35)



Finally, in California, North of Eureka is Redwood National State Park where we felt we were in an enchanted forest among giant redwood trees - many grow hundreds of feet tall and live for hundreds of years.

We are often asked how Marcia and I managed living together in such restricted quarters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for 7 years. The answer lies in the fact that we not only share many activities in common but we each have our own likes and preferences. Each park had many daily activities to keep us in shape - swimming,

horseshoe pitching, volleyball, tennis and organized hiking. We never put on weight! Marcia is an avid sewer and also loves taking part in the social events offered in the parks while I like to hike with fellow residents or cycle and roller blade on my own. We had ample time to be away from one another while being able to tell each other what we did separately.

Overall, the experience was marvellous. We had many interesting diversions, but much of daily life was similar to living at home in Burlington. Our fridge and cupboards were always well stocked. RV parks costs included sewer, water charges and local taxes. Electricity was extra. To operate our home in Burlington cost us about \$11,000 in 2010 – our first year in the Motorhome cost us less - \$6,000 exclusive of food and gasoline.

A perk of this lifestyle is that the people you meet in one park you frequently meet again in another or are invited to their permanent homes. And, the Internet gave us the ability to stay in touch. One man has all my admiration. Mark, a 60 year- old cyclist with cancer, rode 40 miles per day! We got together three years in a row to enjoy each other's company.

To find out how we spent our summer months in Canada, read the story in the next *Herald*.

(More Seven Years On The Road photos on Back Page)

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

Sanibel, An Island To Love!

By David Laidlaw - Photos by Maggie Laidlaw

We have travelled to Sanibel Island, Fl. in our small RV for several years now. While my wife Maggie was still working full-time, these vacations were short, perhaps 2-3 weeks, but they nonetheless endeared us to the island and all that it has to offer. In January 2019, when Maggie retired, we spent almost 3 winter months in Sanibel, although last year's trip ended prematurely due to COVID and this year's border closure precluded it entirely.

Thus, we are really looking forward to heading back to Sanibel in January of 2022 for three months of sun, sand, sea, and especially cycling! As lifelong cyclists, we cannot speak highly enough of the extensive network of off-road, paved cycling routes that traverse the island from end to end. Cycling is the major form of transportation on the island, for everyone from age two to ninety-two. Drivers face hefty fines if they do not yield crosswalks to both cyclists and pedestrians. Sunday morning market day on Sanibel Island would not be complete without row upon row of parked bicycles!



Our other passion is birding and Sanibel is a paradise for bird-watchers. The Ding Darling Nature Reserve covers a full one-third of the island, and every type of Florida bird can be seen both there and around the inland wetlands and other tracts of land on the island. Everything from the ibis to the cormorant, stork, anhinga, white pelican, all varieties of egrets and

herons, shore birds and our particular favourite, the roseate spoonbill, can be sighted and photographed. Besides birds, other popular sightings include alligators, iguanas and gopher tortoises. Of course,

(Sanibel...continues on Page 38)

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

(Sanibel...continued from Page 37)



let's not forget those glorious Gulf Coast sunsets!

Finally, there is a Halton connection with Sanibel Island. There is only one campground on the Island, and it accommodates both RVs and tents. It includes a lovely large pond, and many of the island

birds can be seen there. However, alongside the pond, there is a row of large cages that accommodate magnificent birds from around the world, and three times a week, **Libby Baird** presents an amazing bird show about these interesting birds. Libby is a former Halton teacher, and she has even been mentioned on TripAdvisor: https://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g34616-d9986268-r749589246-Periwinkle_Park_Parrot_Show-Sanibel_Island_Florida.html. Libby has presented her show for many years now, and her husband (**David Baird**, also a retired Halton teacher) is often her able assistant. Her shows attract people from all over the island, and even people from off-island come to see them.



We hope to spend our winter months on Sanibel Island for many more years. It is known as the seashell capital of the world because of its fifteen miles of pristine beaches strewn with many varieties of shells, but we think you will agree that it has much else to offer the weary traveller looking to escape our Canadian winters!

(More Sanibel pics...on the Next Page)

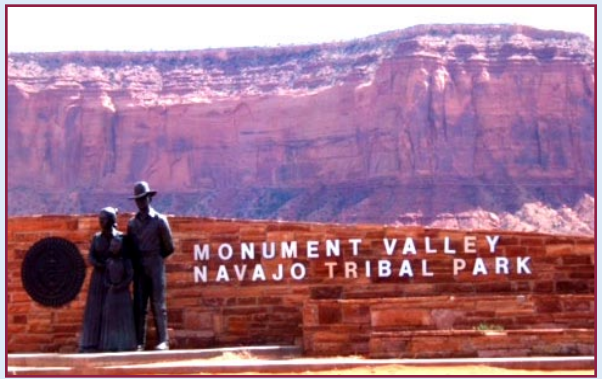
Sanibel, An Island to Love!



On the Road - The Winter Months



Hoover Dam



Florida Gators



Jazz in New Orleans



Desert Springs Arizona



On The Rio Grande

*Marilyn MacLennan, Membership Chair
District 15 RTOERO Halton
469 Woodview Road, Unit #7
Burlington, ON L7N 2Z9*

