

CONNECTIONS

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario • Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario



Mary Jane Finn
President

As I assume the office of Provincial President, I am humbled as I contemplate the names of the women who have preceded me. During the seven years that I have served on the Provincial Board, first as Archivist and to my present position, the voices of these leaders have spoken to me. From the time I answered President Barbara Bain's challenge at the 2002 Annual Meeting to voicing my challenge to you today, the various styles of my predecessors has inspired me. I am only beginning to understand how much of themselves each of these outstanding leaders contributed to this organization. The role of Provincial President is one that involves many different facets of a woman's personality and is a time-consuming role that requires much tact and organization, but also presents the rewarding opportunity to interact with very capable and very caring women in all areas of this province.

Having said that, I also hope that you are aware of the fact that the position of President or any other position on the Provincial Board is open to any one of you who is willing to be of service to the organization from any area.

In addition, if you ever doubted that there is openness in RWTO/OERO, you had only to attend the Annual Meeting in Mississauga to dispel that notion. We had an election for an Executive position! As First Vice-President, and therefore, Convenor of the Constitution and Resolutions Committee, I may have been personally disappointed at the result of some of the votes on the resolutions, but I was nonetheless cheered because these results illustrated to everyone that the Board members

President's Message

are not the sole decision-makers as some of you may have thought. The delegates made their voices heard and their votes count.

You, the members of the individual Branches, are just as important as any delegate or any Board member. You may be reluctant to get involved at the Board level, but you can have your voice heard at the Branch level. Talk to your colleagues who are not members and tell them about the caring and sharing aspect of RWTO/OERO. Invite them to become a member of your Branch. You may not want to serve on your Branch Executive, but your voice can be heard as a committee member in that Branch.

Let us consider the committee members who offered their time, talents, and voices, under the guidance of Alba Falconi and Barbara Johnston, to organize the Annual Meeting at Stage West in Mississauga. I am certain that many of them had not previously had a lot of experience arranging the details for such a large gathering, but they produced a memorable event for those of us who were able to attend. I would like to acknowledge their superb efforts. Bravo!

Here is my challenge to which I referred earlier. Inspiration is the voice that is within each of us. Use your voice... to support and encourage each other to better this organization. Offer your voice... to speak out to promote this organization. Share your voice... to stimulate discussion and inspire new programs. Volunteer your voice in a positive way to offer suggestions as to how we can build RWTO/OERO into an even more vibrant and meaningful association for all members.

We are all volunteers. The bond that connects us is our love and respect for the goals of this organization. I am listening as I travel to visit the various Branches in the province. Your Provincial Board is listening. Your Area Director is listening. Your Branch Executive is listening. For what are we listening? For your voice raised to say, "How can I help?" "What can I do?" "Have you ever thought of...?"

Best wishes to you, the members of the 52 Branches, as you continue to work together to foster your caring and sharing activities. Please contact me if I can be of service to you.

Mary Jane

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Publication

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Convention 2009 – Freedom to Fly

Stage West, Mississauga was a lively place when RWTO/OERO members arrived in June to celebrate their 53rd annual convention. Friendly volunteers with butterfly visors were visible everywhere. They greeted participants and guided them to the efficiently run registration desk. Others supervised the seating for the President's banquet. In the raffle room, amazing prizes were being set up for the silent auction as we waited for tickets to be sold. Welcome refreshments and treats were offered in the hospitality room to perk us up after a long drive, and allowed us to meet friends not seen since last year. The conference centre proved to be a compatible venue. Rooms and elevators were close to all events, and meeting areas were clustered to allow easy access. Mississauga certainly knows how to host a convention!

Once we were settled in, work began. On Tuesday, the Provincial Board offered three workshops. Lee Beech presented her workshop for new delegates, *Everything You Need to Know – Parliamentary Procedure*. Small and medium branches found assistance at Joy Patyk's workshop *The 3M's – Members, Meetings, Money*. Carol Nelson conducted an informative workshop for medium to large branches entitled *Passing on the Positive*. Then we gathered for the first of our delicious meals, served by friendly and efficient staff, and were later entertained by the enthusiastic and energetic music of Justus.

Following the business meeting Wednesday, many members attended a production at the Stage West theatre, while others traveled to Streetsville for an afternoon of what else – lunch and shopping! At the banquet that evening Barbara Bain awards, Feather in Your Hat awards, and Honorary Memberships were presented. The speaker, Diane Dupuy of Famous PEOPLE Players, captured our hearts. A collection was taken in support of her cause, thanks to the initiative of Diane McKendry, Upper Canada East Branch, \$425.00 was collected from convention members to assist Famous PEOPLE Players.

Thursday saw delegates in their places to elect a Second Vice-President, Annette Rhodes. We retained our two other Board members, with Anne Graham taking the position of Insurance Convenor, and Judy Anderson the Assistant Insurance Convenor.

During the business of the meeting, the Resolutions were disposed of as follows:

1. The name change to Retired Women Teachers of Ontario/Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario (RWTO/OERO) was carried.
2. The attempt by the Board to save over \$5000 per year by downsizing the Executive failed to win the required majority, so was defeated.
3. It depended upon #2 being passed, so was ruled out of order.
4. The delineation of the terms of office carried, with an amendment stating the Parliamentarian's term as one year, renewable.
5. Our hundred-year-old members are now Life Members and are no longer required to pay membership fees.



Conference Convenors Barbara Johnston and Alba Falconi lead the way at Convention 2009. Well done!

6. The Goodwill Convenor will be responsible for informing our centenarians of this.
7. It was ruled out of order as it had been dealt with previously.

Had Resolution #2 passed, the Board would have presented a balanced budget. Due to its failure the budget shows a deficit of \$4,810, but was passed. This deficit will not be made up this year with profit sharing from Manulife, as the final amount of \$22,101 was included in the approved budget. It should be noted that the travel allowance has been lowered to \$0.40 per kilometer.

Our Archivist, Jeannine Renaud, once again arranged an impressive display of Cora Bailey Award recipients. She also conducted a poignant **In Memoriam** service on Thursday morning.

It was a pleasure to recognize the Over Nineties and the Mother-Daughter retirees at the Thursday luncheon. We were all in a festive mood after hearing the Darcel Steel Band, and enjoyed the visual presentation of the preceding days and our invitation to the *Fantasy Forest* in London next year.



Cora Bailey recipients attending the convention. Congratulations on your awards.

Many long hours of hard work went into the success of this convention. The exceptional efforts of Mississauga culminated in three days of effective management of RWTO/OERO, delicious meals, comfortable accommodation, enjoyable entertainment, beautiful decorations, exciting prizes, good companionship, and happy faces wherever I went.

Congratulations and Thank You Mississauga!
Carole Watson, Past President

Membership Report

The 'Freedom to Fly Convention' in Mississauga was a delightful experience. Congratulations to all the organizers for their hard work

Honorary Membership Award

Lee Beech and Carole Watson received the prestigious Honorary Membership Award for their outstanding contributions to RWTO/OERO at the provincial level.



Jo-Anne Duffy, presenter, Carole Watson, Provincial President, recipient of the Honorary Membership Award and Suzanne Wilson-Marjerrison, chair of the Committee.



Barbara Moorcroft, presenter, Suzanne Wilson-Marjerrison, chair of the Honorary Membership Committee and Lee Beech, Parliamentarian, and recipient of the Honorary Membership Award.

Barbara Bain Membership Award

This award is given to the three Branches with the largest increase in the number of regular paid-up members in their respective Branch size group. Congratulations to all of you! We recognize that all Branches work at increasing their membership using many innovative ideas.



This year's recipients are Guelph-Wellington (large), Lanark (medium) and Stratford (small). In the absence of Barbara Bain, Mara Hitchins made the presentation to Lynda Gilham, Doreen Watt and Mary Duffin.

Feather in Your Hat Award

This award recognizes creative, innovative and successful activities that clearly enrich the programs of RWTO/OERO. Our three winners this year did an outstanding job in their outreach .



Patricia Depencier, Bev Pickard, and Mary Duffin accepted the award presented by Carolyn Shoup, Membership Convenor.

- (1) Chatham Kent compiled a Memorial Book of their membership since 1970 including historical facts. It took three years to achieve this.
- (2) Burlington Branch held a 'Pretty in Pink' fashion show raising over \$15,000 for Breast Cancer Support Services.
- (3) Listowel Branch started a Back Pack Outreach Project in 2005 which continues to grow. In partnership with the Giant Tiger Store, the twenty branch members fill back packs to give to eligible students.

Your Membership Committee for 2009-2010 consists of Annalee Ladouceur, Ruth Ferguson, Donna Parkhill and Mary Duffin. If you have membership concerns please contact one of us and we will try to be of help. Best wishes to all our members for a productive enjoyable time together.

Annalee Ladouceur, Membership Convenor
613-658-2300 annaleeladouceur@jcis.ca

Thanks to our archivist, Jeannine Renaud for her wonderful photography.

Resolutions

All resolutions to be brought to the 2010 Annual Meeting must be submitted to Carol Bell, Convenor of the Resolutions Committee, by November 15, 2009. Each resolution must contain only one key issue. The intent of the resolution should be clear and concise. Questions and concerns should be directed to Carol Bell or to Lee Beech, Parliamentarian, who are available to help with the wording and structure.

Send to carolbell@sympatico.ca or 61 Simpson Rd. St. Catharines ON L2N 3Z5

Carol Bell, First Vice-President

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Insurance Matters - Know what you have!

Insurance is one thing in life that everyone has, but how many of us really understand what we have? Take the time to examine your Health Insurance plans. We, in Ontario, are covered by OHIP. Most of us have an extended health care plan to cover drugs etc. So why do we need more Insurance?

Our unique Hospital and Home Care is a very special plan and an important benefit available with your RWTO/OERO membership. Last year a total of \$105,386 was paid out in claims to members or their spouses enrolled in our plan. Convalescent Care claims were the highest paid at \$54,813 with Comfort Care, second at \$22,661. There were significant claims under all benefits in the plan including, for example, Health Care Aid, Fracture, Cataract Surgery, Transportation, Ambulance, Physician Validation and Private Duty Nursing. Be sure to check out the Hearing Aid Benefit that was introduced last year. The cost of this plan is very reasonable, regardless of age, at only \$14.49 a month for members and \$15.57 for spouses. Congratulations if you are part of our plan. If you are not yet enrolled, please consider doing it now. If applying during your first year of retirement, you are not required to complete a medical questionnaire but one is required for your spouse. It is a very simple questionnaire and does not need input from your doctor. If you have been turned down due to a preexisting condition, apply again. Conditions change and people have been accepted on their second or third try.

Payments can be made by monthly automatic bank deduction or by annual cheque (\$177.88 for members and \$186.84 for spouses). This Insurance is through Manulife Financial. For questions on new enrolments, call them at 1-866-410-0550. Our plan can be used on its own or often as a combined benefit with other insurance packages that you have. As well as being a great benefit to those who use the Insurance, RWTO/OERO also benefits from this Insurance because of a profit sharing arrangement with the company.

The best way to learn about and to understand our Hospital and Home Care Plan is to hear from people who have benefited from our Insurance. If you have 'good news' to share, please send it to me so I can spread the news. Also talk to your branch Insurance Convenor and share it with your members.

If you have questions and concerns, please pass them on also. Judy Anderson, Assistant Insurance Convenor, and I are working with your Area Directors to arrange fall workshops for branch Insurance Convenors. We value highly the expertise of Terry Kennedy, our broker, who is the liaison between RWTO/OERO and the insurers. If we need an answer, Terry is just a call away.

Anne Graham, Provincial Insurance Convenor
613-829-4679 613-829-4679 grahamanne@rogers.com

Issues and Concerns

DO YOU JUST BELONG?

Are you an active member, the kind that will be missed
Or are you just content that your name is on the membership list

Do you attend the meetings and mingle with other members?

Or do you stay home and criticize?

Do you take an active part to help with the work

Or are you quite content to just belong and watch?

Do you ever work on committees and encourage others to belong?

Or do you leave the work to just a few?

Let us look back on the road we have come

And take a look at what we have done.

Is our RWTO/OERO better for the years we have spent?

Have we grown in dimension?

Have we grown in thought, in word, and in deed?

Have we grown in every way?

Now, have I helped my local RWTO/OERO branch in any way?

If not, perhaps this is the year to become more involved

As extra hands and ideas are always welcome.

Have a wonderful year everyone!

Patricia Depencier, Issues and Concerns Convenor

Goodwill Report

It is my pleasure and privilege to serve as your Goodwill Convenor this year. We are pleased to celebrate six new Life Members as a result of Resolution #5 which was carried unanimously at the Annual Meeting in June: Alice Bullard, Kitchener-Waterloo, Mabel Reid, Kingston, Mary Moles, Blue Mountain, Margaret Gibson, Lincoln West, Elizabeth McIntosh, Niagara South and Lelia Lindsay, Oakville.

It has been a pleasure to send birthday cards to our over 90 members – 27 in June, 24 in July, 20 in August and 30 in September.

Congratulations and warm wishes to our three members who have celebrated their very special 100th birthday: Laura Burgess, Napanee, Grace Patterson, South Bruce and Dorothy Shreve-Segee, Chatham-Kent. Thank you to the branch members who helped arrange for the delivery of roses to these special members as they celebrated this milestone in their lives.

Please remember to forward any change of address information to the Provincial Office. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Annette Rhodes, Goodwill Convenor

Branch News

Brockville

We began our busy year at the Brockville museum, first remembering two former teachers who had passed away and after lunch touring the amazing facilities. We meet approximately ten times a year at various locations and exchange paperbacks along with news and views. We encourage newly retired teachers to join us. In October, Marion Steacy, an area principal, who had retired in 1974, joined us. In November, our Area Director, Betty James, presented the Cora Bailey Award to Helen Earl. Helen has held various positions on our executive and is well known in other local organizations. Helen was pleasantly surprised! Anne Graham and Carole Kennedy gave us an information session on our Provincial Insurance Plan. At our Christmas luncheon we decided to support a local nursing home when we learned that with costs rising ladies had stopped having hair appointments - over \$500 was raised. In June, we enjoyed a joint luncheon with Upper Canada East Branch and were treated to a presentation of the upcoming Shakespearean Festival which occurs in July in Prescott.



Betty James, presenting the Cora Bailey Award to Helen Earl.

Central Algoma

Careful planning and enthusiastic members are two factors for successful, fun-filled meetings in our branch! In November an 'All Red Christmas' meeting was held. Members and guests were surrounded by decorations of red. A prize was given to the one wearing the most red, cookie baskets were raffled, and three Christmas craft projects were demonstrated. The Trinity Trio, a local talented singing group, treated us to Christmas medleys. What a celebration to get us in the mood for the holidays! The Harmony Tea Room, a converted one-room schoolhouse, was the setting for our June meeting. We were served delicious salads, tea sandwiches, and scrumptious desserts. Our guest speaker, Darlene Kars, a retired nurse from the Pregnancy Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, was presented with various baby gifts, often handmade, from our members

Coldwater

Our small group of active members works at carrying out the

RWTO/OERO motto of 'Caring and Sharing'. We enjoy meeting, greeting, and eating at local heritage halls in Coldwater and Matchedash (Severn Township) as well as some local restaurants: Rawley Resort (Port Severn), Yanni's (Fesserton), and Shaw's Sugar Bush (Hawkestone). Our organizers provide seasonal programs for Thanksgiving, Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, and spring as well as informational updates by special speakers on such topics as 'Services for Seniors' and RWTO/OERO Insurance.

Kingston

We were very pleased to have Carole Watson, our Provincial President, attend our Spring Meeting and Luncheon. It was an honour to have Carole install the Branch Officers for the year 2009-2010. Carole shared a number of fascinating personal memories and reflections with our members. A beautiful quilt, created by our Social Convenor, Geneva Keyes, was on display. Our branch is selling raffle tickets on this quilt to raise funds for our Bags Plus Program. This looks to be a very successful venture as tickets are selling quickly! We continue to encourage retired teachers to join our wonderful organization, and have recently welcomed two new members to our branch.

Muskoka

In June, our group enjoyed a day trip to St. Jacob's. As the bus traveled along the country roads, Darlene Poirer and Norma Carrick conducted our lucky draws for five handmade afghans, the proceeds of which will benefit our goodwill programs. After our delicious buffet lunch at the Stone Crock



A few members of the Muskoka Branch gather after the show.

Restaurant, there was time to browse at the Farmers' Market before the hilarious theatre performance of 'Me and My Girl'.

continued on page 7

Branch News continued from page 6

We look forward to four meetings this year and a busy agenda of 'caring, sharing, and having fun' with Marie Rempel, our new President and Rhonda Adams our 1st Vice President.

Scarborough

We had a successful year with an average of 120 people attending our eight luncheons. The Communications Team continued to send dispatches to each member about events and happenings in the branch. A group of members, friends, and family had a great adventure in Alaska at the end of August 2008. Through presentations and day trips, members learned some of the history of Toronto and surrounding areas. Members continue to support the community with donations of toys and gifts to a local restaurant, which serves Christmas dinner to 4000 guests, monthly donations of personal items and magazines and donations of backpacks, and summer toys to local shelters for women and children. Everyone celebrated the lives and contributions of our 80 and older members with flowers. Four members received Cora Bailey Awards in September - Ruth Mori, Linda Jarvis, Susan Urie and Helen Nolan. We have a positive outlook as we prepare for 2009-2010.

Sudbury

We are looking forward with great anticipation to the activities of the coming year. Members are busily preparing for a Silent

Auction at the September meeting. It was most successful last year as Carole Watson can attest. The funds raised will support our branch charitable activities. We will also be welcoming RWTO/EORO provincial president Mary Jane Finn to our meeting in September. When members are reluctant to let their names stand for executive positions, our Insurance Convenor is a shining example to all. Kay Oldenburg turned 90 years of age in May of this year and volunteered to take on this position. Kay is a very capable and active member and we are very proud of her! The Sudbury branch members enjoyed a successful golf tournament in June and several non-golfers joined with the "athletes" later for a wonderful time of socializing at the luncheon. We are ready for another active RWTO/OERO year!

Upper Canada East

New pyjamas or nightgowns evoke memories of comfort, warmth and a fresh start. Our outreach project this year will help to bring these feelings to the mothers and children arriving at Naomi's Family Resource Centre, in Winchester, which provides crisis services for abused women and their children. We collected new slippers, PJ's, toothbrushes, toothpaste and a book for each child and made cloth bags so the children can store their new things. For the mothers, we are assembling make-up/travel kits. We hope these articles will help the families while staying at the centre.

Board of Directors for the year 2009-2010

Members of the Executive, the Honorary President and the Area Directors make up the Board of Directors.

Members of the Executive



Sitting: Carol Bell, First Vice-President, Mary Jane Finn, President, Lee Beech, Parliamentarian, Leslie Utley, Recording Secretary.

Standing: Sherri Stokes, Honorary President, Marilyn Emmett, Program Coordinator, Bev Pickard, Communications Convenor, Gloria Drake, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Anne Graham, Insurance Convenor, Carole Watson, Past President, Judy Anderson, Assistant Insurance Convenor, Annette Rhodes, Second Vice-President, Patricia Depencier, Issues and Concerns, Annalee Ladouceur, Membership Convenor, Mara Hitchins, Convention Convenor.

Absent: Mary Lanktree, Archivist.

Area Directors



Sitting: Betty Wells, Area 11, Erna Fex, Area 10, Lois Plowright, Area 6, Barbara Moorcroft, Area 7, Carol Nelson, Area 5.
Back row: Suzanne Wilson-Marjerrison, Area 9, Patricia Depencier, Area 3, Donna Parkill, Area 4, Mary Duffin, Area 2, Annalee Ladouceur, Area 8. Absent: Mary Lanktree, Area 1 and Ruth Ferguson, Area 12

RWTO Calendar 2009-2010

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| September 15-16, 2009 | Provincial Executive Meeting |
| October 13, 2009 | Submissions for November Newsletter |
| October 15, 2009 | Annual Provincial fees due to the Provincial Office |
| October 20-21, 2009 | Provincial Board of Directors Meeting |
| November 15, 2009 | Submission of Resolutions for 2010 Convention |
| November 30, 2009 | Determine Branch numbers for Convention delegates |
| January 31, 2010 | Nominations for Board for 2010 -11 |
| | Nominations for Honorary Membership Awards for 2010 Convention |
| February 9, 2010 | Submissions for March Newsletter |
| April 1, 2010 | Submission of invitation to host Annual Convention in 2012 |
| April 15, 2010 | Submit Delegate Forms for Annual Meeting |
| April 13-14, 2010 | Provincial Executive Meeting |
| May 31, June 1,3 2010 | Provincial Board Meeting |
| June 1,2,3 2010 | 54th Annual Convention at Four Points, Sheraton Hotel, London |

Receive Your Newsletter by E-Mail

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter on-line, please send your name, address and e-mail address to Joyce Fee at jfee@accel.net.

RWTO/OERO

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