



CONNECTIONS

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



*Leslie Uttley
President*

As your new president, I decided that my first message to all of you would centre on the two themes of Preserves and Celebration. The satisfaction one gets from making pickles, or jam or fruit and lining up the jars on a shelf is one of warm contentment. I remember the basement shelves on the farm lined with jars of preserves – for suppers on dark winter nights, for unexpected company and all those jars were like a savings account for all the days we needed a little lift. Maybe the fascination with those jars came from my failure to have a whole class of thirty students all engaged and working diligently at the same time and with a zest for learning. There were always a couple of students who kept me from perfection. I just bet you can think of some students who caused you a few aspirins.

Now, not all my preserves were perfect in my life. My sister Joy Patyk, your provincial parliamentarian, always froze peaches. Soon after I was married I decided I could be just as good as she is. I made all these pints of frozen peaches. About three months later they foamed over the top of the jars in the freezer. You see, being meticulous about my kitchen I had discarded the almost empty garlic salt container and put it in a Tupperware container that matched that of the ascorbic acid. Needless to say the garlic peaches were all ruined but the family still laughs at my efforts.

Another unhappy instance was my begging my mother to preserve fruit salad with little cubes of peaches and pears and cherries too. My mother made twelve quarts and since the basement shelves were full she put them behind an old door in the basement. My father paid to have a water pipe installed

President's Message

Celebrating Our Preserves

in front of that door. We never got to eat one jar of that fruit salad. Many years later when the farm was sold those jars were still behind that door.

In the busyness of kids and career, I could not preserve to the same extent I had, but I do still manage to do some. I still get that feeling of celebration for a task well done.

So I would like to remind you of all the special preserves you each possess. Perfection in so many ways and forms exists in all our RWTO/OERO members: friendships of past and present from your devoted years teaching; gifts that you give back to your communities in time and expertise in a wide variety of ways. So take a few minutes and brighten your own spirit with a pat on the back. Help preserve your own spirits for those dull November days and blowy winter ones to come.

It is an interesting challenge of how to brighten our spirits and keep them moving forward. It's easy for any of us to fall into a rut of if only, if I could, and poor me. Too many ifs and wishes cause all of us to spin our tires without using our inner preserves – yes, even snow tires.

In our personal lives and in our RWTO/OERO branches it's easy to wish and wait for a magnificent miracle completed by others. We are often so guilty of waiting for that magnificent miracle that we miss all the wonderful things right beside us.

As the preserves on the shelf bring quiet contentment, so do all those wonderful daily happenings, friendships and encounters. We can each be a miracle worker. I challenge you to ask and bring one new member to a branch meeting. I challenge you to call a retired colleague and ask about a RWTO/OERO activity. I challenge you to give someone a lift to a meeting. Your jars of preserves- those inner gifts you have possessed all these years in your successful careers- need to be dusted off and celebrated as they are put to use. You will reap great enjoyment by being a special preserved dessert in your branch. You will feel a joy of quiet celebration in your heart.

Celebrate your gifts with others in RWTO/OERO.

Leslie Uttley
President

HOW TO CONTACT US

Provincial President: Leslie Uttley
RR 1 Stn Main 86714 Courtney Crt Box 13,
Kincardine N2Z 2X3
519-395-0706 leslieuttley@tnt21.com

First Vice-President: Anne Graham
2519 Hanlon Ave, Ottawa K2B 7X2
613-829-4679 grahamanne@rogers.com

Insurance Convenor: Judy Anderson
PO Box 3227, Prince Albert L9L 1C2
905-985-4257 ukelady49@powergate.ca

Manulife Financial 1-800-268-3763
Broker: Terry Kennedy 1-905-339-2424
tkennedy34@cogeco.ca

Publication

This newsletter is published three times each year in September, December and March.
Submissions by email to rwtoconnections@yahoo.ca.

Provincial Office
Executive Secretary-Treasurer: Gloria Drake
2332 Woodburn Rd., Binbrook LOR 1C0
Phone: 289-286-0657
Fax: 905-692-9876
Toll free: 1-877-607-6696
E-Mail: info@rwto.org

Website: www.RWTO.org

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40739021
Return undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
RWTO/OERO Provincial Office
2332 Woodburn Road
Binbrook ON LOR 1C0

Convention 2012

North to Algoma! The Convention Call went out! We answered! We came by car, van, plane, shuttle, bus, train and ferry to Sault Ste. Marie for Convention 2012 from June 5-7. Along the way we enjoyed the natural beauty of the lakes and rivers and trees. Central Algoma and Sault Ste. Marie Branches planned and organized this 56th Annual Convention. These two small branches worked very hard to organize this most successful Convention. Well done!



The Convention Committee warmly welcomed members as they arrived at the Delta Sault Ste. Marie Waterfront Hotel and Conference Centre on St. Mary's River Drive. The friendly smiling hotel staff worked very hard to accommodate everyone. The boardwalk along the river invited us to hike there in the early morning and throughout the

day. We appreciated the spectacular views of the Sault Locks, the International Bridge and the Sault Michigan skyline.



At the registration desk, members were pleasantly surprised when presented with the unique individual tote bags. Each one was cut from a variety of colourful materials at work meetings during the past year and then machine stitched by the northern sewers. Just think of the many hours these women have worked to surprise us and gift them to us. We received directions to follow to fold our colourful bags into their pockets. This pouch was easily carried in our purses. What a lot of creativ-

ity and hard work went into this venture. Each recipient will treasure this special souvenir from Algoma! Tucked into each bag was a "Taste of Algoma" maple candy, compliments of our convention hosts.

Networking sessions were held on Tuesday afternoon from 3:15 – 4:30 p.m. A workshop for Directors and Branch Presidents was presented by our Program Coordinator, Pat Depencier. The RWTO/OERO Storefront was also held with presentations by Annalee Ladouceur and her Membership Committee, our Communications Convenor, Bev Pickard, our Insurance Convenors, Judy Anderson and Nancy Iannizzi and our Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Gloria Drake handed out a sample income and expense form with notes explaining how to complete it. She also distributed copies of our Branch Guidelines. Many attractive interesting items donated by our branches, community businesses and artisans were available in the Silent Auction Room for us to view and place bids. The Hospitality Room on the 9th floor had a wonderful view of the river and skyline with a variety of delicious home-baked treats and snacks served by our smiling gracious hostesses.

The theme for the Welcome Dinner on Tuesday evening was "In the Beginning --- Algoma". The creative centrepieces – a circle of birch-bark enclosing moss, pine cones and evergreens surrounded by colourful rocks and pieces of driftwood – illustrated this land of natural beauty with a variety of landscapes, plants, animals and natural resources. The table favours were notepads prepared by a group of members led by Kathy Greening. The Town Crier, Mary Rossiter, a retired teacher, read a proclamation to officially open the Convention. We sang grace to the tune of "You are My Sunshine" with words written by Ruby Vaughan, a Central Algoma member, who provided all the graces sung at meals. After a delicious dinner, the O'Shraves provided the evening entertainment which was joyous, inspiring, fun and toe tapping. We were amazed at the talent of Aine, a 9 year old girl who played the fiddle, flute, sang and clogged. What a talented group!



On Wednesday morning, the Annual General Meeting began for 139 delegates, 9 alternate delegates and many visitors. Anne Graham, Second Vice-President, read the report from the Ad Hoc Committee created to study extending our membership to non-teaching colleagues as requested by Sandy Houlgrave from the Owen Sound and Area Branch at last year's Annual General Meeting. The general consensus which was approved by the Board stated that our focus should not change. We are an organization committed to the interests and well-being of retired women teachers i.e. caring and sharing. Friends and former non-teacher colleagues are welcome in most branches as guests. The budget for 2012-2013 was presented by the Executive Secretary-Treasurer for deliberation. President Annette Rhodes then turned the Chair over to the Parliamentarian, Joy Patyk, for the Resolutions.

- Be it resolved that RWTO/OERO establish a membership fee for new members who join RWTO/OERO after March 1st that is one half the annual rate set at the most recent Annual Meeting. **Withdrawn.**
- Be it resolved that Provincial RWTO/OERO provide branches with a free membership pin for each new member. **Carried.** (Branch Presidents may receive new member pins from their Directors.)
- Be it resolved that the preamble to the RWTO/OERO Constitution be amended to include: Motto: Caring and Sharing. **Carried.**
- Be it resolved that Provincial RWTO/OERO fund a lump sum grant (e.g. \$100.) to small branches (50 or fewer members) to assist with their RWTO/OERO programming and operating costs.
 - A friendly amendment was brought forth from the

Convention 2012 continued

floor "To amend Resolution 4 to read: Be it resolved that Provincial RWTO/OERO fund a lump sum grant of \$100. annually to small branches of 50 or fewer members to assist with their RWTO/OERO programming and operating costs." *Carried.*

- The amendment then became Resolution 4. *Carried.*

Terry Kennedy, our insurance broker, presented a cheque to President Annette Rhodes on behalf of Manulife Financial as part of the insurance report. Following the business meeting, some members participated in one of the five tours offered, while others relaxed, hiked the boardwalk or visited the casino.



The theme for Wednesday evening's gala banquet was "Algoma --- Through the years --- A rich history of people who came, saw, stayed and created a multicultural mosaic." Andrew Jull piped the Board into the Algoma Ballroom. After O Canada and introductions of the Head Table, the Past Presidents were introduced. The photo card favours were prepared using photographs of the beautiful scenery of Algoma taken by Carol Neave, President of Central Algoma Branch. Grace was sung to the tune of Brahms' Lullaby. The Feather in Your Hat and Barbara Bain Awards were presented. Honorary Membership Awards were presented to Ruth Kaufman (in absentia), Barbara Moorcroft and Annette Rhodes. The Wild Turkeys, 5 young men from the shores of Lake Superior, entertained us with toe tapping songs composed by them which told their own stories.



On Thursday morning our Archivist, Barbara Moorcroft, led us in a fitting Memorial Service to honour the 120 members who had passed away this year. Each of the eleven Area Directors and the Sudbury Branch President presented a flower in memory of these women.

Next, the remainder of the committee reports were presented and approved, as was the budget for the 2012-2013 year.

The final luncheon theme was "Algoma--- Look at Us Now - A thriving part of northern Ontario that attracts

people from around the world to enjoy the natural beauty, the accomplishments and cultures of those who have come --- North to Algoma". One "Over 90" member was recognized and one Mother/Daughter Duo. In lieu of table favours a donation was made to Women in Crisis - Algoma. Following the luncheon, Honorary President, Carole Watson, presided at the Induction of Officers for the 2012-2013 RWTO/OERO Board.



Many thanks are due to Martha Summers and Nancy Konzuk and their committee for an excellent convention. It was very well organized and moved smoothly forward from start to finish. Very well done! The hotel staff was always smiling, gracious

and very helpful. What a wonderful happy event!



The Call to Convention was given by the Hamilton-Wentworth Branch dressed in their blue boas, blue fascinators and bling. They invited us to "Catch the Wave" and come to Hamilton - The Jewel on the Bay, for the 57th Annual Convention at the Sheraton from June 4-6, 2013. After sharing a poem describing some of the many attractions in Hamilton, the ladies sang and danced their invitation to come to Hamilton.

"So, come to Hamilton - we hope you'll be seen At the Provincial Convention in twenty thirteen!"



Annette Rhodes
Past President

Membership

Feather in Your Hat

The Membership Committee, made up of Donna Hemeon, Mary Duffin and Judy Drummond and I, was very happy to receive such excellent submissions for this year's Feather In Your Hat Awards. It made our decisions more difficult and we would like to offer sincere congratulations and thanks to all branches who entered for their hard work. The awards went to –



- **Cambridge** for their long term commitment and ever expanding Library corner at The Bridges homeless shelter in downtown Cambridge. Thanks to Cambridge branch President Sheila Wittie and all her members for their hard work towards this project..
- **Flesherton** for their annual bursary for graduating Grade Eight students who display caring and sharing in four local schools. Congratulations to President Shirley Greenwood and her team of Judith Hood, Janet Glasspool and Florence Hellyer.
- **London-Middlesex** for their many community outreach programs especially the awards donations to the Kiwanis Music Festival, as well as to their syllabus, program book and evening events program. Thanks to London-Middlesex branch President Cathy Harrison and her team of hard workers who contribute to the many London-Middlesex successes.

Barbara Bain Award

This year's Barbara Bain Award winners are:

Tier 1 St. Thomas-Elgin

Tier 2 Peel North

Tier 3 Flesherton



Congratulations to these branches for being recognized for their expanded membership and to all branches in their continued quest for new members. Special congratulations to Flesherton for being double award winners this year! Keep up the good work everyone. Thanks to Barbara Bain for making it even more special for her kind words and handing out the awards.

At the convention the Membership Committee hosted a storefront table where a long list of ideas for maintaining and increasing memberships was collected. Here are some highlights.

- Set up display at pension workshop
- Design a tri-fold brochure about your branch, put in local schools and give to women retiring
- Have a Fall coffee club meeting at a member's house for possible new members
- Host a talent show featuring members' artistic or performance skills
- Interest Groups
- Monthly breakfasts
- Scrapbooking
- Euchre
- Movie group
- Local theatre group
- Travel group
- Book club
- Knitting
- Arts visit group (museums etc)
- Care for community gardens

More ideas from the convention will be shared in future newsletters. Meanwhile let's all continue to spread the word about our fabulous organization.



Yours in caring and sharing,
Annalee Ladouceur
Membership Convenor

Insurance Matters

A recent article in 'News from Canadian Underwriter.ca July, 5, 2012', referred to a BMO Insurance study which discovered that Canadians are taking expensive risks by not buying travel insurance. Those who vacation without travel insurance are risking that they won't be sick or injured while away. Findings from BMO Insurance's online Summer Travel Insurance Study, conducted last month by Pollara and involving a random sample of 1,000 Canadian adults, show that extra medical costs could put a damper on the fun. Costs related to breaking a leg while travelling in the United States could run as high as \$20,000.00. While Canadians can sometimes be covered under the terms of their credit card or workplace healthcare plan, they need to be certain that the correct insurance is in place given the high cost of medical services that can be incurred while away from home. Forty per cent of respondents reported that, at some point in their lives while travelling, either they required medical attention or a travel companion did. That situation is not a good fit with the study's other findings, including that six in 10 respondents do not regularly purchase travel insurance before travelling. Only half were aware that those travelling outside of Canada without medical insurance are responsible for covering the vast majority of medical expenses themselves. Just like packing sunscreen and cancelling the newspaper before leaving home, making sure you have travel medical insurance should be a high priority item on any traveller's 'vacation to-do list'. BMO Insurance advises those selecting a travel insurance policy to:

1. get enough insurance (including medical and dental coverage, air ambulance and airfare and lodging expenses for a family member);
2. understand who pays (a traveller may need to pay for medical care up front);
3. read the fine print (ensure any issues are clarified with the insurer before leaving home)"



Thank you Terry Kennedy for forwarding this informative article to me so I could pass it on to the members of RWTO/OERO.

In your ice cream sundae of insurance, the scoops of ice cream represent OHIP and extended health care, while travel insurance is the whipped cream. One of our plans with Manulife is like the cherry on the top. It focuses on Hospital and Home Care during convalescence or following a period of hospitalization. We also have a Personal Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan. Our unique Hospital and Home Care is a very special plan and an important benefit available with your RWTO/OERO membership. Last year the number of claims and the total paid out in claims to members or their spouses enrolled in our plans increased significantly. It is good to see

that our members are benefitting from this plan. The following benefits paid the most to our members.

- Convalescent Benefit: \$57,241.00
- Comfort Care Benefit: \$29,020.00
- Health Care Aids: \$9,537.00
- Transportation Benefit: \$6,417.00
- Fracture Benefits: \$7,175.00 (greatest amount paid was for pelvis fractures @ \$1,400.00, followed by hip fractures @\$1,000.00)

The cost of this plan is very reasonable (regardless of age): only \$14.49 a month for members and \$15.57 for spouses. If you are not yet enrolled, please consider doing so now. If you are applying during your first year of retirement, you are not required to complete the 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 pre-existing 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 an annual cheque (\$173.88 for members and \$186.84 for spouses). For questions on new enrolments, call Manulife Financial at 1-866-410-0550. Our plan can be used on its own or often as a co-ordinated benefit with other insurance 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. Talk to your Branch Insurance Convenor and share your story with your members. We want to hear your questions and concerns too. Nancy Iannizzi, Assistant Insurance Convenor, and I are working with the Area Directors to arrange workshops in each Area for Branch Insurance Convenors and Presidents. These will be completed by October. Terry Kennedy, our broker, will attend as many of these presentations as she is able to with either Nancy or myself completing the team.

Thank you Branch Insurance Convenors for your work year round as you promote our insurance plans and help our members claim their benefits.



Judy Anderson,
Provincial
Insurance Convenor

Nancy Iannizzi,
Assistant Insurance
Convenor

Goodwill Report

“A friendly look, a kindly smile, one good deed and life’s worthwhile!”

It is my pleasure as Second Vice-President to be the Provincial Goodwill Convenor. Having served seven years on the Board of Directors as Recording Secretary, Area 4 Director, Provincial Program Coordinator and the 2011 Convention Convenor, this new position as Goodwill Convenor certainly seems to be the most rewarding.

From mid June until the end of August, 60 birthday and several get-well and sympathy cards were sent. 14 of our members celebrated their 90th birthday during this time. What a pleasant surprise to receive lovely cards in return! Some were hand written with penmanship skills that have been lost in today’s world. Others were computer generated. What interesting stories these ladies have to tell! Many are enjoying good health and independent living while learning new skills and actively participating within their own Branches.

It is important that we not miss acknowledging these special members at both the Branch and Provincial level. Please recognize and stay in touch with you senior members. Make sure that we have their date of birth. If their contact information changes, please notify Gloria Drake, our Executive Secretary-Treasurer. The Provincial Goodwill Convenor depends upon Gloria’s invaluable record keeping as her source of membership information.



In Caring and Sharing
Marilyn Emmett
2nd Vice-President/Goodwill Convenor

Issues and Concerns

Making Donations Count

The 2010 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating reports that Canadians donated 10.6 billion dollars in 2010 to charities and non-profit organizations. Of Canadians 65 years and older 87% gave an average of \$643.00 each in 2010 making seniors the most generous of all Canadian age groups.

Charities are an important part of our society and help to run vital services. Our charitable donations are a personal matter and each of us has our own set of interests and needs. Some of us donate because we feel compassion for those in need, to help a cause that we believe in or because we want to contribute to our community. Which charities to choose? There are approximately 85,600 Canadian charities all vying for our donor dollar. We are bombarded by requests at the door, at the checkout, by mail, phone and e-mail. This can cause us to suffer from “donor fatigue”. We want to know how our money is being spent and if our donations are making a difference, having the impact we want.



It is suggested that before making a donation we look at a charitable organization based on several key points: consider the financial health of the organization and how money is being spent; know about what percentage is spent on programs, administration and fundraising; scrutinize how accountable and transparent is the organization and whether the charity is accomplishing stated goals.

Doing a little research before deciding which charities you wish to support can help answer some of those questions. In Canada Money Sense magazine’s Charity 100 rates the country’s top 100 charities www.moneysense.ca/2012/06/21/2012-charity-100/

Charity Intelligence Canada www.charityintelligence.ca researches and analyzes Canadian Charities ranking them in an annual list designed to help donors make informed choices. Revenue Canada www.cra-arc-gc.ca/chrts-gvng/menu-eng.html/ maintains a database of Canadian Charities where you can:

- Confirm if the charity is registered and eligible to issue official receipts
- See the information return of the charity
- Check out the charity’s financial information: income, expenses, assets, liabilities
- Find a general account of the charity’s activities
- Get contact information including a web address

If you are unable to find a specific charity this website will provide further information on how to continue the search. At the Charity Intelligence Canada website you can make a

Issues and Concerns *continued*

request for information if the charity you are interested in is not listed there.

Another opportunity to help the needy is the donation of used clothing but all those bins out there are not created equal. A few charities like the Salvation Army do collect the clothing from bins they own, sell the clothing in their stores and all the profit is returned to the charity. In other cases charities hire fundraising companies to pick up and sell the clothes. In these cases the charity usually gets only a very small percentage of the monies generated. Finally, there are bins labelled with signs like "in support of local charoutities", "all proceeds to charity", "charity donation bin", or posting a charitable registration donation number to suggest that a charity is getting the money from the sale of the donation. Often in these cases legitimate charities are not the recipient of the monies. You could be helping to make someone very wealthy. A CBC news report on January 30, 2012 said that the Canadian export of used clothing is a 174 million dollar business and that Ontario's market share is over 132 million dollars.

If you have questions about what is happening to the clothing in a particular bin you can call the charity named or phone number listed and ask what percent of the profit they are receiving from the bin. If there is only a charitable registration number on the bin the Charity Intelligence website or the

Revenue Canada website for charities can help identify if the number on the bin is for a legitimate charity. Both CBC and The Globe and Mail have investigated the lucrative business of used clothing bins. Their reports can be found on the Charity Intelligence website under Research News and Views.

The 2010 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating discovered that over all the amount of our charitable donations have not increased significantly since 2007. The survey indicated that donors have not increased their giving because people believed that their money would not be used efficiently. Our donations are important, they do matter and they do make a difference. With a little research and by asking good questions we can make sure every donated dollar counts for those who are in need.



Dianne Rice
Issues and Concerns Convenor

Our official motto:

Caring and Sharing

Did you know....

- RWTO/OERO has one, part-time, paid employee who works out of her home.
- There is no 'head office' space with a number of people at desks in Toronto.
- When you phone one of the executive, her husband might answer the phone.
- All the Board and Executive are volunteers and members-just like you!

Resolutions for the 2013 Annual Meeting

Resolutions for the 2013 Annual Meeting must be submitted to Anne Graham, Convenor of the Resolutions Committee, by November 15, 2012. Each resolution submitted must only contain one key idea or focus. The intent of the resolution to be presented at the Annual Meeting should be clear, concise and focused. When your branch is preparing to submit a resolution, questions and concerns should be directed to Anne Graham or Joy Patyk, parliamentarian, who are available to assist with the wording or structure.

Please send resolutions for the Annual Meeting 2013 to

First Vice-President:

Anne Graham
2519 Hanlon Ave, Ottawa K2B 7X2
613-829-4679 grahamanne@rogers.com



Anne Graham,
First Vice-President

Branch News

Area 1

Beaver Valley

Beaver Valley Branch may be small, but it has a large impact upon the community. For the past eight summers, a dedicated group of artistic ladies has offered an art camp to local children. The camp leaders are retired women teachers in our branch. Directed by Patricia Kortland and assisted by Carolyn Wehrle, Kay O'Neil and Ainsley Lewin, these RW ladies provided an art camp for 25 children, ages 9 to 13 years, from July 16 to 20. The experience was enhanced by guest artists who taught sessions on sketching, water colour painting and pastel drawing. Other projects included making banners, decorating treasure cans, building inukshuks and rock painting. Nutritious snacks and drinks were served daily. The community enjoyed the display window that showcased student art. This project provided leadership training and community hours for 4 high school student helpers. Participants paid \$60 for the camp, including materials. Art camp is a wonderful example of RWTO seed money still working to provide enrichment for children.

Flesherton

The Flesherton and District Branch of RWTO/OERO has had a busy year. At our June meeting we celebrated Susan MacKinnon's 95th birthday with a cake. Susan has been a member of RWTO since 1973 and is a former recipient of the Cora Bailey Award. At this meeting we also had as guest speaker Naomi Norquay a Professor at the Faculty of Education at York University. She is currently researching Black Settlements along the Old Durham Road. Our July meeting was a pot luck picnic with the Warton and Dundalk branches in our area at Inglis Falls near Owen Sound. At the Annual General meeting in Sault Ste. Marie our branch received both the 'Feather In Your Hat' Award for the Caring and Sharing Awards presented to Grade 8 students at schools in our area and the Barbara Bain Membership Award'.

Dundalk High Point

In September we donate cereal to the breakfast program in two schools. In November we each donated an unwrapped gift for a child or cash to the Dundalk & District Christmas Cheer campaign with Hazel Scutt the lead volunteer and organizer of this community project. In April we donated to the Women's Crisis Centre for Owen Sound and area. In June we donated cash Proficiency Awards to the grade 8 graduating students who were proficient in all areas of the program in Highpoint Community School and Osprey Central School. Last September 201 we met in the Seniors' Centre in Swinton Park, a former one room schoolhouse. President Annette Rhodes visited and stimulated our thoughts about what RWTO/OERO means to us and how we can make it an organization to attract members. In November, local author, Sheila Balls, a retired teacher, delighted us with excerpts from her book. In April, Dean Rutherford, OPP and promoter of Crime Stoppers

shared information about the organization and its success in fighting crime. In June member Nancy Mitchell and husband Jim hosted a picnic at their home at Lake Eugenia.

South Bruce

We have two general meetings a year and made donations to the Goderich Relief Fund and another to the music program at one of our local schools. We continue to support the Saugeen Grannies affiliated with the Stephen Lewis Foundation by donations of used jewelry. Our raffles and book exchange continue to provide funds to help others. This November we are planning a Xmas luncheon and with these funds will make a donation to the Bruce-Grey Child and Family Services Foundation. At our spring meeting Betty Johnson, a dedicated and deserving member, was presented with the Cora Bailey award. Four of our members travelled to the convention in June at the Soo and with other Area 1 members welcomed our South Bruce member, Leslie Uttley, as our new provincial president. We look forward to having her as our guest speaker at our October meeting. Although our branch is small in numbers, we continue to spread our Caring and Sharing motto

Area 4

Brant

We enjoyed Low Tea at The Golden Teapot, Glenhyrst Gardens as a classy way to say good-bye for the summer. Our kick-start last September was the annual Membership Breakfast with Gayle Myke, Executive Director of Arts After School Kids (AASK) sharing information about a free, specialized arts after school program for 11 to 14-year-olds. Monthly social activities included chocolate-making, scrap booking, folded-star quilting, a potluck luncheon/court whist card party, a tour of Seasons Bell Lane Retirement Home, the Casino Express Niagara Falls Coach tour, our spring banquet with Rose Huysentruyt-Closs speaking on her six-week Spanish walk called The Camino, attending the musical Godspell (Paris Performers Theatre), the AASK showcase Five-Year-Celebration, sharing in the 90th birthday Open House for Audrey Elcomb, and then North to Algoma for the enriching 56th RWTO Convention. Our year, carefully designed with something-for-everyone, enthusiastically exhibited the motto "caring and sharing".

Haldimand

Haldimand Branch always has reason to celebrate when our members gather together. We celebrate the chance to be together with former teaching colleagues who have become forever friends. We enjoy the chance to sit down together for tasty luncheons. We celebrate the milestones of retired life including family events like graduations, marriages and the arrival of grandchildren and accomplishments like adventure-some travels and mastering new skills. This year we were thrilled to share in the birthday celebrations for our own Grace McBride who turned one hundred years young.

Branch News continued

Sincere thanks to all our members who donate generously to all our “sharing and caring” projects – cards and stamps for the branch Goodwill collection and supplies for the Women’s Shelter and Early Childhood Centres. The retired teachers of the Haldimand Branch of RWTO/OERO form a great group. Let us continue to celebrate our special bond as the years go on!

Hamilton-Wentworth

Members are immersed in planning for the 2013 convention full of interesting tours and great entertainment. As a fundraiser, there is an Italian dinner in November. Details will be found in our September branch newsletter on the RWTO website. Our executive are drafting a branch constitution which, hopefully, will be submitted to the membership for approval in October. We wish to thank the other branches who have assisted us.

Many events have been planned to support our belief in caring and sharing. They provide opportunities to make connections, meet new friends, and support local charities. Our first event in September is a Meet and Greet to welcome new members to the branch and provide them with valuable information

about RWTO Insurance Plans, branch activities and interest groups.

Please check the RWTO website for Convention 2013 updates. We hope to see you next June in Hamilton - the Jewel on the Bay!



Call to Convention in Sault Ste. Marie with our enthusiastic song, dance, and Hamilton poem.

Lincoln West

In our summer meeting in June, Lincoln West group enjoyed having Luca Vitali visit us to talk about his family property in Tuscany. He owns and operates Casa Toscana in downtown Grimsby where one can buy several varieties of Italian olive oil fresh from the family farm in Tuscany. He also imports rich, aged balsamic vinegar and several types of Italian cheeses. You might want to pop into the store if you are visiting in Niagara and give yourself a real treat! Just like fresh pasta, the real deal tastes so much better than the mass produced kind. Yum!!

Niagara South

What a great year we have had with our enthusiastic membership! A celebration of all things local was highlighted in our venues and programs. In the fall we met at Port Colborne’s Social & Recreation Centre. A Welcoming Tea for New

Retirees and an invitation to become new members was very successful with membership increasing to 60. We enjoyed meetings and lunch at restaurants in Welland and Wainfleet; in Ridgeway at the library we tasted homemade pies. In June we invited guests from the Roselawn Centre for a luncheon and theatre. Local presenters featured Travel & Goodwill in Cuba by a member, ‘Chocolate’ from Marshville, and Women’s Health. Donations to local children and support groups focused on Pajamas & Books at Christmas, Pathstone Mental Health for Children, and Women’s Place. Our members look forward to continuing our celebrations through caring and sharing.

St. Catharines

The St. Catharines Branch has over 350 members. One new, successful interest group, Community Outreach, will fine tune and continue our involvement in the community. Members were introduced to Nordic Pole Walking last year. Interested members have a planned walk once a month where they will receive support and encouragement as they pursue their fitness. Several members will gather to play Euchre once every two weeks. Adding more diversity for our membership are groups including Bridge, Revolving Book Club, Bowling, Golf, Walking, Book Chat, Gourmet, Lunch Bunch, Travelogue and Digital Photography. We recognized members Linda Foster, Myrna Kroeker and Anja Jokela with the Cora Bailey Award last year. Four luncheons were planned for our members on the fourth Wednesday of the months of September, October, April and May with a variety of programs which included speakers Brian Merrett, Teresa Forte and Wilma Morrison. We also gathered in December for lunch to celebrate the season and to raise money for Community Care.

Area 7

Belleville

The Belleville and Area Branch celebrated their 60th anniversary at the June 20th meeting. A display of past branch presidents was set up along with a display of our ‘over 90’ members. We celebrated with the traditional Happy Birthday Song and a birthday cake and cupcakes to mark this milestone in our organization. We invited members of the Trenton Branch to help us with our festivities.



Durham North

The Durham North branch is happy to share we have a fall luncheon on Wednesday, October 10th at Sunderland United Church starting with a social time at 11:30 am. Memberships

Branch News continued

will be available and all retired women teachers are encouraged to join our branch. Our guest speakers, from the Dragon Flies, will be sharing about their recent dragon boat festival in Port Perry. This group provides breast cancer awareness, support for breast cancer survivors and funds for diagnosis and treatment at local hospitals in the area. There will also be a display of pictures from the 56th RWTO Convention. Come and socialize with us. Enjoy the hot beef lunch, which is just \$20.00, learn about the work of the Dragon Flies, chat with other retired women teachers and have an enjoyable afternoon.

Northumberland S Durham

We continue to focus on caring and sharing and regularly donate to several worthwhile causes making someone's life a little better. We had a Zen Tangle workshop, an interesting presentation supporting women artisans in Third World countries. Joanna St. Lewis explained to us the plight of women in Rwanda. She has started a project to assist these women to be self-sufficient making clothing and baskets which they can sell. This has also improved their self-esteem. President Annette Rhodes was our guest at the Christmas meeting. Our breakfast club continues to meet every 3rd Thursday of the month which is a nice social gathering. We have had the pleasure of being entertained by our choir at meetings. They had the honour of taking part via a recording for the memorial service at this year's convention. Area Director Barbara Moorcroft, who is a member of our Branch, received the Honorary Membership Award. An award rightfully deserved. Past President Vicki Cubitt received the Cora Bailey award at our year-end meeting. We like others are still working at getting new members. Looking forward to another busy year.



President Astrida Chalmers, Vicki Cubitt receiving the Cora Bailey Award from Area Director Barbara Moorcroft, flowers presented by Valdeen Button 2nd Vice-President.

Peterborough

This past year we had a silent auction as well as a quarter auction at our December meeting to raise money for our charities. Funds were donated to the School for Young Moms who were able to buy food, diapers and library books on parenting. We enjoyed our first picnic at Lang Pioneer Village in June and had a glorious day taking part in old games, good food and reminiscing about early days of teaching. Lee Beech gave her

power point presentation about her book, *Uncommon Women*, which led into members' discussions of early school days. Members had been encouraged to bring an artifact or memory to the picnic. First contracts, early registers where there were classes of 46 pupils, Dick and Jane readers, High Road of Song books and memoirs and historical documents of high school days were among some of the treasures shared at our meeting. Following that we had a guided tour of the school house. We are very fortunate to begin our year this fall with a full slate of officers.

Trenton

Topics for our 10 meetings last year included: Getting to Know You wine and cheese followed by a members artistic talent show, Gift of Life organ donations, 10,000 Villages, Lee Beech discussing her book *Uncommon Women*, games day, and entertainment from our own members. Annette Rhodes, Provincial President, and Barbara Moorcroft, Area Director attended the May meeting and installed our new executive. Annette also presented Cora Bailey Awards to Marianne Flindall for her work as secretary bringing our branch into the computer age, and to Cherrie Gilliland for her tremendous work and organization in providing us with many successful bus trips. New initiatives this year included a book club, Welcome bags containing a RWTO/OERO pin, our trifold, insurance information and a directory presented to new members, birthday celebrations each month with a little treasure, early bird membership draw where you win your membership, door prizes, and a \$100.00 bill draw. Donations were made to Three Oaks, a woman's shelter as well to the Sexual Assault Centre.

Area 9

Lanark

We listened to a school band, welcomed a local musician, learned about financial planning and retirement savings funds, and heard about the travels of our President, Annette Rhodes. We hosted the Mayor of Carleton Place, a retired teacher. She shared her enjoyment and challenges of community service. Judy Anderson, our Provincial Insurance Convenor, entertained us with her musical talent and updated us with the Provincial Insurance news. We heard from a current teacher, Sandy McRae about her teaching experiences overseas and travels in China and Costa Rica. With the jewels from Costa Rica she makes her own jewellery and we were able to purchase many of her wares. Ruth Anne Johnson, a retired teacher, join us and shared stories from her amazing experience at a hunting lodge in South Africa. We continue to build on our *PROFILES BOOK*. Each member is invited to share their personal story and add a few pictures creating a special memory keepsake. We continue to meet 8 times a year for a luncheon with attendance of 35-40 members. Our donations of \$100 to each of the Four Food Banks in our county continues. Interval House is also another recipient of toiletries.

Board of Directors 2012-13

Honorary President: Mary Jane Finn

1766 East Gate Estates, Windsor N8T 2T2
519-251-0700 m.finn@sympatico.ca

President: Leslie Uttley

RR 1 Stn Main 86714 Courtney Crt Box 13,
Kincardine N2Z 2X3
519-395-0706 leslieuttley@tnt21.com

Past President: Annette Rhodes

3684 Governors Rd RR 2 Lynden L0R 1T0
519-647-3500 annetter@execulink.com

First Vice-President: Anne Graham

2519 Hanlon Ave, Ottawa K2B 7X2
519-395-0706 grahamanne@rogers.com

Second Vice-President: Marilyn Emmett

1 Tara Crt St Catharines L2N 2M2
905-646-5543 emmett@cogeco.ca

Parliamentarian: Joy Patyk

401 Second St N RR 1, Sauble Beach N0H 2G0
519-422-2380 519-422-1283 jpatyk@bmts.com

Recording Secretary: Peggy Stock

RR 1 Old Mill Rd, South River P0A 1X0
705-386-2274 pegstockhome@netscape.ca

Archivist: Barbara Moorcroft

9 Gibson Pl, Port Hope L1A 4G8
905-885-4895 bmoorcroft1@cogeco.ca

Communications Convenor: Bev Pickard

484 Concession 11 East RR 1, Freerton L0R 1K0
905-659-1096 or 705-857-2601 rwtoconnections@yahoo.ca

Convention Convenor: Nancy Papiez

10-60 Dundas St Dundas L9H 7M6
905-628-9907 npapiez@cogeco.ca

Goodwill: Marilyn Emmett

1 Tara Crt St Catharines L2N 2M2
905-646-5543 emmett@cogeco.ca

Insurance Convenor: Judy Anderson

PO Box 3227, Prince Albert L9L 1C2
905-985-4257 ukelady49@powergate.ca

Assistant Insurance Convenor: Nancy Iannizzi

17 Queen Mary Drive, St. Catharines L7R 2J3
905-687-9783 iannizzi@sympatico.ca

Issues & Concerns: Dianne Rice

9908 Eric St RR 1, Thedford N0M 2N0
519-243-2628 dianr@execulink.com

Membership Convenor: Annalee Ladouceur

7024 County Rd 44 RR 3, Spencerville K0E 1X0
613-658-2300 annaleeladouceur@jcis.ca

Nominations and Policy: Annette Rhodes

3684 Governors Rd RR 2, Lynden L0R 1T0
519-647-3500 annetter@execulink.com

Program Coordinator: Patricia Depencier

RR 6 12946 Longwood, Thamesville N0P 2K0
519-692-3712 pjdepencier@sympatico.ca

Resolutions/Constitution : Anne Graham

2519 Hanlon Ave, Ottawa K2B 7X2
519-395-0706 grahamanne@rogers.com

Executive Secretary-Treasurer: Gloria Drake

2332 Woodburn Road, Binbrook ON L0R 1C0
289-286-0657 1-877-607-6696 info@rwto.org

Directors

Area 1: Donna Hemeon

3 Centennial Heights Crt Meaford N4L 1E5
519-538-3707 hemeond@bmts.com

Area 2: Mary Duffin

151 Norman St ,Stratford N5A 5S1
519-273-2767 mduffin@quixnet.net

Area 3: Dianne Rice

9908 Eric St RR 1, Thedford N0M 2N0
519-243-2628 dianr@execulink.com

Area 4: Lois Lockhart

7653 Chippawa Road South RR 3, Wellandport L0R 2J0
905-774-4786 lois_lockhart@hotmail.com

Area 5: Carol Nelson

717-10 Dean Park Rd , Scarborough M1B 3G8
416-724-7107 carol.nelson@sympatico.ca

Area 6: Lois Plowright

401 Thomas St, Stayner L0M 1S0
705-428-2880 loisplowright@bell.net

Area 7: Susan Armstrong

14260 County Rd 29 RR 4, Warkworth K0K 3K0
705-924-9161 armstrsu@hotmail.com

Area 8: Annalee Ladouceur

7024 County Rd 44 RR 3, Spencerville K0E 1X0
613-658-2300 annaleeladouceur@jcis.ca

Area 9: Judy Drummond

140 Drummond Rd RR 1 Toledo K0E 1Y0
613-275-1354 jjdrum@cogeco.ca

Area 10: Valma Mongeon

263 Riverside Dr, Sudbury P3E 1H4
705-675-8994 valma@sympatico.ca

Area 11: Marlene Falls

88 Broadview Drive Sault Ste. Marie P6C 5T1
705-256-1681 marlfal@sympatico.ca

Area 12: Phyllis Robson

152 Talbot Dr. Oakville L6L 4C5
905-847-2824 probson1@cogeco.ca

RWTO/OERO Calendar 2012-13

September 1, 2012	Provincial Membership Dues
September 18-19, 2012	Provincial Executive Meeting
October 16-17, 2012	Provincial Board of Directors Meeting
November 6, 2012	Submissions for December newsletter
November 15, 2012	Submissions for Resolutions for 2012 Convention
November 30, 2012	Determine Branch numbers for Convention delegates
January 31, 2013	Nominations for Board 2013-14
	Nominations for Honorary Membership Awards for 2013 Convention
February 14, 2013	Submissions for March newsletter
April 15, 2013	Submit Delegate Forms for Annual Meeting
May 6-7, 2013	Provincial Executive Meetings
May 7-8, 2013	Provincial Board of Directors Meetings
June 4-6, 2013	57th Annual Convention, Hamilton

RWTO/OERO

RWTO/OERO Provincial Office
2332 WOODBURN RD
BINBROOK ON LOR TCO

PM Agreement
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