



THE SCRIBBLER

Sault Ste. Marie R.W.T.O. Newsletter Fall 2019 and Winter 2020

SHARING

CARING

HAVING FUN

Life Membership recipient: Joyce Mertes

Cora Bailey Award recipient for 2019: Brenda Ostaff

Two new members: Bonnie Frech and Elizabeth Oja



Message from President

Dr. Maya Angelou (1928-2014) was a woman I highly respected and admired. I had the opportunity to take part in an Evening with Maya Angelou in 2005 at the L.S.S.U. Arts Centre. A poet, educator, historian, author, actress, playwright, civil rights activist, producer and director, Dr. Angelou travelled the world spreading her legendary wisdom. On page two, I share with you some of her words of wisdom that I hold dear. Maybe you will find some of Dr. Angelou words relevant in your life too. Respectfully, Brenda G.

“I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.”

MAYA ANGELOU



I would like
to be known
as an intelligent woman,
a courageous woman,
a loving woman,
a woman who teaches
by being.

MAYA ANGELOU

**“YOU MAY NOT
CONTROL ALL THE
EVENTS THAT
HAPPEN TO YOU,
BUT YOU CAN
DECIDE NOT TO BE
REDUCED BY THEM.”**

- Maya Angelou

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IF YOU FIND IT
IN YOUR HEART TO
CARE FOR SOMEBODY ELSE
YOU WILL HAVE SUCCEEDED

Maya Angelou



WHEN GREAT SOULS DIE,
AFTER A PERIOD PEACE BLOOMS,
SLOWLY AND ALWAYS IRREGULARLY,
SPACES FILL WITH A KIND OF
SOOTHING ELECTRIC VIBRATION.
OUR SENSES, RESTORED, NEVER
TO BE THE SAME, WHISPER TO US.
THEY EXISTED. THEY EXISTED.

WE CAN BE.
BE AND BE BETTER.
FOR THEY EXISTED.

Maya Angelou
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“Listen to yourself
and in that quietude
you might hear
the voice of God.”



On Wed., September 25, 2019, our general meeting, entitled **Let's Remember September is Alzheimer Month** focussed on Brain Health.

We began the meeting with time to casually talk in small groups about what we did over the summer.

There was a short business meeting to present the executive and callers for this year. Sandy F. gave her Treasurer's Report. Rita's name was drawn for the free membership. Bev B. explained the open window for insurance.

Brenda Ostaff was very surprised when she was presented with The Cora Bailey Award. Brenda was chosen for outstanding dedication to our branch and whole-hearted participation in activities. Congratulations, Brenda!



Brenda O. (left) was presented the 2019 Cora Bailey Award by President Brenda G.

After lunch, Janice Seppala, Education Coordinator for the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma, gave a very informative presentation entitled Healthy Brain.

Janice shared with us details of lifestyle changes that improve brain health including: physical activity, brain healthy foods, lifelong learning, participating in activities that challenge the brain as our brains love novelty, and social connections. She explained risk factors for Alzheimer's Disease, listed the differences between Dementia and Alzheimer's.

Many members made donations to the Alzheimer Society, so the total we collected was \$347. Receipts for donations of \$20 or more have been mailed.

Lucky members won the beautiful door prizes: two Forget-Me-Not suncatchers, a lovely deep blue silk scarf with Forget-Me-Nots on it and an Alzheimer calendar.





Janice Seppela from the Alzheimer Society of S.S.M. and Area had an attentive audience with her informative presentation on The Healthy Brain and Alzheimer Disease.



Susan McLean, Coordinator of Volunteer Services with the Alzheimer Society informed us about programs, services, helpful pamphlets and documents provided by the agency.

Wed., October 23, 2019, our general meeting was entitled **Together We Welcome the Provincial President and the Provincial Assistant Insurance Convenor to our Joint Meeting.**

Karen Clark-Lauzon, Provincial President, and Karin Mussen, Assistant Insurance convenor arrived in the Sault on October 22nd. Brenda G. met the ladies at their hotel, and then Jenny K., Joyce R. and Brenda G. hosted the ladies for dinner at Jenny's house. We enjoyed a delicious meal and conversation, getting to know the two guests a little more. President Karen showed the qualities of a quiet, reserved, deep thinker, while Karin appeared to be a bubbly, entertaining social butterfly—both very intelligent, dedicated, compassionate ladies.



From left around the table: Karin Mussen, Karen Clark-Lauzon, Joyce R., Brenda G. and Jenny K. enjoying a delicious meal at Jenny's house.

Joyce R. our Area Director, chaired the joint general meeting on Oct. 23rd. She began the meeting with a Meet and Greet Mixer called "Have You Ever?". In groups of three we took a "Have You Ever?" suggestion paper, and each of us took our turn at answering the question. It was fun. Following addresses by each of the branch presidents, Brenda G. of the Sault, and Jean Campbell of Central Algoma, members of the Central Algoma branch welcomed provincial President Karen Clark, Lauzon in song and costume. Dressed in sombreros and serapes, the enthusiastic members sang a 6- verse song about Karen to the tune of Hokey-Pokey.



WAY TO GO, LADIES!

We learned from the creative lyrics some information about Karen such as: she taught choirs and bands, tried some musical theatre, she loved her students' art, she helped to run a RWTO convention at Caesar's Casino in Windsor, and she currently plays piano at a hospital twice a month.



In Karen's speech she talked about how our volunteer work as retired teachers can affect people. For example, when playing the piano at the hospital, she played "Beautiful Dreamer" and then learned that an elderly couple listening had had that song at their wedding. They were very touched by her choice of music.

Karen gave us some examples of what we can do to try to recruit new members: Use Vistaprint, an online company to make our own branch business cards. Stand the RWTO postcards like a tent on tables where we meet, so that others see them and ask about our organization. Give out the new RWTO brochure and a copy of Connections to new retirees.

Following our delicious luncheon catered by Sandra Punch, Karin Mussen, Assistant Insurance Convenor, made a presentation of the “Open Window Insurance Opportunity”. She started off by stating “Mirror, mirror on the wall, there’s a window opening this fall”. She effectively used the fairy tale analogy throughout her speech to hold our interest in what can be a dry topic. She announced the Nov. 15 deadline for open enrolment, which later became a Dec. 15 deadline. She encouraged us to take advantage of the insurance which is supplemental, which offers benefits that our other plans do not have and which offers coordination of benefits. She ending with “Have an enchanting retirement!”



Before adjournment, Brenda G. and Brenda O. presented Karen and Karin with cards depicting the works of Group of Seven members who painted the Algoma District, and a Sleeping Children Around the World donation in each of their names.

Joyce Mertes attended the joint meeting as her last meeting in the Sault, because she moved to Southern Ontario on October 31, 2019 to be closer to her sons and their families. We honoured her with a Lifetime Membership.



Sandy F., behind Joyce M., gave a fond farewell to Joyce at the meeting.

Joyce was a longstanding member of the Sault Branch of RWTO having joined in 1988. Joyce was one step away from being Provincial President when her husband became ill, and Joyce made the decision to resign to take care of him. Her well-known rise to the top of our organization is recorded in the book Uncommon Women where it states that “When the nominations for the 1999-2000 Executive were presented...Joyce Mertes was First Vice President...Joyce was obliged for health reasons to resign from her position of First Vice President on April 19, 2000 at the Executive meeting”.

Joyce, an avid and excellent Scrabble Player hosted the Scrabble Club in her apartment at Collegiate Heights for several years. She continued to play when the club got larger and we had to use the activity room.

We will miss Joyce, and we wish her health and happiness in her new retirement home. As Sandy F. says: "You (Joyce) will always be a part of us and with us".

A group of us honoured Joyce at a luncheon at North 82 on Sat., Oct. 26th.



Back row left to right: Barb W., Diane M., Josie V., Carol McF., Margo D., Marilyn C. and Bernice W.

Front row left to right: Gerry Y., Joyce M. and Brenda G.

November 20, 2019—Caring Christmas Craft

Originally planned for Wed., November 27, 2019, our Christmas activity, planned by Rita W. took place on Nov. 20th from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. The Davey Home called Rita and changed the date once and the time twice because of conflicts they had: first from Nov.27 in the morning to Nov. 20 in the morning, then again to Nov. 20 in the afternoon.

A group of thirteen of us had a good time meeting the residents and making crafts with them. We helped them make two simple Christmas decorations, chatted and sang Christmas Carols with them. It felt satisfying to see the residents enjoying the time we had together. Our branch made a \$50.00 donation to the Davey Home Activities Program for materials.



Pat P. and Brenda O. assisted residents to make Christmas cards with pencil crayons and stickers.

We were not meeting at the church in November, so the executive members and the book club decided this year that they would fill boxes and cans with baking as part of our Goodwill initiative . Cookies, bars, etcetera were brought to Jenny K.'s house, and the book club members brought their desserts with them on Dec. 16th. After the book club meeting on that day, the book club packed goodies and delivered the packages to eleven members we identified as not being able to regularly attend our general meetings.

Christmas Baking



Left to right: Rita W., Bernice W. and Carmen C.



Left to right: Brenda G., Jenny K. and Bernice W.

Convention 2021 Update

The Central Algoma, the Sault and the Sudbury Branches will host the 2021 convention in the Sault. Joyce R., our Area Director, will update us on planning at our February General Meeting.

Sault Branch Groups and Clubs



The Breakfast Club meets every second Friday at 9:00 a.m. at Gino's Restaurant, 1076 Great Northern Road. Please join us for breakfast or just coffee and conversation.



The Scrabble Club meets every second Friday at 1:00 p.m. at the Centennial Library. Please email or call Carmen C. at cacharsley@hotmail.com or 705-759-1884 for more details.



The Book club meets the third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. We have a list of books selected for Sept. 2019 to June 2020. We take turns hosting the meeting at our homes by providing thought provoking questions and refreshments relevant to the setting of the book if possible. Please email Brenda G. at gallanb@shaw.ca or call her at 705-949-9145 for more details.

OUR NEXT GENERAL MEETING will be Wed., Feb. 26th at 11:00 a.m. at the United Baptist Church hall at 41 Malabar Street. After a brief business meeting and lunch, we will be taught some simple paper quilling skills by Carmen C. and Stephanie H. There will be three quilled cards for door prizes. If possible, bring along a retired teacher friend who has not attended our meetings before. We look forward to seeing you.

Newsletter by:

Brenda G.,

President and

Communications Convenor

