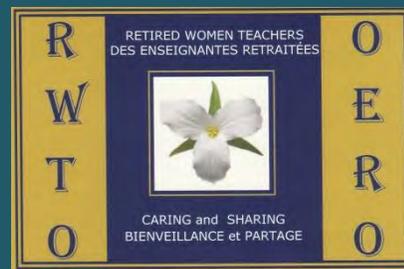


# South Bruce RWTO/OERO Newsletter

## August 2020



Wow, even in a pandemic, the days are flying by and here we are in August already! Hopefully you're keeping healthy as we navigate these unique times. To those of you, who have been having health challenges, please know that you are in our thoughts. We hope that your treatment is bringing you comfort and returning you to good health.

It's that time of year when we have to renew our membership. Even though we haven't been able to meet in person we're hoping that connecting through these newsletters makes you still feel a part of South Bruce RWTO.

The total fee is \$45 which covers the annual fee of \$40 and a \$5 fee for Branch incidentals like stamps, paper, ink, flowers etc. Please send a **cheque** made out to South Bruce RWTO/OERO to **Carole Machan at 736 MacKendrick Dr., Kincardine, ON N2Z 3A4** and you will receive your membership card either at our next gathering, by "personal" delivery or by mail. Thank you to all who have submitted stories for us to enjoy!

Pat Emmerton  
South Bruce RWTO/OERO President

### Financial disbursements:

So far this year we have given financial support to local food banks and The Women's House. No donations were made in July.

As the return to school approaches amid heightened health and financial concerns, the Grey-Bruce United Way Backpack Program is asking for assistance.

In an article that appeared in local media July 29<sup>th</sup>, the United Way said it anticipates a significant increase in requests for backpacks filled with school supplies. In 2019, 2,308 packs were distributed and this year's goal is to assemble 4,000 packs.

As a group, we traditionally make a sizable donation to this organization at our November Christmas Tea meeting. We think it would be a good idea to send our donation earlier in order to support this back-to-school initiative.

Accordingly, we need a member to make a motion to donate \$500 to the Grey-Bruce United Way Backpack Program. We also need a seconder and for each member to vote on the motion either by emailing Christine ([roberts@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:roberts@hurontel.on.ca)) or by phoning Pat at 519-396-1120.

### What's new?

The South Bruce RWTO/OERO executive are pleased to welcome and introduce Lynda Cerson as our new First Vice President!

Lynda has volunteered to take on this position of responsibility effective immediately and will become branch president in June 2021. She will spend the 2020-21 year assisting and learning from Pat.

A little background on our new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice:



I began my teaching career in 1967 at the age of 19. I was born and raised in the Kincardine area, and taught at W.E.Thompson and Huron Heights in Kincardine, as well as at Ripley Central. I taught all

grades except Kindergarten and Grade 8 homeroom. I got my degree the hard way through extension and correspondence courses while working. After my kids got a little older I also went to Toronto one summer to take the Instrumental Music course so I could teach that subject which I thoroughly enjoyed. I happily retired on January 1, 2001.

**From Joan Kirkham:** I am so happy that Covid19 restrictions came just as winter was leaving and spring was making its debut. The fact we were at home so much gave us a chance to truly watch and feel the changes of Nature...trees budding and leafing, snowdrops blooming, daffodils peaking out from their long winter's sleep and growing into their bright yellow cheery blossoms, the return of the redwinged blackbirds with their song of 'gleeeeeee', the first robin and on and on. Now we

have a full roster of birds' songs to hear and flowers to see.

My Covid19 days have been spent enjoying and appreciating the sounds and sights of Nature as I garden and tend to my plants as much as possible. I have enjoyed many a good cup of coffee or tea on my deck with

family and friends just soaking in the world around me. Through God's gifts and so many awesome friends I have found such peace and happiness during these unusual times.



**Eleanor Thompson:**

I have enjoyed good health, so am thankful the Covid has been kept under control. I was sad to lose my brother Lawrence Surridge in July and was well remembered with a message from our teachers. I did enjoy a few days at Allan's Cottage and had the experience of being in a sauna and then going in the river. My 16th great grandchild was born in June.

**Janet Browne:**

One of the most worrisome aspects of the pandemic is the safety of our vulnerable family members and the strict protocols for visiting those in long term care. It took a lot of perseverance but Janet Browne and her family

organized a lovely celebration for their father's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday recently. Read about it on the Kincardine Record's website:

<https://www.kincardinerecord.com/story.php?id=9587>

### “Back to School”

Do you still have “the dream”? You know, the “back to school” dream where it's the first day and your room isn't ready or you don't know which school you're assigned to or last year's most challenging student is smiling at you from the front row even though you've transferred schools?

In case you aren't sufficiently grateful to be retired, here's a funny video demonstrating what classrooms may be like this fall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvVKXcpR-oc&feature=youtu.be> (Thanks to Linda Somerville for sharing.)

### Here are a few stories from members:

Last week, out of the blue, I got an email from a former colleague who was hoping to get together when she visited Kincardine. I was thrilled to hear from her and was certainly available and eager for the visit. She and her sister, with whom I'd also taught, spent a fun two hours with me. Not only did we catch up with each other's lives but I heard updated news about the lives of other colleagues, friends and students. It was such a pleasure to reconnect with these gals. I had a smile on my face for the rest of the day! Their visit made me realize that the people connections we made during our teaching careers are so important and I need to put more effort into keeping those communication lines open!

Pat Emmerton

I was near the beginning of my second year of teaching as an itinerant Core French teacher. I was trying valiantly to coax my 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in oral activities but finding it a tough slog. One day a boy raised his hand. I was excited because this was the first time he'd volunteered an answer and I felt we were on the cusp a great breakthrough. Standing, he explained in a weary voice, “You know Madame... French class would go a lot smoother if you'd just speak English.” I can't remember my response but I'll never forget that boy.

Christine Roberts

Mostly I remember good times during my career. When I first started at Ripley for a maternity leave I was told that one young man in my grade 3 class had a reputation for causing grief, but for whatever reason he never caused any trouble for me that year.

I really get a kick out of meeting up with so many that stop to talk and have to remind me of who they are. Some boys especially will guiltily apologize for being a ‘bad egg’ to which my reply is that I don't remember that at all, which is the truth.

Lynda Cerson



## RWTO meetings:

As summer begins to wane and we look toward what traditionally would be 2 or 3 fall gatherings, we miss the interactions between friends and colleagues. Many members have kept in touch through various video call applications. We've all heard of Zoom by this point.

The South Bruce executive would like to know if members are interested in attempting a virtual meeting. Please let us know if you would be comfortable participating in a meeting held online.

## New RWTO/OERO members:

Do you know a newly retired teacher or retired teacher who is new to our area? RWTO/OERO's central office has new promotional materials outlining the many benefits to being a member. Here they are in a nutshell:

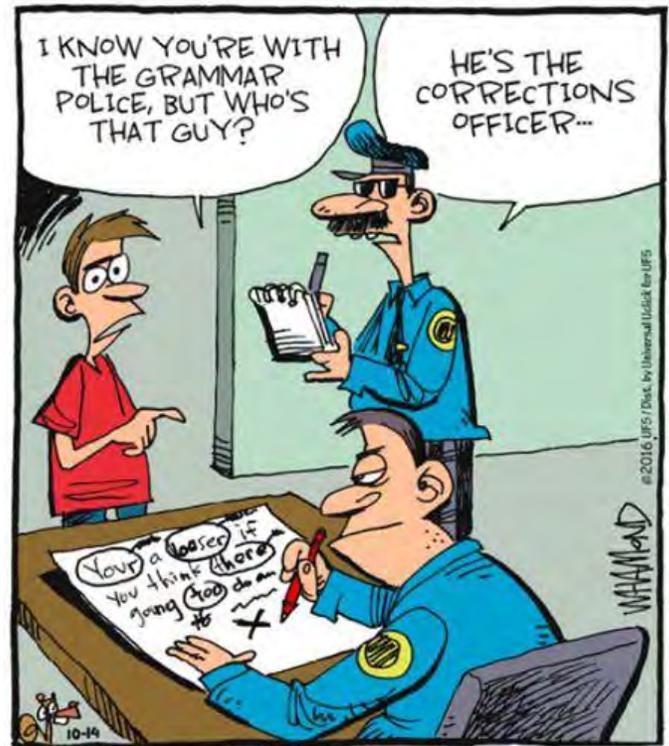
### Why Become a Member?

#### The benefits of membership include:

- Keeping in touch with former colleagues
- Meeting and making new friends
- Joining one of many Branches across Ontario
- Enrolling in exclusive Hospital and Home Care insurance plans
- Participating in leadership opportunities at Branch and Provincial levels
- Staying informed of Branch and Provincial events through newsletters, website, email
- Attending local Branch social activities such as luncheons, hiking, golf, day trips, etc.
- Assisting local communities through outreach program
- Enjoying camaraderie at the Annual General Meeting

Contact Pat Emmerton (519-396-1120, [randp@bmts.com](mailto:randp@bmts.com)) if you would like a brochure

or postcard to pass on to a potential new member.



The July newsletter contained a link to a video address by the new RWTO/OERO provincial president, Nancy Papiez. She has since provided a transcript of her comments.

## President's Message

Greetings Fellow Members of RWTO/OERO. I am very pleased to serve as Provincial President this year. It is certainly an honour and a privilege to be entrusted to this position.

I would like to thank my Branch, my friends in Hamilton-Wentworth, who have encouraged and supported me in various positions at the Branch and Provincial levels. I hold you near and dear to my heart.

I would also like to thank the Provincial Board of Directors, those who have served in the past and those who are currently on the Board. You

have been wonderful role models. You've really inspired me.

This year is going to be a different. It's going to be a challenge. Due to Covid-19, we are subject to social distancing. Our meetings and our social gatherings have been curtailed.

- More than ever, we need to **MAINTAIN MEMBERSHIP**, so canvas. Make those phone calls.
- More than ever, we need to **STAY CONNECTED**, so reach out and support.
- More than ever, we need to accept new ways of communicating, so **EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY**. Through technology, we can engage in virtual meetings and fun get-togethers.

There is help for technology. Provincial is providing on-line interactive workshops that will be available to all Branches throughout the year.

*Maintaining Membership, Staying Connected, and Embracing Technology* are vital in keeping our organization strong and thriving not only during this pandemic but into the future.

As Provincial President, I will work hard to support and stay connected with you the Membership. I will work hard to lead the Provincial Board of Directors on a path to accomplishing new goals. I will do my best to ensure that this wonderful organization of ours, of Retired Women Teachers, remains alive and vibrant. Be Well and Stay Safe.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Papiez  
Provincial President 2020-2021



**Before you go... some homework:**

- 1) **Please indicate your vote on the proposed donation to the United Way.**
- 2) **Please indicate your willingness to participate in virtual meetings.**
- 3) **We'd love to share more teaching stories. Please send them to [roberts@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:roberts@hurontel.on.ca)**
- 4) **Do you have a September tradition you'd like to share with us?**