



Retired Women Teachers of Ontario / Organisation des Enseignantes Retraitées de l'Ontario

President's Message – “Getting Outside Your Comfort Zone!”

Last September, we were faced with the COVID-19 challenge. We stepped out of our comfort zone as we faced many challenges. It was not easy, but we were determined and resilient as an organization. We overcame many of our anxieties and worked very hard to Maintain Membership, Stay Connected and Embrace Technology throughout the year. As a result, we are more connected and stronger than ever. Kudos to the Branches and to the Provincial Board of Directors! We have danced a new dance; we have sung a new song!

All of us must continue on this path for the next while to keep our organization alive and vibrant. Soon we will be able to hug family, friends and each other and what a day that will be!

A special thank you to the Branch members for your loyalty in renewing your memberships and staying connected with RWTO/OERO. As of December 31st, our provincial membership count was 93% paid with a total of 4,565 members and 243 Life Members. Members can still pay their fees until March 31st for this year.

A special thank you to the Branch Executives for all of your wonderful efforts to support your Branch members which I'm sure has made them feel very special.

The Convention Committee, chaired by our Website Convenor Kathy Gallagher, has definitely stepped out of their comfort zone and are rising to the challenge of organizing our first Virtual Convention and doing so with abundant enthusiasm! There is a well planned Annual General Meeting, six exciting workshops, six great virtual tours, fabulous live entertainment, prizes and much more! Watch for monthly Convention updates on our website: www.rwto.org.

Branches will soon begin the process of filling Branch Executive positions for the 2021-2022 year. Please consider taking on a leadership role or even taking a turn at the helm. Your branch is counting on you! Your organization is counting on you! Step out of your comfort zone and Think to the Future!

I like this Chinese Proverb:” A Man (Person) Grows Most Tired by Standing Still”

I have had the privilege of working with an amazing group of hard working, dedicated and kind-hearted



Nancy Papiez,
Provincial President

Continued page 2 ▶

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

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rwtoconnections@gmail.com • Website: www.RWTO.org*

President's Message – "Getting Outside Your Comfort Zone!" - continued

women on the Provincial Board of Directors. Thank you for your support and friendship. We have grown in leadership together and the experience has been absolutely wonderful!

To all the Branch Executives and members, although we could not meet in person, I am truly grateful for the invitations to Zoom meetings, the e-mail letters of

appreciation, the kind comments and support from so many of you. One day, we will be together again at the Convention. And oh, what a day that will be!!

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Papiez,
Provincial President 2020-2021

Issues and Concerns - Estate Planning

One of the more difficult decisions that you have to make as an adult is to determine what is to happen to your assets and property upon your passing. You may put it off because there's always another day and you can do it tomorrow, however without a legal Will, your intentions may not be the course of action.

A Will is a legal document that expresses a person's wishes as to how property is to be distributed after his/her death and who will manage such property until its final distribution. Without a Will, the distribution of your estate can be prolonged and challenging to settle among the parties. Lawyers can assist in the writing of your Will and include all the necessary information that is needed for a clear interpretation. You can also write your own Will by downloading a form online.

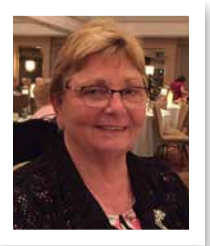
Along with a Will there is another very important legal document and that is a Power of Attorney. A Power of Attorney gives someone else the right to act on your behalf.

There are two aspects of a Power of Attorney. The first is a Power of Attorney for Personal Care. This names the person who would make decisions about your health care, housing and other aspects of your personal life such as meals and clothing if you became mentally incapable of making these decisions.

The second is Power of Attorney for Property. This names the person who would make decisions about your financial affairs including paying your bills, collecting money owed to you, maintaining or selling your house or managing your investments. Without a Power of Attorney, a family member or friend would have to apply to the courts to assume these responsibilities. A free kit is available from the Ontario government to write your own Power of Attorney. You can download the kit or get a print copy by calling Service Ontario - toll free at 1-800-267-8097 or 416-326-1234 in the Greater Toronto area. Another option is to have a lawyer write your Power of Attorney. Consider seeing a lawyer if your personal or business affairs are complicated.

Estate planning involves the transfer of someone's assets when they die, as well as a variety of other personal matters. It's never too soon to have a Will or Power of Attorney. If you have these documents, please review them and update them as needed. Ensure the care of your loved ones.

Kathy Smith, Board Member



Techno Tip

When you examine an email that you receive requesting information or alerting you to a security breach, check the email address before opening it. At the end of the address there will be a country code that will identify the origin of the email. For example co is Columbia, cn China and ru Russia. com is a commercial domain but often it is followed

by a second set of initials identifying the country of origin, com.lb Lebanon, .com.ae Arab Emirates. The Canadian Revenue Agency, a bank or or even Microsoft would never have an address ending with one of these country codes.

Do not open or read the email; simply trash it.

Insurance Matters

While we're in the depths of Winter signs of Spring's awakening are gradually emerging. Days are growing longer and I'm excited at the prospect of the sun's warmth coaxing the Spring bulbs to gradually emerge from their slumber. We've endured another lock-down as the rates of infection from COVID-19 surged, but we're encouraged by the availability of vaccines to provide us with protection against it. Most members I've spoken with over the past few months were disappointed to remain in place rather than wintering in warmer climes, but all look forward to the time when we again will be able to travel freely and without great concern for our health and wellbeing.



For this issue of "Insurance Matters" we have some new information to share with you. Again this year, Manulife will be issuing tax receipts to those members (and spouses) insured under the Hospital and Home Care Plan. If Manulife has your email address on file, they will invite you to download your tax receipt if you wish to do so. They will also be mailing a hard copy to the address they have on file for you. If you have changed your address over the past year, please make certain you've advised Manulife of your new address to ensure you receive your tax receipt.

For many years, members have been asking for a Benefit Identification card. I'm happy to tell you that Manulife will be issuing benefit cards for all insured members and spouses with the Hospital and Home Care benefit. Cards will be mailed tentatively by the end of March.

The Hospital and Home Care contract will be available online at Manulife's Secure Serve site starting April 1, 2021. Anyone becoming insured after that date will receive their benefit card in the mail and will receive a link to their contract online. In addition, there is a project underway to simplify the wording of the Hospital and Home Care and Personal Accidental Death and Dismemberment contracts to make them more easily understood. When the revision is complete the new "plain language" contract will be available at Manulife's Secure Serve site. Of course, for those members without computer access, paper contracts will still be available.

Many members have been attempting to submit claims online using the Secure Serve site. This capability has not been available, but I am pleased to tell you that an initiative is underway to make this service available to Hospital and Home Care plan members. Manulife is targeting April 2021 as the deadline for this, but testing will be required to ensure any "glitches" are worked out before going live. For those members without computer access, paper claims will continue to be accepted.

Lots of changes are coming, so let's look forward to better days ahead! Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay connected to each other.

Insurance Convenor

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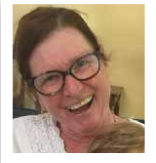


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Goodwill

As we look forward to Spring and hopefully, a more normal world, we continue to remember all our Retired Women Teachers in Ontario. This year has been one of concern for each one of us as we connect in a variety of ways with our Branch members. Goodwill continues to be my priority with our ladies who are 90 and over. This year, in 2021 we have 9 ladies celebrating their 100th year and they will join the group of 14 who have already surpassed this wonderful age. These ladies are the hierarchy of our organization.

Birthday cards continue to be sent to each of these ladies

throughout the year and a “Spring Message” is being prepared to send to 281 RWTO/OERO ladies 90 and over.

Keep these ladies in your hearts as we continue through this pandemic. Keep healthy and safe!

Yours in Caring and Sharing,

Judy Drummond, Provincial Goodwill Convener, 2nd Vice-President
jjdrum@xplornet.com



Program

Dear Branch Presidents and Area Directors,

Spring is just around the corner and with it a very busy time for Branch Presidents. I especially look forward to reading the Annual Branch President Reports that I will receive this month through your Area Director.

Please refer to the Convention 2021 Bulletin sent out in late January, to ensure you are up to date on ‘all things Convention’. If you have not done so, I strongly suggest that you print that document. This year we are breaking new ground and definitely Stepping Out of Our Comfort Zone with our ‘Virtual’ Convention. It will be even more

important for you to be fully informed. Equally important will be staying up to date by checking your emails frequently, as new and updated information will be shared as it becomes available.

‘See’ you at the Convention as we demonstrate how well we are ‘Staying Connected’.

Judith Bennoch,
Provincial Program Coordinator
rwtoprogramcoordinator@gmail.com



Archives

Thank you for your photos for the In-Memoriam service this June for our virtual convention. The tributes will be in the form of a slide show similar to last year.

When you send your information, please remember to attach your member’s name to your picture and the name of your branch and send it to: mumkat@aol.com. You can reach me there anytime if you have questions.

We publish public domain photographs only. You can send

the funeral website link to me or send the photo and obituary.

After January 31, names of deceased members will appear the following year in Connections and in our AGM June 2022.

Susan Rose, Provincial Archivist



Website

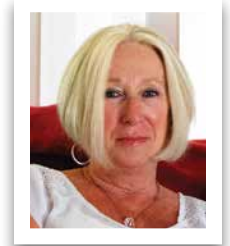


IT'S TIME

To check your local Branch Web Page for information on what needs to be updated on your Branch Web Page.

- Go To: <https://rwto.org/branches/communication-convener/>
- Send all updates to be posted to rwtocyberlady@gmail.com

Kathy Gallager, Website Convener



Membership

A big "Thank-you!" to all the hard-working Branch Membership convenors and Treasurers who have made our organization amazingly supported during this pandemic! It can become very boring in lockdown if you don't start to make your life more exciting within its parameters! Brainstorming even the craziest ideas can be fun and, if you can share them with someone else, it can become a good laugh for TWO people!! Caring about five of your friends will be a joy for all of you! REACH OUT and ENJOY! Our membership will blossom thanks to YOU!

Another great idea would be to make a video to encourage membership in our fine organization! Jump out of your comfort zone and give it a try!

Submissions for "Feather in Your Hat" Awards are due by March 1st! Please notify the Membership Convenor by email and send the submission (hard copy) by mail

(Joyce Ratz, Box 487, Iron Bridge, ON P0R 1H0 ratzdj@gmail.com) before March 1st! Details of submission are found in our Policies and Procedures Manual (page XIII - 3) on our RWTO/OERO website! The Membership Committee enjoys recognizing creative, innovative and successful activities carried out by a Branch or a group of Branches who have worked cooperatively on a project that has clearly enriched the programs offered by RWTO/OERO!

Joyce Ratz, Provincial Membership Convenor and Director, Area 11

Cathy Harrison, London-Middlesex;
Evelyn Martin, Haldimand;
Nancy Strutt, Flesherton;
Anne Graham, Lanark;
Judy-Anne Tumber, Peterborough



Sharing Techno Facts - Creating A YOUTUBE Video For Your Branch or Your Family

The process to complete a YouTube video that can be shared with a specific audience or with the general public is easy and fun. Why not create a video for your Branch members?

Start with a collection of pictures (Album). If doing your Branch, don't forget to check your archives of photos.

The type of computer you use does not affect the process, it just affects the name of the software and some of the terminology.

If using an Apple Computer, once your Album is complete in **Photos** go up to the top left of your screen and select **Create** and select **Slideshow**. Give your slideshow a title and then **preview** your slideshow, it will include all the pictures in your album. This is the time to change the order of the pictures if you don't like the sequence. Just drag and drop.

In preview mode you can now select the music you would like for the slideshow; options are to the right of the preview screen. Watch your slideshow several times to see if it is flowing correctly and that the music selected enhances your show.

You are now ready to **EXPORT** your file. This option is found at the top of your screen. Select High Definition (720p). The file will now convert to a **m4v file** (a movie). Save the file so you will be able to find it easily. I put

mine in a MOVIE folder. Do not close the file, keep it open on your screen.

You are now ready for the final step, converting the file to a YouTube video.



You can work in your Google account (gmail). It has the YouTube option, or you can open a separate YouTube account. Once in YouTube, you go to YouTube Studio then to **Create** (top right) where you will be requested to upload a file. If you still have your movie file somewhere on the screen of your computer you can simply drag the m4v file to the required upload location and then you wait. Once the file is uploaded you will be asked a few questions about the content. I always make my videos public and identify them as kid-friendly, The address for your video is what you need to record for your files. You can now share your video on Facebook or email the address to your members.

<http://youtu.be/zM09Rhr1WDM> This is a sample video that I created of a balloon ride over the Nile in Egypt.

Continued on page 9 ►



Resolutions for 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting

The following Resolutions are being submitted by the Branches and Board of Directors for the 2021 Annual General Meeting. Those Resolutions that were not presented last year due to a global pandemic situation are being carried forward and addressed at the AGM this year. Please read them carefully.

We value the input and submissions from both our membership and Board which help us to build a strong, vibrant organization of RWTO/OERO.

BRANCH RESOLUTIONS for 2021 Annual General Meeting

Resolution #1 (from Windsor-Essex)

Be it resolved that Policy and Procedures RWTO/OERO document section III, Finance Policies, 3 Fees, b Fee Rebates to Branches i “The annual Branch rebate per paid Provincial member shall be 25% of the membership fee, commencing with the 2008-2009 membership year. The rebate on the fifteen dollar membership fee shall remain at \$8.00” be amended to read,

“The annual Branch rebate per paid Provincial member shall be 40% of the membership fee, commencing with the 2021-2022 membership year. The rebate on the \$15.00 membership fee shall remain at \$8.00 for those members who retired on or before August 31, 1980.”

Rationale:

- Local Branches are facing the challenges of rising costs and operating expenses (e.g. Convention expenses/ Goodwill cards & gifts /Membership activities / Special Events: 80+ Tea / Archives / Office supplies / Luncheon venue deposits/etc.).
- ** The existing 25% rebate per member is a minimal return in assisting with actual costs per member.
- ** A minimal number of members/delegates are subsidized to attend Convention. The major work of RWTO/OERO occurs within the Local Branch.
- Promoting “Caring and Sharing” in our communities is a Local Branch priority demanding “time, talent and treasure.”
- Rebates are guaranteed based on membership to provide monies for local expenses wherever needed. As local membership increases, Provincial also sees an increase in funding. Grants may or may not be forthcoming and their use is directed by Provincial.
- It has been ten years, established in 2008/2009, that the membership rebate was implemented at 25% as

stated in the “Policies and Procedures” document.

- The amount of rebate is only defined in the “Policies and Procedures” document and not in the Constitution.
- Fundraising to increase membership for the purpose of generating revenue at the local level is increasingly demanding of time and energy due to the reality of an aging membership.

Resolution #2 (from Daisy Wilson Coldwater)

Be it resolved that Article IX, Branch Organization, be amended by the addition of 10 “Whenever possible, endeavour to ensure that RWTO/OERO Branch meetings and events take place in a location or facility that is accessible to all.”

Rationale:

We are an organization who cares about the well-being and needs of our members. We seek to retain our members as they age and their health, comfort and safety needs may require careful consideration when planning our events and activities. We strive to be inclusive and responsive to our members' special needs so we may all benefit from each other's participation in our organization.

Resolution #3 (from Daisy Wilson Coldwater)

Be it resolved that Article V Duties of the Board of Directors, 2 Board of Directors, be amended by the addition of f, “Whenever possible, endeavour to ensure that RWTO/OERO Provincial meetings and events take place in a location or facility that is accessible to all.”

Rationale:

We are an organization who cares about the well-being and needs of our members. We seek to retain our members as they age and their health, comfort and safety needs may require careful consideration when planning our events and activities. We strive to be inclusive and responsive to our members' special needs so we may all benefit from each other's participation in

Continued ►

Resolutions for 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting – continued

our organization.

Resolution #4 (from Windsor-Essex)

Be it resolved that Policy and Procedures RWTO/OERO document Appendix C 3 13 “Visit Branches at the request of the Branch” be amended to read, “Visit Branches at the request of a Branch. Each Branch is entitled to a visit by the Provincial President once every two years.”

Rationale:

- Presidential expenses for travelling across the province over a one-year period would be reduced, therefore this measure will be more cost-effective.
- There would be fewer restraints and challenges for the Presidents regarding travel conditions and timeframe.
- It would allow local branches a broader timeline to plan visits from the President.

Resolution #5 (from London-Middlesex)

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting be amended by the addition of a new section 7, Honorary Delegates. The current sections 7 and 8 will be renumbered to 8 and 9, consecutively.

“Any Past Provincial President attending the Annual General Meeting will be considered an Honorary Delegate. “

- a. They may speak to resolutions and motions to assist in clarifications in a discussion.
- b. They will have no voting privileges.
- c. They will be responsible for their own Convention expenses.

Rationale:

Past Provincial Presidents have a wealth of experience and background information in our organization and would add significant, important information to discussions regarding Resolutions or other business at the Annual General Meeting.

RESOLUTIONS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD RESOLUTIONS for 2021 Annual General Meeting

Resolution #6

Sales and Materials Convenor

Be it resolved that Article VII Duties of Other Members

of the Board of Directors, 5 Sales and Materials Convenor, The Sales and Materials Convenor shall: be amended with the addition of,

- a. collaborate with Area Directors to track and manage distribution of Membership and Cora Bailey pins on an annual basis,
- b. manage all aspects of the sales of RWTO/OERO pins and materials during the year and at a display at the Annual General Meeting and Convention,
- c. maintain records of all sales and inventory, and
- d. recommend purchases as required to maintain inventory and suggest new items for consideration.

Rationale:

At the 2019 Annual General Meeting, a resolution was passed to establish the appointed position Convenor-Sales and Materials to promote and manage sales of RWTO/OERO materials. This section describes the Duties of this position to be included in Article VII, Section 5.

Resolution #7 Appointed Committees/Convenors

This Resolution has been WITHDRAWN by the Board of Directors.

Be it resolved that Article VIII Duties and Structure of Provincial Committees, B Appointed Committees/Convenors, 5 Communications Website Convenor, be removed and replaced with the following:

Communications Website Committee

The Communications Website Committee shall:

- a) be chaired by the Communications Website Convenor,
- b) be comprised of the Communications Website Convenor and members representing different areas of the province, duly approved by the Board of Directors,
- c) ensure the RWTO/OERO website is maintained and updated as required,
- d) support and assist Branch Communications Convenors.

Rationale:

- Currently, the position of Communications Website Convenor does not have a committee. By creating this committee, the Communications Website

Continued ►



Resolutions for 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting – continued

Convenor would then have members to assist her with her duties.

- Creating this committee gives non board members an opportunity to work on our provincial website.
- Creating this committee does not have any financial implications.

Resolution #8 Duties of Other Members of the Board of Directors

Due to the withdrawal of Resolution #7, the Parliamentarian has ruled that this Resolution is now Out of Order.

Be it resolved that Article VII Duties of Other Members of the Board of Directors,

3 Communications Convenors, The Communications Website Convenor shall: be amended by the addition of a) and b) and renumbering of the current a) through d) to c) through f) respectively.

- a) chair the Communications Website Committee,
- b) liaise with the Webmaster and Communications Newsletter Convenor,

Rationale:

These duties apply to the Communications Website Convenor now that a Communications Website Committee has been formed.

Board Resolutions #9 Elections

Be it resolved that Article IV Organization, 4 Elections (b) “If more than one candidate is nominated for any position then a secret ballot shall be held. Election of these candidates shall be by majority vote of the delegates present at the Annual Meeting” be amended to read,

“If more than one candidate is nominated for any position then a secret ballot shall be held. Election of these candidates shall be by majority vote of the registered delegates at the Annual Meeting.”

Rationale:

- Adding the word ‘registered’ clarifies that the delegates have received their voting cards and are eligible to vote.
- Deletion of the word ‘present’ delineates that the majority vote shall be based on registered delegates

who are in attendance at the Convention.

Resolution #10 Annual Meeting

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 1 “There shall be an Annual Meeting of RWTO/OERO in June of each year” be amended to read,

“There shall be an Annual Meeting of RWTO/OERO in June of each year. Refer to the Voting and Election Procedures Handbook for details.”

Rationale:

A detailed Voting and Election Procedures Handbook has been created by an Ad Hoc Committee. Procedures for nominations of elected positions, voting, elections, et cetera are detailed in the handbook and can be referenced.

Board Resolution #11 Quorum

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 3 Quorum “A quorum for the Annual Meeting shall be fifty percent (50%) of the registered delegates” be amended to read,

3. Definitions

a) Quorum

A quorum for the Annual Meeting shall be fifty percent (50%) of the eligible delegates.

b) Eligible Delegates

Eligible delegates who may attend the Convention are based on paid membership numbers for each Branch.

c) Registered Delegate

An eligible delegate becomes a registered delegate upon receipt of her voting card at the Convention.

Rationale:

Definitions are now clarified.

Board Resolution #12 Voting Delegates

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 5 Voting Delegates, c “Each Branch is entitled to delegates according to the following formula” be amended to read,

“Each Branch is entitled to eligible delegates according to the following formula.”

Continued ►

Rationale:

By adding the word, “eligible”, the delegates entitled to attend the Convention is more clearly defined.

Board Resolution #13 Election and Appointments of Board Members

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 8 “The election of officers and the appointment of the other members of the Board of Directors shall take place at the Annual Meeting” be deleted.

Rationale:

This information is redundant (see Article IV

Organization, 4 Elections (a) Election of Executive Officers, (c) Election or Selection of Area Directors, and (d) Appointments to the Board of Directors).

Please Note: Board Resolutions #9 to #13 originated from the creation of a Voting and Election Procedures Handbook.

Respectfully submitted by:
Nancy Bell,
1st Vice President/Chair,
Constitution and Resolutions
Committee



Sharing Techno Facts -

Creating A YOUTUBE Video For Your Branch or Your Family - continued from Page 5

If your computer operates on a Windows platform the process outlined previously is similar but it is completed in PowerPoint.

Create a slide show of your photos in PowerPoint. In most cases you simply drag and drop or insert the photos. While in the slideshow format, ensure the photos are in your preferred order. To change a location of a photo you simply drag and drop. Add any words (text) to the slides then add the music that best suits your presentation, or you can add narration.

On the **File** menu, select **Save** to ensure all your work has been saved in PowerPoint presentation format (.pptx).

Click **FILE > EXPORT > CREATE A VIDEO**.

In the first drop-down box under the **CREATE A VIDEO** heading select the video quality you want, which pertains to the resolutions of the finished VIDEO.

Select HD (720p) for displaying on the Internet or DV

HD (1080p) for displaying on a Computer and HD Screen

The ULTRA HD (4K) option is only available if you are using Windows 10.

The second drop-down box under **CREATE A VIDEO** heading tells whether you have narration and/or specific time setting for your photos. (The default time is 5 seconds). If you have recorded a timed narration, by default the value is **Use Recorded Timings and Narrations**

Click **CREATE VIDEO**

In the **File name box**, enter a file name for the video, browse for the folder that will contain this file, and then click **Save**

In the **Save as Type box** choose **MPEG-4 Video**

This is the file that you upload to YouTube as earlier instructed.





News from the Branches – “Getting Outside the Comfort Zone”

Area 5

Rendezvous

We have lived a year of tip-toeing quietly around the house or suite,; not wanting to disturb our family or housemates. At the same time we have lived through a devastating and emotional experience with the pandemic, but kept our feelings to ourselves. In the Lunar New Year tradition, children are encouraged to make loud noises as fireworks are lit to scare off bad spirits. In our December newsletter, Rendezvous members were challenged to try something new by taking on the role of Town Crier and shouting a toast to 20Glorious21 from their front porch or apartment balcony. The clanging of school bells, many of us received upon retiring, welcomed the new year and gave 2020 a rousing send off!

Judy Anderson, Branch President

Scarborough

In the midst of this pandemic, Scarborough has continued to operate with few problems. We have our usual large executive and communication has been maintained with minimal disruption. There has been our newsletter, “AFTER THE BELL”, once a month. It has been full of news, a few recipes, some humour and stories from members. It has been emailed to anyone who has an email address and snail mailed to others. A successful mail-in was done to support our shelter and a cheque was presented to the support staff at the shelter, never forgetting masks and physical distancing. We were able to give the moms and kids a fun Christmas. Of course, like everyone else, there have not been any luncheon meetings but members have kept in touch with each other through phone calls and emails. Again, Scarborough has continued to ‘care and share’. We are looking forward to meeting in person, whenever it may be.

Carol Nelson, Branch President

Area 6

Blue Mountain

Unprecedented, virtual, and distancing are only a few of the words that define our past many months. The uncertainty that comes with these words resulted in

a very different time for our branch, just as it did for others. Connectivity was achieved through the use of technology, phone, mail and Zoom helped bring us together. Thanks to some of our RWTO executives for their patient instructions. This medium has allowed our Book Club to have regular meetings.

The constant positive and caring responses of members was a reminder of the resilience of RWTO members. Our local hospital and hospice youth art healing program have both benefited from branch donations.

With more time around our homes we have come to know more about the birds in our neighbourhood and laughed at the squirrels as they scurry around and entertained our pets more, much to their liking.

Now as the days grow longer and vaccines are coming, we are hopeful that this summer or fall will allow for in-person meetings. Meanwhile we continue to smile, mask and care for each other.

Lois Plowright, Branch President

Daisy Wilson Coldwater

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic our Branch, like every other, has been forced to postpone in-person meetings over the past year until large gatherings are once again safe to attend. However, we have found creative ways to stay current, including enjoying the Dayton Programs, “We Will Meet Again”. Also, our Goodwill Convenor regularly sends thoughtful cards for members’ birthdays and important life events. We especially try to include our older members who are now residing in assisted-living centres with phone calls and cards since drop-in visits are no longer permitted. Our Secretary compiles hard copies of our newsletters and distributes them by mail to those members who do not have email. Our Communications Representative has volunteered to participate in the virtual choir which will be shown at the virtual 2021 RWTO/OERO Conference this year. Our Treasurer reports that our membership has survived the pandemic almost completely intact and we are happy to have maintained our committed contributions to local food banks and Operation Smile. All of us are patiently awaiting the day when we can once again meet to enjoy company and shared laughter.

Maureen McKinnon, Branch Communications

Continued ►

East Parry Sound

When stepping out of my comfort zone for a new adventure, I always learn something. Perhaps not what I had intended, but it serves as a lesson anyway. When I read our theme, I wondered if other members also thought using Zoom was outside their comfort zone?

As a participant, I was happy to passively join in, let others do the set-up while procrastinating and avoiding running my own meeting. Then I realized that time to take leadership had finally arrived; I needed to organize my own Zoom call and connect with our group. We really needed to see each other again.

Surprisingly, the results were untroubled. Everyone managed to sign in, I did not delete anyone, the internet connection held up, my fears gone. Our first Zoom executive meeting was a success. Now onward to full branch Zoom meetings.

Susan Rose, Branch President

Orillia-Muskoka

“Unexpected events can change our life plans, but each new day of bettering this pandemic is worth all that we strive for.”

Most of our Orillia/Muskoka members have managed to meet virtually using Zoom. Each month three different volunteers preside over our meeting 1) chairperson 2) convenor for social activity 3) secretary. Rusty Draper, a former radio announcer has been one of our interesting speakers. Since November 2020, our branch has donated monies to the Orillia Food Bank, Interval House in Bracebridge, and the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre Simcoe/Muskoka.

During December we were so happy to have arranged for two elementary schools to design and arrange “Dear Friend” Christmas cards for every long term resident at Oak Terrace and Trillium Place in Orillia.

Fortunately, internet technology has greatly assisted the RWTO members of Orillia/Muskoka in continuing our social activities during the pandemic.

Yvonne Bromley, Branch President

Area 8

Brockville

Getting Outside Our Comfort Zone has certainly been inevitable during the COVID-19 pandemic

that we have all been facing! Area 8 has been trying to stay connected with our growing membership by participating in physically-distanced activities such as kayaking and hiking local trails, an outdoor executive meeting in the summer, zoom meetings, phone calls, emails, and good old pen and paper correspondence. We are excited to welcome four new members this year and sad to see the recent passing of two of our active members.

Our Goodwill Ambassador, Laura, has continued to send birthday cards and gifts to recognize special birthdays, other milestones, and “thinking of you” cards when warranted. At Christmas, cards and artistic bookmarks were mailed to each of our 60 members and we are planning an Easter surprise as well! Our callers phoned to welcome new members and welcome back previous members.

Our Newsletter Coordinator, Lynda, sent out a very informative newsletter in the fall and another will be sent during the spring months.

Our Treasurer, Helen, has been doing a great job of keeping our finances in order.

So, despite the circumstances we are trying to stay connected in new ways, but we certainly look forward to meeting in person again when it is safe to do so.

Karen Kerr-Kennedy, Branch President

Gananoque

One year ago, when COVID-19 arrived, our lives changed. Restrictions, established to deal with the pandemic, disrupted routines, cancelled events, and severed social groups. Our Comfort Zone had been pulled out from under us, like a mat.

To ensure our members would feel supported, we created a new comfort zone. Members received phone calls, puzzles, stories, and photographs that made up part of frequent mailings. Snail mail was a necessary, but expensive, part of our “caring and sharing”. Canada Post benefitted from the stamp sales.

Every member received photo collage copies of our

Continued ►





News from the Branches – “Getting Outside the Comfort Zone” – continued

virtual “Tea Party”, our “Strawberry Treats”, “Cats in Hats” and “Cats, No Hats”. With each new event the number of participants increased. Mail call is exciting now as our ladies look forward to the RWTO packages.

Our New Normal, our New Comfort Zone is working better than we could have imagined. However, we still look forward to the day when handshakes, hugs, singing and gathering will be possible, safely. (All photos are on the RWTO Website)

Mary Ellen Moulton,
Branch Treasurer/Communications

Upper Canada East

This year has been a challenging one with the pandemic causing confinement, loneliness and isolation. Our branch was affected by this with all 2020 gatherings being cancelled. So, emails were sent out containing humour to lift our member’s spirits. Then during a Fall Challenge, our members were encouraged to send in an Autumn photo which was added into a collage and placed on the RWTO UCE website home page. For Christmas, a special newsletter was written and inserted into a Christmas card and sent to every member of our branch. In this newsletter we asked members to attend one of the four virtual Christmas Teas planned. At each tea, a cup of tea and a Christmas cookie were shared. Seeing colleagues and friends visit and have some much-needed togetherness, warmed our hearts. We hope to continue staying connected by mail, virtually, and by email during 2021 until we can meet again.

Diane McKendry, Branch President

Kingston

We in Kingston Area, like everyone else, have had to do things differently this year due to COVID-19. Our fall session consisted of contacting all our members using our Telephone Tree to have a visit and remind people to send their membership fee to our Treasurer, Karen. Our Secretary, Laraine and I attended Napanee



Branch’s brunch as Associate members. For our winter and spring activities our Telephone Tree is again activated and a newsletter will outline some ideas for keeping in touch. Our “Treats For Troops” boxes are getting organized to send again soon. As spring and warmer weather approaches we propose a catered garden party to entertain all our members so that we can congregate and still be socially distanced. Blessings for keeping safe as we care and share!

Betty Jeanne Kippen, Branch President

Napanee

As this New Year unfolds we are looking forward to being able to meet as a Branch once more. Fortunately, we were able to meet for our “To ‘ell to the Bell” lunch in September as a restaurant opened especially for us. In December, each member received a phone call and visit from a member of the executive as we delivered a small gift of support in these difficult times. Included was a newsletter updating members on the activities of the executive. In October some members of Napanee Branch were able to complete a virtual walk (postponed from May) as we supported Hospice Lennox and Addington in their Hike for Hospice. We also supported Children and Family Services in their “Tree of Hope campaign” and The Morning Star Mission in Napanee who provide meals and run a food bank for the neediest of our community. Hopefully, we will be able to meet in person again in the near future.

Beryl Jacka, Branch President

Area 10

Sudbury

2020 was certainly a year of many challenges. We had to adjust to staying home to stay safe from contracting the coronavirus known as COVID-19. Wearing masks has become mandatory. To keep in touch with family and friends, ZOOM has become a frequent factor in our lives. That took us out of our comfort zone as many of us were not technology savvy. Instruction was offered by some executive members to assist those who needed help. Our RWTO/OERO meetings are conducted by Zoom – virtual meetings to conduct our business. We enjoyed our virtual Christmas party led in singing

Continued ►

the traditional carols by talented Sudburian Gavan Rousseau. We celebrated our two new 90-year-olds with flowers and cards. And so, we go into 2021 waiting for our turn to be vaccinated in order to flatten the curve of new Covid 19 infections. It will take some time, but that is one thing we retired teachers have - time.

Erna de Burger Fex , Branch Insurance Convenor

Area 11

Central Algoma

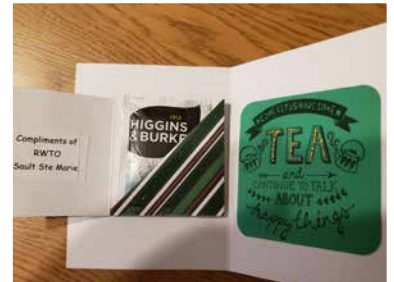
Central Algoma is keeping in touch with all our members and operating in a modified format during this pandemic. In lieu of general meetings, we keep the membership informed with regular newsletters. Most of our activity groups are operating with the assistance of Zoom, the outdoors, social distancing, Canada Post and the telephone. This way we are able to keep in touch with members, support those who are living alone or have suffered personal loss, and maintain some semblance of normalcy. Technology in the North continues to be an issue as stable and / or reliable internet connections can be an issue for many. At a recent joint meeting with the Sault Branch and Nancy Papiez, Provincial President, this issue and its impact on our ability to fully participate in the June convention was discussed. The learning curve is steep but we are innovative, flexible and staying safe.

Jean Campbell, Branch President



Sault Ste Marie - Keeping In Touch

Our branch keeps in touch with each other using approaches that appeal to all of our five senses. We have a Telephone Committee consisting of five callers each having ten members to call. They call once every six weeks to let members know that they are being thought about during this difficult time.



In December, the executive mailed out to members special handmade Christmas cards with a tea bag inside. The Earl Grey Black tea smelled and tasted delicious. We enjoyed a communal experience by thinking of each other while in our homes enjoying a hot cup of the tea.



Our Book Club meets monthly by Zoom. We continue to have fun socializing and discussing our books while sipping a beverage and nibbling on snacks.



All in all, we are successfully keeping in touch with each other and making special memories along the way.

Brenda Gallander, Past President and Communications Convenor

Updating Information

When your personal information changes, please ensure that you update your data. This can be done easily and safely on the RWTO/OERO website. Once on the site, go to CONTACT US where you will find the box as outlined to the right. Fill in your first and last name and the changed information, and hit SEND. It's that simple. There is a location to add a message if you so desire.



In Memoriam

<i>Name</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Branch</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Branch</i>
Allen, Mary	Scarborough	Scarborough	Luke, Linda	Uxbridge	Durham North
Anderson, Helen	Stratford	Stratford	Lyons, Marg	Markham	Scarborough
Apted, Elaine	Scarborough	Scarborough	MacDonald, Marilyn T.	St. Catharines	St. Catharines
Ball, Evelyn	Sarnia	Sarnia-Lambton	MacDonald, Vera	Georgetown	Peel North
Barnes, Madge (Winty)	Toronto	Rendezvous	MacKay, Joyce	Sault Ste. Marie	Sault Ste. Marie
Bosco, Pauline	Thorold	St. Catharines	Main, Madeleine	Sundridge	East Parry Sound
Bowers, Norma	Carleton Place	Upper Canada East	Martindale, Mary	Hamilton	Hamilton-Wentworth
Bracken, Amy	Seeleys Bay	Gananoque	Mason, Mary	Windsor	Windsor-Essex
Brady, Ann Marie	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	McAllister, Suzanne	Toronto	Mississauga
Breault, Elaine	Windsor	Windsor-Essex	McCallum, Frances	Dutton	St. Thomas-Elgin
Bremermann, Elfriede	Oakville	Oakville	McCarney, Lynne	Ottawa	Ottawa-Carleton
Brett, Victoria	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	McFarling, Elaine	Sault Ste. Marie	Sault Ste. Marie
Brooks, Trish	Stratford	Stratford	McLay, Charlotte	Stokes Bay	Warton
Brown, Enid	Jasper	Lanark	McMann, Margot	Campbellford	Trenton
Brown, Glenice	Guelph	Guelph-Wellington	McMartin, Marjorie	Cornwall	Pay Direct
Buchanan, Barbara	Smiths Falls	Lanark	McMullen, Joyce	Sunderland	Durham North
Caplan, Marion	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	McNally, Jane	Orillia	Orillia
Carrick, Norma	Gravenhurst	Orillia	McNamee, Rosemary	St. Catharines	St. Catharines
Carscadden, Elizabeth	Sault Ste. Marie	Sault Ste. Marie	McNichol, Phyllis	Sudbury	Sudbury
Chambers, Louise	Dundas	Hamilton-Wentworth	Merriman-Gray, Florence	Burlington	Burlington
Clarke, Beverley	Brockville	Brockville	Milligan, Helena Jean	Oakville	Rendezvous
Collins, Marjorie	Whitby	Scarborough	Monette, Antoinette	Windsor	Windsor-Essex
Cornack, Theresa	Selwyn	Peterborough	Mountain, Margaret	Embro	Stratford
Crosbie, Yvonne	Stayner	Blue Mountain	Munro, Hazel	Kemptville	Upper Canada East
Dalrymple, Eva	Petrolia	Sarnia-Lambton	Murray, Jane	Caledonia	Haldimand
Davis, Norma	Kemptville	Upper Canada East	Newman, Joanne	Sarnia	Sarnia-Lambton
Dickson, Ruth	St. Catharines	Niagara Falls	Orton, Frances	Cottam	Windsor-Essex
Duggan, Camilla	Kitchener	Kitchener-Waterloo	Palmer, Shirley	Huntsville	East Parry Sound
Durrant, Beverley	Etobicoke	Mississauga	Parsons, Edith	North York	Rendezvous
Faris, Hazel	Stratford	Hamilton-Wentworth	Pierce, Gilberte	Glencoe	Chatham-Kent
Flannery, Sheila	North Bay	East Parry Sound	Plaunt, Mary	Renfrew	Pay Direct
Forster, Helen	Zurich	Pay Direct	Rancier, Phyllis	Sault Ste. Marie	Sault Ste. Marie
Furtney, Margaret	Parkhill	London-Middlesex	Rooke, Betty Anne	Kitchener	Kitchener-Waterloo
Gagné, Lauretta	Sudbury	Sudbury	Rookley, Janet	Niagara Falls	Niagara Falls
Griffin, Isabel	Aurora	St. Thomas-Elgin	Ross, Irja	Windsor	Windsor-Essex
Gudz, Sandra	Wyoming	Sarnia-Lambton	Rutledge, Marie	Sarnia	Sarnia-Lambton
Heaman, Grace	London	London-Middlesex	Scherer, Avanel	Ancaster	Hamilton-Wentworth
Heath, Meg	Oakville	Oakville	Schram, Heather	St. Catharines	St. Catharines
Herron, Mary	Owen Sound	Warton	Shamess, Margaret	Parry Sound	East Parry Sound
Hill King, Florence	Dunnville	Pay Direct	Simbirski, Rose	Mississauga	Mississauga
Hogg, Elsie	Trenton	Trenton	Speller, Jean	Sault Ste. Marie	Sault Ste. Marie
Hornby, Muriel	Thessalon	Central Algoma	Stevenson, Jean	Ilderton	London-Middlesex
Hotham, Muriel	Dresden	Chatham-Kent	Stewart, Irla	London	London-Middlesex
Hubel, Donna	Toronto	Scarborough	Thomas-Shaw, Ada	Sarnia	Sarnia-Lambton
Idenden, Dawn	Milton	Pay Direct	Thwaites, Anna	Niagara on the Lake	St. Catharines
Irwin, Marion	Belleville	Belleville	Tivy, Verna	Toronto	Scarborough
Jackman, Margaret	Mississauga	Mississauga	Valera, Connie	Toronto	Rendezvous
Jackson, Margaret	Niagara Falls	Niagara Falls	Walsh, Betty	Oakville	Oakville
Jeffries, Alfreda	Grimsby	Lincoln West	West-Hobbs, Clarice	St. Catharines	St. Catharines
Jones, Judy	Fergus	Guelph-Wellington	Wheatley, Lauretta	Stratford	Stratford
Judge, Shirley	Listowel	Listowel	Whittaker, Anne	Oakville	Oakville
Kirkham, Joan	Kincardine	South Bruce	Wiley, Doris	Napanee	Trenton
Knudsen, June	Scarborough	Rendezvous	Williams, Elsie	Burlington	Mississauga
Kuslikis, Mary Anne	Toronto	Mississauga	Williams, Shelagh	Ottawa	Ottawa-Carleton
Larkin, Josephine	Mississauga	Rendezvous	Winkler, Dianne	Cambridge	Cambridge
Las, Hazel	Grimsby	Lincoln West	Wolfenden, Judith	Brockville	Brockville
Laycock, Gerrie	Carlisle	Burlington	Wood, Margaret	Stirling	Trenton
Leith, Margaret	Orillia	Orillia	Wright, Frances (Bunny)	Oshawa	Northumberland
Leyland, Elizabeth	Warton	Warton			South Durham
Lightcap, Dorothy	Powassan	East Parry Sound	Wringe, Anne	Napanee	Trenton



RWTO/OERO 65th Convention 2021 Program

Details are still being finalized regarding AGM discussions and voting procedures. In order to keep informed, please check emails and the RWTO/OERO website on a regular basis.

EVENTS FOR DELEGATES (blue)

OPEN EVENTS (red)

Tuesday June 1, 2021

Morning

RWTO/OERO Virtual Song / Keynote Address -Nancy Papiez
Annual General Meeting (AGM)



Afternoon

Workshops

(Workshops will be available to all members on the Website after the Convention)



Cooking Demonstration – Judy Drummond

“Strawberry Season!” I will be assembling 3 delicious strawberry desserts and conclude with my favourite appetizers. Recipes will be included in the workshop.



The Hospital and Home Care Claim Form Workshop –Terry Kennedy

The Hospital and Home Care Claim Form Workshop is an overview of the claim form; how to complete it; when to complete it; with tips to ensure members receive all the benefits they are entitled to.



Treasurer’s Workshop – Linda Huffman

The Treasurers Workshop will be composed of a Power Point presentation covering Dues Remittance in Excel and PDF, how to complete a Bank Reconciliation and preparation of Branch Income and Expense Statements.



Using Colour Coding to Enhance Genealogy Research –Jan Murdoch

Take advantage of a universal colour coding system to label everything. It saves time and helps you stay organized. It makes for more successful researching, especially when you are examining new DNA connections or trying to break down a Brick wall.



Wander Food and Wine – Stephanie Piché

Chef, Cooking instructor, wine educator, travel presenter, food writer and blogger, Stephanie Piché with grace and panache will share her insight and knowledge in pairing Canadian wines and cheeses.



Let’s Do PR- Hope Leon

“Let’s Do PR” is a workshop about Public Relations, ... what it means,... the “3” easy steps to do PR successfully, ... and how we can creatively use it in our RWTO branches to boost membership, amongst other things.

Evening

Pizza Night – Enjoy your pizza with live Entertainment by Comedian Joe Pillitteri



Wednesday June 2, 2021

Morning

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Virtual Tours – Explore a Destination, Plan a Future Adventure

Women, Wine and Fashion – a Virtual Fashion Show by Anne’s on the Avenue

Evening

Glamour Evening with

“The Liverpool 4 -Canada’s Beatles Tribute”



Thursday June 3, 2021

Morning

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

1:00 pm

In Memoriam

Over 90 Recognition

Awards Ceremony – Barbara Bain/Feather in Your Hat/Honorary Membership

Closing Ceremonies

Call to Convention 2022



Nancy Bell

**REGISTRATIONS WILL BE SHARED BY EMAIL
AND ON THE RWTO.ORG WEBSITE ONCE AVAILABLE.**



RWTO/OERO

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Tecumseh, ON, N8N 0H9

**PM Agreement
40739021**