

RWTO/OERO

Owen Sound and Area

Did you know that every month has a birth flower and that, just like birthstones, each has its own special meaning?

June birthdays belong to one of the most popular flowers of all time, **the rose**. **Roses** have been cherished for their classic beauty and fine fragrance for centuries.

Pets and the Pandemic

Do you have a pet that has made your time of social isolation more tolerable? Here are a few pets that have made life more bearable for some of our members.



Rosanne Gallinger's dog Murphy appears very content in this photo. Rosanne is displaying her talents in the second picture, which is a painting that Rosanne did of Murphy.



This is a picture of Sue Loyst's horse. He is a 15 year old standardbred that is a lovely horse for trail riding. His name is Jasper.



Suzanne Vamplew's pandemic companions are these adorable cats. They are Moonki (black) and Windki (grey).



Penny McKay shares this photo of her Granddaughter with her new pet, Luda. Penny is very excited about being able to dog sit! I imagine this new puppy has already brought a lot of joy to her new family during the pandemic.

Louise Dobson sent us this photo of her cat Tinker. I'm sure Tinker has supplied her with a lot of affection throughout this pandemic. She also has untraditional pets. Her 3 pet chickens are pictured below. Louise is sharing this poem about one of her chickens called Betty. Thank you Louise



AN ODE FOR BETTY

By Louise Dobson (March 2, 2021)

Betty was my chicken and she knew I was her friend
 She liked to have me rub her back when I went in the pen
 But February 15th very early in the morn
 A mink got in the chicken shed and chicken flesh was torn
 Five of our Barred Rock hens were killed just for their blood of red
 With only Betty spared and she was damaged but not dead
 A bite upon her feathered neck had left a bloody gash
 I wrapped her in a blanket then up to the house did dash
 What could I do to help her but give care and let her rest
 I took her to the basement and then Ed brought in her nest
 All day she was in shock and did not move or say a thing
 But later on that night she stirred when water I did bring
 She was alive the next day but her sadness I could see
 So I put my I-pad in her nest so she'd have company
 With live feed from a hen cam Betty heard and saw some birds
 And their squawking seemed to comfort her and then her voice I heard
 She would fight and try to live again so we could still be friends
 She seemed to be much better and we built a basement pen
 She would drink a little water but could not eat chicken feed
 So I put it in her water dish to soften up the seed

Knowing she would need more chicken sisters further down the road

We brought in three small Ida Browns and gave them a new home

Betty stayed away from them 'cause they were young and spry
 But sensing Betty's loneliness they slept right by her side

I bought them a new radio tuned to 102.9

The classical FM station 'cause their music is divine

Our chickens listened all day long while strutting on their legs

The music seemed to calm them down and they would lay more eggs

Betty moved and drank a bit but still she could not eat

And after several days she could not stand up on her feet

She lay down and her tender eyes gazed on me one last time

Then slept 'till she was gone and my eyes filled with salty brine

Although we'd both fought valiantly the damage was too great

And Betty left this world on February twenty-eight

She was just a chicken but she was my lockdown friend

Through Covid-19 days she was my therapist now and then

I'm glad I had this time to say goodbye to my dear pet

And thankful she's not suffering but I miss her friendship yet

Epilogue

If we make bonds with critters when they die we have a pain

In our hearts because we miss them even with the memories gained

So treasure every moment with your cat, horse, dog or bird

Be thankful for their friendship and I'll say just one more word

Believe that when life's over you will see them once again

When you walk across that rainbow bridge they're waiting at

the end



Our Owen Sound Branch has continued to be active!

Welcome everyone to the beautiful blooms of summer and to the beginning of resuming our lives with family and friends. Your executive is continuing to work on your behalf. We do not, at present, have any plans to meet in person. However, we will keep you updated as the Covid situation changes.

Our last General Meeting was held virtually on May 26. Thank you to our Social Committee for organizing the very informative speaker, Kristine Hammel, who shared her work about the Persephone Market Garden. Thank you also to members who submitted pictures of their beautiful gardens and to Rebecca Hlynialuk for organizing all the pictures into a wonderful slide show.

The May 26 General Meeting was the last one for our Treasurer, Marg Abra, to deliver her Treasurer's Report. Marg has served in the Treasurer's role for 13 years and was also a phone convenor for 4 years. We are so grateful for all the work

that Marg has done on our behalf. Thank you Marg.

Congratulations to Laurie James and Rhonda O'Reilly for receiving the Cora Bailey Awards for 2021! Both these ladies have served our RWTO greatly. Please read about their accomplishments further in this newsletter.

Also please see the information regarding membership fees for this year. We are most appreciative to all the members who have stayed with RWTO during these very challenging times. We are in a position to be able to offer memberships at \$25.00. Please see further in the newsletter for details.

The Annual RWTO Provincial Convention was held virtually June 2, 3 and 4. The opening event was a song 'Who Loves You' featuring representatives from local associations. It was wonderful for us to have Laurie James singing in the virtual choir.

Our RWTO President, Nancy Papiez, spoke to us on the question of how to keep RWTO vibrant and meaningful in the future. She highlighted some of the important advocacy work done in the past. A question has arisen as to how to keep RWTO sustainable. About 25% of RWTO members are over the age of 80 and 50% are between 70 and 79 years of age. The question is: should RWTO open its membership to other educational professionals who have worked in schools? A resolution to this effect would need to come from one of the local RWTO branches.

And finally it would be remiss of me not to make a plea for members to join our Executive. We have vacancies for the positions of first and second vice president. Please consider joining this wonderful group of women on our executive.

Yours in Caring and Sharing

Sue Loyst, President

You are getting a bargain!

Your RWTO executive has made the decision to discount your yearly membership fees for 2021/22. We want you to know how much we appreciate your continued support for your Owen Sound and Area branch during the pandemic. We are all looking forward to the day when we can once again meet and have our regular meetings. We will continue to send you bi-monthly newsletters. Remember to send your stories and pictures. We want to know what you have been doing.

MEMBERSHIP FEES for 2021/22 are due before Sept. 1. The amount is \$25.00. If you retired before Aug. 31, 1980, the fee is \$12.50. (These amounts are for the membership year 2021-22 only.) Please make the cheque payable to **RWTO Owen Sound & Area Branch**. You may include a self addressed stamped envelope if you wish your membership card mailed to you.

***If** you pay the Provincial dues to another RWTO branch, then the amount for an associate membership with the Owen Sound Branch is \$5.00 (2021/22 only).

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE RWTO INSURANCE , YOU MUST BE A CURRENT PAID MEMBER OF RWTO FOR THE INSURANCE TO BE EFFECTIVE.

Please send your payment to Mary Hall (the incoming treasurer) at 359522 Bayshore Rd., Annan, Ont. N0H 1B0

Mary's phone number is 1-226-622-7454 and her email is maryandmurray@hotmail.com

Marg Abra - Treasurer

What do you make?

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life.

One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education. He argued: "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?"

To stress his point, he said to another guest: "You're a teacher, Susan. Be honest. What do you make?"

Susan, who had a reputation of honesty and frankness, replied, "You want to know what I make?"

She paused for a second, then began.

"I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I can make a C+ feel like the Congressional Medal of Honour and an A - feel like a slap in the face if the student did not do his or her very best. I make kids sit through 40 minutes of class time when their parents can't make them sit for five minutes without an iPad or movie rental. Do you really want to know what I make?"

She paused again, and looked at each and every person at the table.

"I make kids wonder.

I make them question.

I make them criticize.

I make them apologize and mean it.

I make them write.

I make them read, read, read.

I make them show all their work in ma

on their final drafts in English.

I elevate them to experience music and art and the joy in performance, so their lives are rich, full of kindness and culture, and they take pride in themselves and their accomplishments.

I make them understand that if you have the brains, then follow your heart...and if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you pay them no attention.

You want to know what I make? I make a difference.

By the way, what do you make?"



Insurance Matters

This is a message from your insurance rep Rhonda.

*by now the insured members of our branch should have received their new Manulife Hospital and Home Care Policy identification card

*the plan number on the front of the card(17777C) refers to our RWTO/OERO Hospital and Home Care Plan and is common to all insured members/spouses

*the ID number is unique to the person insured

*on the back of the card is noted the Secure Serve website(manulife.ca/secureserve) which you can use

to register your information in order to review your contract details, submit claims and register for direct deposit

*the 1-877-222-7340 phone number also on the back, is a dedicated number for our RWTO policy and will be promptly answered by a service representative

*the numbers for pharmacists and dental carriers which appear on the back are NOT intended for our use, as this is a somewhat generic card, those two numbers are for other Manulife plans, so please

ignore them.

*the brochure is getting an update and is currently in the development stage, when ready it will appear on our RWTO/OERO website

*a new printed brochure will be available soon

*claims will shortly be available for online submission for those choosing to use that service, you will be notified when these changes are made

*please note that the cost of insurance coverage has not changed and claims will continue to be accepted using the current paper copy.

Thanks, as always if you need assistance, please feel free to call or email.

Take Care,

Rhonda O'Reilly 519-371-9240

rtoreilly@rogers.com

Cathy McCoy 519-371-0122

catcoy.cm@gmail.com



Cora Bailey Award Recipients for 2021



Rhonda O'Reilly attended Stratford Teacher's College before beginning her teaching career in Grey County. Throughout her career Rhonda taught in a number of grades from kindergarten through to grade six in a variety of areas including special education, learning resource and music. Rhonda has served her local RWTO as a telephone contact, informing members of upcoming meetings. Rhonda works as our local RWTO insurance contact assisting members with concerns and keeps us up to date on any insurance changes. Rhonda is an avid gardener, reader and she designs and creates her own greeting cards. Rhonda's dedication throughout the years has made her a worthy recipient of this year's Cora Bailey Award.

Laurie James grew up in Toronto and attended Toronto Teacher's College. After beginning her career in Scarborough she moved to Owen Sound. Laurie taught all the grades at Victoria School before moving to Sullivan School where she enjoyed teaching kindergarten. Laurie is well regarded in Bluewater for her creation of the book 'Songs for Jolly Phonics'. After her retirement Laurie spearheaded a fundraising activity to raise money to build a replica one room school house at the Grey Roots Heritage Village. Local quilt makers and students created a beautiful award winning quilt for this activity. Laurie organizes, designs and distributes our branch newsletter. Normally the newsletter is sent out four times a year; however, this year Laurie is sending it out bimonthly. Laurie is very musically talented. She participates in two choirs and is singing virtually at this year's RWTO convention. Laurie's dedicated commitment to our group has made her a worthy recipient of this year's Cora Bailey Award.



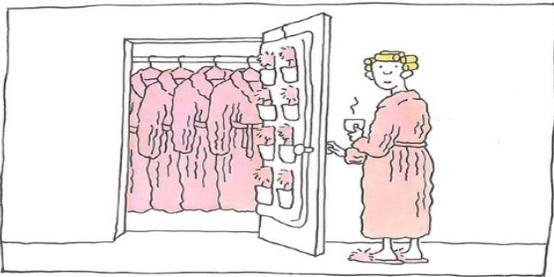
Hi Ladies, We hope that you are able to get outside and enjoy the beautiful weather we are having. Sadly since our last Newsletter, I have sent Sympathy cards to three of our members. A card was sent to Jennifer Pearson at the passing of her mother-in-law. One went to Ruth Kaufman at the passing of her sister. A card went to Shirley Sullivan at the passing of her husband. We send our sympathy to these ladies.

Yours in caring and sharing,
Lorraine Dunning 519-376-5017
Barbara Schwartz 519-371-2474

Lockdown Advice

Everyone PLEASE be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home! I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my Pepsi, and we all agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention this to the washing machine, because she puts a different spin on EVERYTHING! I certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant! In the end the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out! The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic... told me to just suck it up! But the fan was VERY optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon! The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion but the front door said I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip! You can just about guess what the curtains told me: they told me to "pull myself together!" We will survive!

MAYBE I SHOULD GET OUT MORE.



Greetings,

There were members who did not rejoin this year. It is good news that it was due to a change of focus and not health issues. We have 67 members including 3 Life members and 4 Visiting members. We all look forward to seeing each other in the near future.

"Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe"

Penny McKay - Membership Rep



The last classes of 2020/2021 will not resemble the last classes in June from years past. As our children continue to learn online let us reflect with Louise on the Junes past, remembering the good times.

JUNE – THE LAST CLASS

By Louise Dobson

The teacher stood up and looked out past the class
 To the birds that were flying by the window glass
 The students were packing their books one last time
 Anxiously waiting for school bells to chime
 R-r-r-r-ring was the signal and out they did go
 Emptying classrooms row upon row
 The teacher walked back and sat down in the chair
 A throne for a kingdom, no longer there
 For this was the very last class to be taught
 Though 'twas sad to move on, in a way it was not
 The teacher thought back on the work and the fun
 Like a tending of plants was the job that was done
 Discontent "weeds" killed with kindness and care
 While nourishing minds with knowledge so fair
 In the garden of wisdom the students all grew
 And the teacher had been there to help get them through
 Pens, papers and pencils were packed up and boxed
 The teacher made sure all these treasures were locked
 Then gazed out the window as students went by
 And though freedom was waiting, a tear touched the eye
 Of the teacher who breathed deep and let out a sigh
 Then the hand of the teacher waived its last good-bye