



RWTO/OERO

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

St. Catharines Branch Newsletter – Summer 2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am so very happy that our organization has remained intact throughout the pandemic. Several interest groups still offered our members activities and fellowship and we continued to do outreach into our community. To have a full slate of executive officers, at this time, is even more incredible!

A big welcome goes out to Melanie Kelch as our new 2nd Vice President and to Fern Lackenbauer as our new Newsletter Editor. We are also welcoming back Chereen Osborne in a new role as Honorary President for 2021 – 2022. Also, new this year is a PR committee chosen from our executive who will be looking into ways to grow our membership and balance our demographics.

Of our \$45.00 membership fee, \$40.00 goes to the Provincial office for redistribution and \$5.00 stays with us. This remains the best value of all comparable organizations, particularly in regard to the large array of interest groups we have and the insurance package we have been able to offer. I encourage everyone to submit their membership fee to our treasurer, Linda Foster, in a timely fashion. As we are reopening after COVID 19, we need to know our numbers going forward to facilitate planning luncheons and other events when the Ontario reopening is complete.

As usual, we welcome questions or suggestions from our members to anyone on our executive you feel most comfortable in contacting. Every year we also welcome ideas for new interest groups and welcome nominations for any member who would like to be featured in a "Rocking Retirement" video to be an inspiration to us all.

On a sad note, we continue to mourn the loss of members and their family members either due to natural causes or COVID 19. We hope that they will find peace and live on through their legacies. This year we also mourn the loss of thousands of First Nations children whose graves have been found many years after suffering terrible circumstances in Canadian Residential Schools. We plan to participate in the national reconciliation effort. An important mandate in 2021 -2022 will be not only to acknowledge the gifts to us from our First Nations people but to show them our support and admiration.

We have also received confirmation that our new Provincial President, Nancy Bell, will be joining us at our April luncheon, assuming that a luncheon in a large venue will be possible by that time.



Towards that momentous day and hopefully even earlier, it cannot be stated enough by enough people how imperative it is that all of us humble ourselves to receive both vaccinations and stop not only a possible fourth wave of the virus which has crippled us for almost two years, but eradicate it entirely as we did many other viruses in this country. We can heal and be strong again but the effort will require the sacrifice of everyone.

"For those of you already fully vaccinated, Bravo."

Until we meet again,
Kathie Dussome, Branch President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	Page 1
Slate of Officers	Page 2
Introducing New Faces	Page 3
Membership	Page 4
In Memoriam	Page 4
Branch Outreach	Page 5
Goodwill	Page 6
Insurance	Page 7
Covid information	Page 7
Convention 2021	Page 8

SLATE OF OFFICERS

As Past President, I am thrilled to announce that our Slate of Officers is complete for 2021-2022.

A warm welcome and thank-you to **Melanie Kelch** for joining the executive as Second Vice President. Melanie already met with the executive on Zoom at the June meeting and has made a great suggestion for a future community outreach project.

Fern Lackenbauer has enthusiastically accepted the position of Communications Convenor for the Newsletter.

Marilyn Emmett continues with the publication of the August newsletter and will include Fern in the planning to smooth the transition into September. Marilyn’s polished publications have been enjoyable and her knowledgeable presence as Honorary President on the executive will be missed.

Chereen Osborne has accepted her new role as Honorary President 2021-2022 and contributed on Zoom at the June executive meeting.

Clara Warden has shown her continued commitment to the executive by accepting

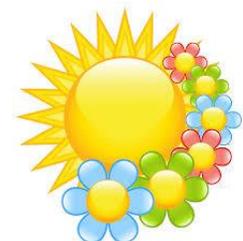
her new position as Membership Convenor. She is assisted by Linda Foster who will now focus on her role as Treasurer.

Thank you to everyone on the executive for keeping the branch alive during COVID and for assisting me in my presidency of 2020-2021.

Susan Lewis - Past President



RWTO/OERO ST. CATHARINES BRANCH SLATE OF OFFICERS 2021-2022	
HONORARY PRESIDENT	Chereen Osborne
TABLE OFFICERS	
Past President	Susan Lewis
President	Kathie Dussome
1 st Vice President	Linda Gaudet
2 nd Vice President	Melanie Kelch
Treasurer/Membership	Linda Foster
Secretary	Violette Hagerty
CONVENORS	
Membership	Clara Warden
Social	Louise Farquhar
Communications-Newsletter	Fern Lackenbauer
Communications-Website	Jessica Thomson
Archivist	Jessica Thomson
Goodwill	Janis Harlos
Insurance	Chris Graham
Telephone	Sheila Bengier
Interest Groups	Cathy Terrio-Lakeit
Issues and Concerns	Marg Newby
Program	Linda Gaudet and Melanie Kelch
AFFILIATE/LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES	
ETFO	Donna Painter
OECTA	Clara Warden
OSSTF	Margo Smith
PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES	
Area 13 Director	Kathy Smith
Provincial Program Coordinator	Judith Bennoch*
Provincial Communications Newsletter	Jan Murdoch*
	*St. Catharines Branch Members



INTRODUCING SOME NEW FACES

Melanie Kelch - Second Vice President



I am quite honoured to accept the position of Second Vice President of RWTO/OERO St. Catharines Branch. I am a retired elementary teacher with over 30 years of experience. I retired in 2015 after a 25-year career with the Toronto District School Board. Prior to that I also taught in the Durham School Board and the Lambton County School Board. Following retirement, my husband Allan and I moved to the Niagara Region and settled in St. Davids. Originally from Sarnia, I attended the University of Western Ontario in London and the University of Windsor.

I am quite involved in the community both with my church and several choirs. Other community service work is with Meals on Wheels.

I regularly walk with the Friday afternoon walking group, and have attended several of the luncheons. I have always felt welcomed as a newcomer to the group.

As a member of the executive, I look forward to contributing to this very active group of women whose motto is Caring and Sharing. I am very excited to make new contacts with people and look forward to meeting many more of the members as we are able to gather together in person.

Fern Lackenbauer - Communications Convenor - Newsletter



I look forward to working with you and the RWTO executive as the Newsletter - Communications Convenor. Staying informed and connecting with friends and fellow teachers is so important, especially after these many months of cancelled activities.

As a former secondary business teacher at Eden, Fort Erie and Welland High, I had the opportunity to teach many students who are now business leaders. Computers, entrepreneurship and business skills were of special interest to me. Since retiring in 2018, I have enjoyed exercising my artistic side by creating cards to encourage others. I use alcohol inks, watercolors, dye and oxide inks along with dies, stencils and embossing techniques to create elaborate cards. I am also a gardener and love connecting with people. I have two children in London and Vancouver, plus two wonderful grandsons. Once again, I look forward to working with you or meeting you at future events.

And Some Returning Members of Your St. Catharines Executive!



Sheila Bengler
Telephone Convenor



Louise Farquhar
Social Convenor



Violette Hagerty
Secretary



Marg Newby
Issues & Concerns



Chereen Osborne
Honorary



Donna Painter
ETFO Liaison



Margo Smith
OSSTF Liaison



Cathy Terrio-Lakeit
Interest Group Convenor



Jessica Thomson
Archivist & Website

MEMBERSHIP

This year, your membership renewal form arrived by e-mail for those of you who receive your newsletter by email. I thought it would be easier to complete this way. If for some reason you are unable to complete it and you need a paper form, just let Clara or myself know and a form will be mailed to you. I am really hoping everything will be returned by the end of August.

* Remember, you must be a paid-up member of RWTO/OERO to participate in Branch activities or to continue your enrolment in the RWTO/OERO Hospital and Home Care Insurance Plan.

Some of you may be wondering why we are asking you to pay your dues of \$45.00 at this time. The main reason is that we are 1 of 49 branches in the provincial RWTO/OERO organization. The Provincial mandate for membership in this organization is \$40.00 annually. I submit this amount of money to the provincial treasurer every Fall. Our branch cannot arbitrarily decide that we don't want to pay those fees. We do get a rebate from the province and along with the \$5.00 you pay above the \$40.00. Our annual local budget is about \$5,500.00. Even though we may be unable to meet, we still have many of the same costs (printing, postage, goodwill, donations) as in previous years. As a point of interest, we have not had a fee increase since 2011.



Linda Foster, Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP – Clara Warden

Hello Everyone! My name is Clara Warden and I am taking on the role of Membership Convenor, assisting Linda Foster with membership. I will also continue to be your Affiliate Liaison for OECTA.

New members are important for our group. We need your help to recruit newly retired teachers as well as those who have been enjoying retirement for a year or two or more. Membership information is available on the website, <https://rwto.org> and also from the affiliate liaisons: Margo Smith (OSSTF), Donna Painter (ETFO), Linda Foster and myself.



It was decided at our last Executive Zoom meeting that a sub-committee be formed to establish goals and develop a one-year plan which will include public relations strategies to entice new membership. This sub-committee will consist of Donna Painter, Margo Smith, Fern Lackenbauer, Violette Hagerty, Kathie Dussome and myself. More information will be forthcoming.

Clara Warden, Membership Convenor

In Memory of



Diane Bradley

Louise Minniti

**“A Life So Beautifully Lived.
A Heart So Deeply Loved.”**

CARING AND SHARING AWARD

The executive of 2020-2021 also want to thank the membership for their caring and sharing over the past year. A new award called, **The Caring and Sharing Award**, has been approved and added to the branch handbook. As outlined by the sub-committee in 2019-2020, this award's criteria include, but is not limited to: "commitment of time or service; going above and beyond with interest groups; participating in home visits with members; or long serving members leaving their post". At our next available luncheon, nominees who have been reviewed by the Past President and Honorary President and approved by the executive will be honored with a small appreciation award. The award allows the membership to honour up to ten recipients per year. Please forward any nominations to the Past President Susan Lewis, or Honorary President Chereen Osborne.

ST. CATHARINES BRANCH OUTREACH 2021-2022



RWTO/OERO St. Catharines will again be collecting gently used shoes, in **September and October**. You can drop off @Jan Harlos', 27 Damude Dr., Fonthill, Patti Malkiewich's @3153 Dorchester Rd. in Niagara Falls or Melanie Kelch's @8 Stoneridge Cr. in St. David's. Please email me for pick up in St. Catharines: lgaudet7@gmail.com.



CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY CARE



We are hopeful that we will be able to get together by Christmas!
We'll be asking for donations to support the ever-increasing number of people in our community in need. Your contribution will positively impact those struggling to make ends meet.

NIAGARA WORKERS WELCOME

This is a grassroots organization that has been hosting events for the Niagara Migrant Workers since 2007. When the workers arrive in Niagara, many have travelled for a few days and then arrive at odd hours to their bunk houses. It may take a few days until they are completely settled. In the past, Welcome Kits/Bags have been assembled and distributed to the workers when they arrive. This year the group had to plan differently due to the fluctuating health protocols. They relied more on financial donations and arranged to purchase essential items in bulk. This coming year there will likely be more group and personal engagement as restrictions ease. RWTO/OERO St. Catharines hopes to participate in this effort starting in February, 2022.

Rankin Run

RWTO/OERO St. Catharines has long been involved in the Rankin Run and after a Covid hiatus, plans to continue with a representative group, and financial contributions. This event will likely take place in May 2022. More info to follow!



"We've Got Your Back"



This program started in 2019 has delivered 14 blankets to members suffering from isolation or illness. As the ladies continue to knit, new recipients need to be suggested by the membership. Please contact Janis Harlos, our Goodwill Convenor, or Susan Lewis, Past President, with names of ladies in need of a visit and a blanket in September.

Linda Gaudet, 1st Vice-President

GOODWILL

This has been a most difficult year for RWTO members, as we have been unable to celebrate milestones with our families and friends, unable to grieve properly the loss of our loved ones and unable to spend time together with our peers at luncheons. The tide appears to be turning; many of us have received the necessary vaccines and are looking forward to opportunities to dine out, travel and for many of us to see our families. The RWTO Executive has attempted to bridge the isolation gap with “Thinking of You” cards sent in February and May. As Goodwill Convenor, I have continued to send out Birthday greetings to the 80+ and “Thinking of You” and condolence cards when informed of a need. Many of you have forwarded thank you’s via phone, snail mail or e-mail. It is heartening to receive these messages of affirmation.



Please continue to let me know when a member is in need of some TLC.

jharlos6@gmail.com or 905-892-8203.

I am looking forward to having the opportunity to honour our “Forever Young” members at a luncheon in the near future. These ladies have run the gauntlet before us, clearing the path to make teaching a better and more rewarding experience for us all.

Jan Harlos, Goodwill Convenor

There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age. – Sophia Loren

To keep the heart unwrinkled, to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent—that is to triumph over old age. – Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Forever Young Members

<i>Annetta Atkinson</i>	<i>Henriette Basset</i>
<i>Gloria Breithaupt</i>	<i>Bev Davies</i>
<i>June Howard</i>	<i>Frances Lovett</i>
<i>Marian McKnight</i>	<i>Marion Moordian</i>
<i>Jean Munson</i>	<i>June Nordstrum</i>
<i>Joan Rothman</i>	<i>Elsie Seddon</i>
<i>Marilyn Shea</i>	<i>Joan Sisler Wells</i>
<i>Mary Jane Tanner</i>	<i>Dorothy Walker</i>
<i>Agnes Wieler</i>	<i>Geraldine Young</i>



INSURANCE

The new Manulife forms are available. However, making a Manulife claim can now be done online and has a support centre available for our members. The phone number for the support centre is 1-877-222-7340. This support will be available to assist participating members through the set up and the online submission procedures. Manulife has issued a Benefit Identification Card for ALL Hospital and Home Care participants. These were sent to insured individuals at the end of March 2021.

- Manulife is simplifying ALL contracts to reflect “plain language”. The Hospital and Home Care contract became available on Manulife’s “SecureServe” April 1, 2021.
- Paper claim Forms and Submissions will continue to be available. Members will be able to download their Tax Receipts from the Secure Serve, if they wish to do so.
- Paper receipts will continue to be sent out as in the past.



Chris Graham – Insurance Convenor

COVID -19 UPDATES

For YOU and those in YOUR COMMUNITY

Stay well-informed and follow

the Government of Canada (GOC) Guidelines

to keep you SAFE at:

www.canada.ca/covid-vaccine

(Updates, Documents, Links, Videos, Shareable Resources, Useful Protocol Charts)

The Gov't of Canada states that, **“WE CAN ALL HELP!”**



With the direction of the Canadian Gov't,

“We Can All Help” to bring together:

families; grandparents; friends; sports fans; concert and theatre enthusiasts; food & wine aficionados; struggling businesses; travelling adventurers; and much more!

Additional local Health Info: niagarahealth.on.ca

Remember to stay home, if you are feeling unwell; wear your mask and remain 2m apart, as advised; know the protocols for indoor and outdoor gatherings and visits; wash your hands.

Stay well and hoping to safely commune with our RWTO friends again soon.

That's All for Now

As I put the finishing touches on this, my final RWTO/OERO newsletter, I think back over the 20 years that I have been involved with the St. Catharines Executive and The Provincial Board of Directors, sometimes both at the same time. At times it has been a steep learning curve. The new challenges brought immense personal growth and the opportunities to meet remarkable women from across the province and here at home. Many have become good friends. What an amazing organization!

Please welcome and support Fern Lackenbauer who will be your new Newsletter Convenor.

In Caring and sharing and ...still having fun,

Marilyn



RWTO/OERO CONVENTION 2021: STAYING CONNECTED

Nancy Papiez, Provincial President, welcomed the delegates, and thanked the committee for their hard work with special thanks to Convention Committee Chair, Kathy Gallagher and Program Coordinator, Judith Bennoch. With Zoom technology, it was a steep learning curve! The AGM Committee Reports and Resolutions can be found on the RWTO Provincial Website.



The 2021 Convention included some interesting Webinars. The first one I attended was “Wander Food and Wine with Stephanie Piché”. Stephanie is from Sudbury, not the first place one thinks about when it comes to wine. She talked about shapes of glasses, using your senses and food pairings. Her message: “The more you learn about Ontario wines, the more you’ll love them! Shop local!”

The evening’s entertainment was Live with Comedian Joe Pillitteri, winner of a Citizen of the Year Award for his work with the Terry Fox Foundation. And yes, he’s related to the Pillitteri vintner. Joe says that teachers have been a big part of his life, and he was thrilled to accept this gig, in spite of the fact that he hates doing Zoom comedy. He’s sure too, that we’re all really disappointed not to be able to experience Zoom teaching! Joe says that Maria Volante, his grade 10 English and drama teacher greatly affected his life. She told him he was smart and funny, but not to forget a sense of compassion; she added that praise matters as much as criticism and that one should remember “the work is the reward”.

Canada Rocky Mountaineer is probably on everyone’s bucket list! Tanya Memme for Best Vacations traveled from Vancouver to Banff. She describes the CP train trip as the Trip of a Lifetime! One travels from big city, through rainforest, snow-capped mountains, and desert. CEO Randy Powell says the magic comes from the spectacular scenery, and world class food and service.

I had no idea what to expect of the Jerusalema Dance Challenge, but wanted to support our members Jan Harlos, Jessica Thomson and Violette Hagerty. JDC is an international music movement in which we can proudly say RWTO participated. We watched our dancers, were offered a chance to learn the steps and then were able to dance along with them. All I can say is, I need more practice!

The Liverpool 4 – Canada’s Tribute to the Beatles: I screamed at the television February 9, 1964 when the Beatles appeared for the first time on the Ed Sullivan Show, and that tells you all you need to know. This group from Grimsby, Cambridge and Toronto is a singing sensation, and judging by the comments, the other RWTO Beatles lovers thought they were great too!

The Closing Events included a rousing rendition of O Canada and a lovely memorial to the Indigenous children of Kamloops: “May their spirits return home.” The 2021-2022 Board of Directors was installed, and new President Nancy Bell spoke of her three key focus areas: Expanding your Technology Repertoire; Connecting across Branches; and Highlighting Membership Strategies.

Call to Convention 2022, is hosted by the London-Middlesex Branch. Their theme is “Laughter Lifts Us Up!” “Who Loves You Pretty Baby?” was the closing song, and our very own Laurie Benson, Peggy Allen, Melanie Kelch, Judith Bennoch and Anne Dean belted it out with dozens of other RWTO members.

Linda Gaudet- 1st Vice-President