



Central Algoma 2026/2027 Newsletter

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings to all of you wonderful women who have worked in education. Our 2026-2027 year with RWTO/OERO promises to be filled with meaningful meetings and socializing. Your executive has planned interesting agendas many with guest speakers. We can all be proud that we won the Feather In Your Hat award for all the hard work Carol Neave and her group The Investigators did on researching Long Term Care Homes in our area. We also won the Barbara Bain award for getting the highest number of new members for mid-size branches. Both of these awards are prestigious and have helped put our Central Algoma Branch on the map of those groups who are going places and doing things. I hope each of you members, established and recent, will bring a guest to our first meeting so they too can experience our fellowship of sharing and caring and just maybe we can be in the running for another Barbara Bain award for membership growth. If you have any ideas for a project we can undertake bring those ideas along to our first meeting and maybe we can qualify for another Feather In Your Hat Award.

Please remember our first meeting is featuring an Edible Silent auction; so again a reminder to bring a donation if you are able and extra money so you can bid on a tasty treat. Also at this meeting, sign-up sheets will be out for you to consider joining one or more of our interest groups. In each group, enthusiastic leaders encourage the participants. Consider Games, Crafts, Book Club, Theme dinner, Walking. And if you have ideas for a new group, bring them along as well.

I look forward to working with the amazing women who make up your executive and to encourage you to think about taking on a leadership role. We will be only needing a first vice president as Jean has graciously volunteered to remain as second vice and Kelly will be moving up the ladder next year. I can sincerely say these positions are important, necessary and not onerous. We need your participation, involvement and energy to keep Central Algoma a vibrant group supporting education and educators. You are super women doing important work by being part of this branch and I

encourage each of you to consider a role on the executive.

In closing I feel this 2026-2027 year promises to be a memorable one. Come out, bring a friend and new member and enjoy our sharing and caring as we work together to support Central Algoma district schools and libraries, teachers and students.

Marilyn Schatzler
President Central Algoma Branch



GREETINGS FROM OUR AREA 11 DIRECTOR

It was an honour to represent both Central Algoma and Sault Ste Marie Branches in the 2nd year of my four-year term. Time goes by quickly when you are having fun and feeling like you are making a difference. The surprise was that there are many zoom meetings. The good news is that they ARE on zoom and one can wear one's PJ bottoms to a meeting. The Soo Branch is fortunate to have Patricia Mary Lambert who has been welcomed enthusiastically onto RWTO/ERO's executive as First VP next year.

I serve on the Social Justice Committee which advocates for better senior care. That is an issue dear to my heart, and I hope to your heart as well.

There are 12 Committees altogether and you may choose which interest you the most. I also serve on the Leadership and Branch Organization Committee, Employee review committee (there is only one employee), and new for me will be the Connections Newsletter Distribution and Financial Alternatives Committee.

Money and budgets are playing bigger roles in the discussions of the Board. Branch Members are dying. (Last year Central Algoma lost 8 members) Appointed Honorary Members all mean less revenue for both branches and the Board. Finding new and younger members is a focus and will determine the eventual future of RWTO/OERO.

The highlight for me this year was attending the Jubilee (70th) Convention held in London, ON, my hometown. I was thrilled to be on hand to witness both our branches in District 11 receive not one, but TWO awards! Hurray for Northern Ontario spirit and co-operation and FUN. Only one other District, 3, earned 2 awards and that was London Middlesex which includes 5 branches stretching from Chatham, through London, Sarnia, St. Thomas and Windsor. That makes our success even more special, and it earned money \$\$\$ for both our branches.

Can we do this again next year? Have a wonderful summer, and I look forward to seeing everyone in September with new and creative ways to share, care, prepare and have fun at our meetings and in our subgroups.

Carol Neave
Area 11 Director

CENTRAL ALGOMA EXECUTIVE 2025-2027

Past president: Mary Jane Thompson
President: Marilyn Schatzler
1st Vice: Kelly Cudmore
2nd Vice: Jean Campbell
Treasurer: Anne Wildman
Secretary: Maureen Gooderham
Insurance: Marlene Falls
Publicity: Jenat McClelland
Social Convenors: Suz Humphreys
Cathy Bennett
Jane Vienneau
Telephone Convenor: Joyce Duncan
Newsletter and Communications: Nancy Konzuk
Goodwill: Glenis Johnstone
History / Archives: Connie Bennett
Callers: Maureen Gooderham
Elaine Brown
Nancy Konzuk
Heide Marrato
June McDonald
Area 11 Director: Carol Neave

www.rwto.org

You will find information about all the Branches, what is going on at Convention, insurance issues and most importantly, a copy of this Newsletter!

You can also read the Provincial newsletter, CONNECTIONS

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

If you have any questions about RWTO, our Branch or your Insurance, please contact one of the following:

Central Algoma Branch

President: Marilyn Schatzler 705-759-6625
1st Vice-President: Kelly Cudmore 705-248-2091
Secretary: Maureen Gooderham 705-254-8786
Treasurer: Anne Wildman 705-575-1253.
Insurance: Marlene Falls 705-256-1681
Goodwill: Glenis Johnstone. 705-782-6349
Provincial Area Director:
Carol Neave 705-575-8383

Manulife Insurance Broker:

Terry Kennedy: tkennedy34@bell.net 1-519-583-0098

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE \$65 AND DUE AT THE SEPTEMBER MEETING.

CORA BAILEY AWARD WINNERS

2006	Marg Snider
2007	Shirley Kent
2008	Martha Summers
2009	Glenis Johnstone
2010	Ruth Juhola
2011	Marny Pollard Alice Ward
2012	Ruby Vaughan
2013	Nancy Konzuk
2014	Joyce Ratz
2015	Marlene Falls Carol Neave
2016	Verna Lapish
2017	Muriel Hornby Kathy Greening
2018	Gayle Manley Nina Warnock Ruby Buck
2019	Cathy Bennett Anne Wildman
2020	Lily Ritchie MaryJane Thompson
2023	Suzanne Humphreys
2024	Joyce Duncan
2025	Maureen Gooderham
2026	Connie Bennett

CORA BAILEY AWARD WINNER



Kelly Cudmore (L) and Maureen Gooderham (R) present the Cora Bailey award to Connie Bennett.

Connie Bennett is a long-time member of Central Algoma RWTO branch. She is vibrant, straight forward and has contributed to many of our subgroups. Specifically, as a student of history, Connie has been influential in working on preserving the History of Central Algoma RWTO. As caretaker of our archives, she was successful in moving this body of work into a permanent storage place at Central Algoma Secondary School in Desbarats, ON. As a gal who loves to laugh and have fun, she is a leader and mainstay of the Games Group. She also took on an important role in the Investigators' group which visited and reported on various long term care places in the area. Importantly, she is cheerful and encourages others to come out and enjoy the activities. Congratulations Connie, you are a worthy recipient of the Cora Bailey Award.

SHARING WITH OUR COMMUNITY- 2025/26

CASS Scholarship: \$500 – Alexis Pellerin

Petunia Pig: \$200 to Thessalon Library
(Winner of \$100 - Francine LeBlanc)

Literacy Awards:

\$300 to Central Algoma Intermediate School for Trisha Jeffery's class. She will purchase storytelling kits to support oral language development in JK – 2. Trisha reports that they

purchased red riding hood retell puppets, gingerbread retell and mitten retell as well as puppet kits where they could create their own puppet to use at the puppet centre.



\$275 to Echo Bay Central for Meghan Cripps' Grades 4-6 class. She will purchase a We Will Write programme that will provide short creative writing challenges using a gamified collaborative writing platform on the 1:1 technology available.

\$125 to Lindy Fairbrother at St. Joseph Island Central Public School for a Primary Decodable Text library for K-2. This will help students with phonics.

INSURANCE MATTERS

Our organization offers a unique Health Insurance Plan which is not available to members of any other retired teachers' group. It is called the RWTO Hospital & Home Care Plan.

Hospital & Home Care Plan: The RWTO Health Insurance Plan offers post-hospital home care insurance to help with expenses when discharged from hospital following an accident or illness. For certain benefits, the plan offers cash with no receipts necessary -only the doctor's certification that you have been in hospital.

RWTO Personal Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan: This plan will cover you for losses incurred from a serious accident, 24-

hours a day, anywhere in the world. Benefits are paid for accidental death, dismemberment, or paralysis resulting from an accident. Choose the coverage you need, in units of \$25,000 up to \$200,000.

For further information contact Manulife Financial at [1-866-410-0500](tel:1-866-410-0500).
Marlene Falls at 705-256-1681
Terry Kennedy at 1-519-583-0098.
Or email at tkennedy34@bell.net

RWTO 70th Annual Convention 2026

70 years to celebrate

June 2-4 ,2026

London

Carol Neave and I left Monday June 1 to drive to London. After checking in we found our rooms near each other but not sharing a common washroom. The rooms were quite nice for a dormitory. We checked with the IT lady, Jane, running the computers and who was supposed to have the pictures we each took put on a running loop that could be seen by all the delegates during the convention. This did not happen; however, Carol and I continued with the photography task, taking close to 1000 photos during the 3 days between the two of us. These pics we have now edited, and they have been put on a thumb drive and sent to Linda Sergeant who will get the loop ready for use at next year's meeting in London at Western University. The meals were of excellent quality. I'm sure much better than the students might have been served during the school year.

The silent auction had many wonderful items as 44 branches each brought one or two items. The chocolate donated by Central Algoma was very popular. Total earned from this auction was \$4580 for RWTO/OERO.

There was a wellness fair featured day 1 with many vendors from Mary Kay to St Joseph hospital and Chartwell Homes. These displays were visited frequently during the day. I attended a sound bath and Reiki demonstration.

The keynote speaker Dr Angela Roberts from London delivered a message on Super Agers. She noted that ageism is the most socially accepted form of discrimination today. Older adults who internalize negative stereotypes of aging live 7.5 fewer years. She noted ageism in healthcare leads to under treatment, under screening, and misdiagnosis. She listed 5 pillars to help us each become Super Agers. I will discuss these throughout the meetings this year.

The business of the many resolutions was debated and voted on, with several resolutions being deferred to next year's meeting.

The high notes were when Central Algoma along with Sault Ste Marie won the Feather In Your Hat awards. Thanks to the Investigators Group for all their efforts and hard work. Not only did we receive a lovely fascinator hat but also a cheque for \$100. As well we were the top for mid-size branches in getting new members. 4 were listed. Those who joined later will be in next year's count. Barbara Bain herself presented the awards and a cheque for \$300. She is a delightful lady rocking her 90's. We were delighted to present these two cheques to Anne to enhance our upcoming budget.

129 deceased teachers were honoured for the 2025-2026 period with a thoughtful In Memoriam service prepared by the Sudbury Branch. At the end of this service the Directors of each region placed a yellow rose in a vase and a tea light candle on the table.

In closing it was a lovely time connecting with other retired women educators. We had delicious meals, and good entertainment. Especially fun was the karaoke evening where both individuals and table groups, including ours, got on stage and sang. Next year, same place. A week later is the plan for the annual meeting. I hope you will put it on your calendar so we can have 2 branch reps attend. Consider this your invite and start planning.

Marilyn Schatzler
President.



Sandy Fulcher, Sault branch, and Carol Neave, Central Algoma, proudly wear the Feather in our Hats. Marilyn (centre) holds the Barbara Bain award for the increased number of members we welcomed this year.

Next year's Convention
Theme: RISE UP!
June 15,16,17 2027
Clare Hall (Wellness centre)
Western University Campus
London ON
Plan to attend!

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMITTEE

Connie Bennett

705-785-3508

conniebennett44@gmail.com

Connie Bennett, Cathy Bennett, and Glenis Johnstone are the members of this committee.

This year memorial services were held for RWTO members Frances Swann, Catherine Bell, Alice Ward and Shirley Kent. They will be truly missed and remembered for their years of contributions to our local group.

At a History committee meeting we looked through the photos in the Archive photo albums. Many memories and laughs were had as we tried to put names to some people. Agreement could not be reached on the identity of one photo so had to ask David Ratz if the

photo was of his wife, Joyce. It was indeed a photo of her younger self. We labelled the photos of people and activities that we were almost sure about and others we labelled as unknown for now. At a later date we could bring these photos to a meeting to seek help from other members. Some of the activities photographed looked like everyone was having way too much fun!!

We also developed a form for members to sign if they do not want their photos in the Archives. This will be brought to every general meeting by someone on the executive.

I also combined similar reports in binders and created a master copy listing the contents of each numbered binder. New binders will be made as necessary.

Next year we plan on deciding what the membership feels should be kept at the local Archives. Provincial RWTO mandates what should be sent to the Provincial Archives, but other activities can be decided locally.

Any member can visit the Archives at Central Algoma Secondary School during school hours by ringing the buzzer and signing the visitor book at the reception desk as a RWTO member. The Archives are in a hallway off the staff room. Staff are always friendly, and I love to hear the teaching stories- very similar even after 20 years of retirement.

GOODWILL COMMITTEE

Glenis Johnstone

705-782-6349

johnstone.glenis@gmail.com

Ten cards were sent: six "thinking of you" and four "sympathy". Eight boxes of chocolate cookies were sent for Christmas Cheer. Please let me know if there is a member in need of a card.

INVESTIGATORS AD HOC COMMITTEE

Carol Neave
705-575-8383
gcneave@live.ca

We were thrilled that our Investigators' Report earned our Central Algoma Branch a Feather in your Hat Award at the Jubilee (70th) RWTO Convention that was held in a residence at Western University in London.

There are lots of other things Investigators could do:

(A) list all the agencies and assistance that are available in our area for folks who wish to stay in their own home as long as possible but are finding they need assistance. There are more agencies than you would think but less assistance than you might need.

(B) keep up to date with the changes that are hopefully being made in each of the places we visited

(C) write letters to our MPP requesting that any new facilities for the elderly that will be built include more home-like settings and care

(D) find out places in other areas in Ontario where vast improvements in elderly care are being created by new companies in less institution-like facilities

Our current team is tired out by the work we have done the last 2 years and wish to sign off. HOWEVER, if anyone else feels motivated to continue, please step up and volunteer to continue our work. Central Algoma Branch members will support you.

PUBLICITY

Jenat McClelland
705-971-0031
jenatm@hotmail.com

RWTO Central Algoma has its own Facebook Page. It is a professional page which allows us to comment and like posts which creates traffic and boosts our page. If you have pictures or information about your group, contact Jenat by email and she will post the information. In this day and age without print media to share news, this is a good way to get the word out.

Go to **RWTO Central Algoma** on Facebook.

INTEREST GROUPS



June's book club at North 82

BOOK CLUB

Linda Prodan
705-575-1519
lmprodan@hotmail.com

The RWTO Book Club meets the third Monday of each month at 1:30 from September to June, sometimes in members' homes, occasionally at a restaurant. Discussion of each book is followed by a social hour with coffee, tea and sweets. Laughter can be heard far and wide and many problems of the world are solved, or not! Some of us have been members for years, others bring new perspective to the group.

The first meeting of the new year is Monday, September 21st at North 82 (12:30 lunch) followed by discussions, where we will vote for nine books on suggestions from the group, set dates for meetings and have volunteers who would like to host. Sometimes the hosting is shared.

Looking forward to another fun year!

CRAFT GROUP



Cathy Bennett
705-785-9921

We are a group of 10 who meet 7 or 8 times from September to May in the afternoon of the 4th Monday of the month (barring unforeseen circumstances like foul weather). Our get-togethers provide the opportunity to socialize while working on some creative endeavour. The variety of projects is wide: embroidery, knitting, crochet, card-making, beading, whatever “portable project” a person is working on. Even sewing on buttons qualifies! We always meet in someone’s home, the hostess providing beverages and treats.

GAMES GROUP

Connie Bennett
705-785-3508
conniembennett44@gmail.com



The group of 7 (not the artists) and two back up members met nine times this past year on the 2nd Tuesday. Get-togethers in January and February are not scheduled as weather often prevents travel.

In June the hosts for each month are selected. The host provides a light lunch at noon and selects a game to play. This year some members decided to co-host and this worked well.

Our final get together for the season was held at Cathy’s on a beautiful sunny day, so we gathered on her deck to enjoy a delicious potluck lunch. We set the schedule for next

year and then had so much fun and laughs recalling past gaming experiences that we didn’t have time to play a game. Some past experiences were: neighbours wanting to join in, reports by others citing noise restrictions, games being too difficult due to confusion over left and right directions and Clue (not for the clueless)!! Pictionary and Mexican Train are always a favourite. But House Rules apply!

Since this year is the 70th anniversary of RWTO the group celebrated by attempting to play Ontario Trivial Pursuit. This proved to be challenging so we decided to play in teams. The first gathering will be on September 9th hosted by Marny Pollard. Dates, hosts and contact information for members will be distributed.

WALKING GROUP

Coordinator needed

The Walking Group is coming to grips with life’s new realities – lack of participation, interference from weather, age, bugs, travel, etc.

If this group continues, it will need a new coordinator and some new ideas about what will work. Several women always sign up in the fall with good intentions but sporadic turnouts of 2 to 10 are hard to coordinate and to plan ahead for.

THEME DINNER

Carol Neave 705-575-8383 gcneave@live.ca
Nancy Konzuk 705-941-1764
nkonzuk@gmail.com



FIFA dinner: Glenis had the flags and quiz ready

Our Theme Dinner Group is going to try and second guess the weather and only meet three times this coming year when the weather is clear!

The three suggested themes this year are:

100 Miles Harvest on Wednesday, September 30 ,

Valentine's Day foods of love (aphrodisiacs?) on Wednesday February 3 and

German cuisine on Wednesday May 5.

A decision has been made to limit the group to 20 since hosting is then possible inside a member's home without the added cost and hassle of renting a hall. These dinners are participatory potlucks, and you can make an appetizer, salad, dessert, or main. We always have fun, eat well AND we can bring a friend or partner.

Responsibilities of the Co-Hosts (Partnering is more fun and less work).

1. Set the time and email group members (call if member does not have a computer) 2 weeks ahead of the date to remind folks what the Theme is, ask them to RSVP and let you know what category of dish they will be bringing.
2. Three or four days before the event, send out another email notifying everybody how many will be attending, and what specific dishes will be coming.

Hosts may choose to fill in missing categories or simply supply tea, coffee, punch or whatever drinks might be suitable for the theme. Participants are welcome to BYOB.

3. On the day of the dinner, set up tables, chairs and decorate and prepare entertainment as you wish.

We would like to have you join us!

LET'S DO LUNCH

Carol Neave 705-575-8383

gneave@live.ca

Because we are a dynamic group, and appreciate change and new ideas, we are going to take a member's suggestion and offer **Lunch Out** together once a month as a new interest

group. There are now lots of interesting restaurants in SSM and down the line and we will try to eat at a different one every month. Let's try for the first Thursday of every month. **October 1** would be our first time to Do Lunch. Place to be decided when we know how many might be interested. This will be for members who enjoy trying different restaurants with good company but with no responsibilities involved other than paying for their own meal.

In Memorium



Shirley Kent



Shirley joined Central Algoma RWTO in 1994 and soon volunteered her expertise as Treasurer and then President by 2001-03. She was the welcoming face to many newcomers and full of stories about her 40 years in education. She was a principal at Landslide School, a grade 8 teacher and finally a teacher consultant with the Algoma board. She was recognized as an outstanding teacher at our local branch as Cora Bailey winner in 2007. Through her career, she championed the growth and support of women in education.

Sadly, she passed away on October 30, 2025 at the age of 89.

Myra MacDonald



Myra began teaching in 1953 at the King Edward School in the Sault. Her career took her to Dacey, Clergue and eventually Laird where she finished her 35-year teaching career. Central Algoma RWTO benefitted from her kindness and compassion and her artistic skill in painting porcelain plates which graced our Silent Auction tables. She passed away in May 2026

Late Breaking news

In order for Provincial to conserve costs, the Presidents from now on will only make branch visits in the area they live in. Hence our Joint meeting with the Sault will not feature the President. When the next president, Patricia Lambert from the Sault branch, takes office then she will visit the northern branches.

New Members

Check out the new members who joined us this year. Some shared their past experience. Did any of these women share educational experiences with you?

A little bit of trivia:

- Taught in Port Perry. Eileen Wootton

Educational assistant at Arthur Henderson and CASS working with special needs kids - Arden Palmer

Educational Assistant at Arthur Henderson for 34 years - Cheryl Harvey



Mary Ann Bomhof.

Arden Palmer



Cheryl Harvey.

Jackie Barrett



Marg Hawkins.

Cathy Membury



Eileen Wootton.

Kris Oliverio

**Suzanne Evoy
(no picture yet)**

Branch Meetings

Monday, September 14, 2026

Summer should get a speeding ticket!

Organized by Cathy Bennett

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: Puddingstone Lodge, Lighthouse,
Bruce Mines

Cost: \$30

Caterer: Copper Bean

Bring a new member!

***Sign up for interest groups!**

Share your summer experiences!

**Silent Auction: Bring an edible (self-made,
grown or bought)**

Thursday, October 22, 2026

The "Sucker" for Education Joint Meeting with Sault Branch

Organized by Suzanne Humphries

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: Ontario Finnish Resthome Association,
725 North Street, Sault Ste. Marie, ON (first
building)

Guest speaker: Fraser Neave will explain his
work with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission
in controlling the sea lamprey population

Cost: \$25

Caterer: Finnish Ladies Auxiliary
Turkey dinner



Monday, November 30, 2026

Christmas!

Organized by Cathy Bennett

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: Zion United Church, Thessalon
Silent Auction and Carol singing

Cost: \$30

Caterer: Zionettes

Bring an item for the Silent Auction

And your best singing voice.

Dress in your Christmas bling!

Wednesday, April 14, 2027

Stepping into Spring

Organized by Suzanne Humphries

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: Bruce Station Hall, Station Road, Bruce
Station

Cost: \$30

Activity: Come dressed to move. Anne
Cranston, a fitness instructor, will give us a
mini fitness workout before we sit down to a
sumptuous chicken dinner

Bring an item for Bruce Mines Food Bank.

Caterer: Jenn Simons

Wednesday, May 26, 2027
(to be confirmed)

Fraud Prevention

Organized by Jane Vienneau

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: North 82, SSM

Cost: \$30

Induction of new executive

**Annual Meeting: bring 2 copies of a summary of
your group's activities for the President's binder
and the archives.**

**Guest speaker: Fraud Prevention with SSM
police officer, Wayne Taylor.**