

## South Bruce Retired Women Teachers' Christmas Caring and Sharing 2023

Christine Roberts

The South Bruce ladies were in their festive best for the annual Christmas luncheon held November 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Kincardine United Church.

Branch President Frances Nixon welcomed the crowd and shared reminiscences of students and teaching at Christmas from her early career in Ireland.



Area 1 Director and South Bruce member Pat Emmerton introduced special guest RWTO/OERO Provincial President Sandra Salerno. A former primary division teacher from the Haldimand area and active member of her local RWTO branch, she brought greetings from the provincial board.

Salerno's message highlighted the positive impact of RWTO/OERO in the lives of retired women teachers and the many ways branches support struggling communities, particularly children and women, throughout the province.

She was enthusiastic about membership changes which now include retired women education professionals such as education assistants, early childhood educators and child and youth workers. She also encouraged South Bruce members to participate in their branch, especially at the

executive level.

South Bruce Past President Lynda Cerson was recognized for her outstanding service to the branch with the Cora Bailey Award. Branch treasurer Carole Machan provided an overview of Cerson's teaching career and highlighted her work as branch president during the pandemic.



New member Heather Keelan was welcomed with an RWTO pin and rose.

Among the many local charities supported annually by the branch, it is a Christmas tradition to donate to the United Way of Bruce Grey Hope for Our Kids Fund which supports children in Bruce and Grey Counties affected by poverty.



Francesca Dobbyn, Executive Director United Way of Bruce Grey, accepted a donation of over \$400 and also thanked the



group for their continued support of the fall backpack program which provides school supplies to low-income families.

Following a delicious meal of roast turkey with all the trimmings provided by Karen Seale and Nancy Craig, it was time for fun.

At the outset of the meeting each table was assigned a Christmas song for which they were to rewrite the lyrics. Everyone enjoyed the creativity and enthusiasm as each team presented their song.

Barb Ross provided a game and to wrap up a thoroughly enjoyable get-together, Jean MacDonald instructed and led a lively set of line dancing.

The South Bruce RWTO/OERO Branch will meet next in the spring.



