



RETIREMENT MATTERS



President’s Message

Brilliant sunshine is streaming across my desk as I write this report. It warms my heart and gives hope and anticipation of a warmer spring — often so disappointing in Ontario but leading to a summer of lazy days and relaxation.

Our February luncheon was fun because so many of our participants left with prizes. Thanks so much to Pat DeMille and her partners in Bingo who presented such an enjoyable gathering.

Our March luncheon with Judy Lyons, renowned quilt appraiser and happy deep end of the pool water runner, was extremely well attended and captivating. Judy brought lots of history and told of her pleasure in talking about the quilts she has made and acquired. It was fascinating.

Due to repairs of the parking lot at Tyandaga Golf Course we had to relocate to the Laurie Branch auditorium in the Mainway Arena. This was a touching moment as his wife is one of our members and he was Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Burlington. Fortunately, RWTO/OERO BurlOak will return to the Tyandaga Golf Club for our AGM in May. I look forward to seeing you there!

You may have read the Connections Newsletter from the Provincial arm of RWTO/OERO containing the very important article about Senior Living Options: Long Term Care “Homes”, (I always refer to them as facilities because the last thing they resemble is one’s own home, more like prisons, some of them). Many of you will know of my role as Political Advocacy Chair for District 15 Halton RTO-ERO. In this role, I have been networking with a variety of local organizations to learn about and discuss the conditions of Long Term Care (LTC). Margaret Gear, our Area Director, invited me to participate in the Social Justice Committee for RWTO/OERO. It has been very interesting to listen to the learning and caring practices discussed to protect women who are the largest group of people living in these facilities. We must advocate for ourselves and each other to ensure we receive dignified and adequate care as we age. Staff in these facilities are predominantly female as well, and their working conditions represent the living conditions of the residents. Consequently, we have an investment in protecting and advocating for the workers in the facilities, until our influence helps to change them to become caring centred places.

continued next page

Table of Contents

1-2 - President’s Report	9 - Papercraft, Euchre
3 - Membership, Archives	10 - Tea Rooms, Lunch Bunch
4- Insurance, Program	11-Travel, Food4Kids
5 - Treasurer’s Report	12 -Donations
6 - Goodwill, Visiting, Telephone	13 - 14 February Event
7-Communication, Nomination	15-16-17 March Luncheon
/Proposed slate of officers	18 - Ontario volunteer Awards
8 - Book Clubs, Book Review	19 - Purse Project
	20 - Obituaries

Seven resolutions for the 2024 Annual General Meeting are listed in Connections and include the addition of Retired Women Speech and Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Educational Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, Educational Office Support Staff. We discussed this at the December luncheon. Additionally, there is a motion to change the name of the organization to Retired Women Educators of Ontario-RWEO/OERO to foster equity amongst members. The final resolution is to exhaust our RWTO/OERO branded supplies and then replace them with the new logo.

As you know, Diane Sinden will take over the role of Area Director for Area 12 as of September 2024 for a 3 year term. Margaret Geare has accepted the nomination by Mississauga branch to become Provincial Program Coordinator. We wish her well in this venture. The AGM runs June 4th and 5th on Zoom and includes workshops on Tuesday afternoon which will be available to all members on the website following the convention. Please consider participating from the comfort of your own home.

There is no nominee for the positions of 2nd Vice President and Insurance Convenor. This is a concern because without leadership our organization is at risk. Taking on the role of Vice President offers a candidate an opportunity to ease into the role with the guidance of the Past President and the current President, as well as the invaluable support of the Executive. This is the ultimate measure for succession planning. Mary McCully, Past President and Nominations Chair has prepared a suggested slate of officers for your Executive, along with other vacant positions. It is vital that you all consider throwing your hat into the ring as we need volunteers to fill these positions for the next year.

Candidates may contact me or present themselves at the AGM. Please consider these roles and encourage others to come forward! Believe me when I say, we want each of our volunteers to succeed and we support each other for the benefit of our members. Your Executive works to plan activities, events, and luncheons to meet your interests and requests, to keep this organization functioning. We cannot do everything asked of us but hope new ideas and energetic volunteers will keep coming out and supporting us to achieve that goal.

The list of Provincial members we have lost this past year covers almost 3 complete pages. Without new members our organization will wither. We provide so much positive energy to one another and to our communities we must find ways to encourage and protect our relationships.

Challenge! Brochures were placed at each place setting at the March luncheon and given to most Executive members at the meeting. The aim is to encourage everyone to find a potential new member and give her a brochure or find a bulletin board to post the brochure on to widen our sphere of influence to welcome new members to the BurlOak branch. Is seeking 5 to 10 new members for 2024 an unrealistic goal? Can we find ways to accomplish this goal? Together we can do it! Chat up your contacts at curling, seniors clubs and centres. If you know active teachers hand them a brochure and ask them to give it to a colleague who might be retiring this year. Remember to include not just teachers but any female educational worker.

Please consider attending the RWTO-OERO 2024 Convention. It is being held on Zoom this year to cut costs but will again be in person in 2025. BurlOak has 3 delegates.

Claudia Stewart

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership

RWTO/OERO Membership Matters - Moira Plexman

Membership Fees

I have been a RWTO member since 2008 and in that time our fees have remained the same. This January, our pensions were increased by 8% to reflect inflationary trends nationally. Numerous discussions about food pricing increases have dominated the news in recent months. This year, RWTO Provincial is raising its fees by \$10 to cover cost increases of the 3 times a year printing and mailing of the newsletter "Connections"; and to pay the one salaried employee of the organization and her office expenses, as well as convention expenses. Currently, we send \$40 of the \$50 we collect to provincial but this amount will increase to \$50 for 2024-2025. Consequently, we need to increase our fees to reflect that. Please remember our share of the membership money goes to speaker fees, luncheon subsidies, room rental, and the associated taxes on food and rentals.

Again this year your executive has agreed to continue membership incentives. Renew this spring to take full advantage of what is offered.

"Early Bird Special"

Pay your membership fee of \$60 by the May AGM to be entered into a draw to win a "free September lunch". Even if you do not win this draw you will still be entered into the July 31 draw to win your membership.

"Win Your Membership"

All membership payments received by July 31 will be entered into a draw to win your membership.

New Member Recruitment - Help grow our RWTO!

Current members are our best ambassadors when it comes to inviting new members to join our branch. Please approach retired teachers that you know and extend an invitation to join our ranks. Remember, we are now able to invite Early Childhood Educators, Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Counsellors, in addition to teachers from any level of teaching to join us.

Moira Plexman, Membership

Archives Report

It is my pleasure working as the archivist for the past six years or so. In continuing to do so for our BurlOak Branch, I would appreciate any help, no matter how small.

You will see me taking pictures at the luncheons but not at many of the interest groups. Consequently, I do not have access to any photos from the various groups. I would appreciate receiving any materials the interest groups would like to share.

I look forward to gathering and sharing the information in our archives.

Peggy Blair

Insurance Report

Did you know?

Our insurance supplements your provincial health plan and is different from your extended health care insurance. It provides you with financial assistance for the unexpected costs associated with getting well, so that you can return to your active lifestyle as soon as possible.

For instance, our Convalescent Benefit pays \$350.00 a month for up to 6 months when confined indoors following hospitalization for 3 days or more. It also pays \$72.50 per week for up to 4 weeks when confined indoors for convalescence following outpatient surgery or hospitalization of less than 3 days.

RWTO/OERO is the official sponsor of these, which have been exclusively designed for and available only to members and their spouses. The plan offers solid protection at very reasonable rates. The hospital and Home care Plan is just one of those supports available, and at a very affordable price. For \$14.49 a month for a member and 15.57 a month for a spouse, we encourage you to take a closer look at this plan and how it can be part of your retirement planning.

For more information, please contact:

Cecile Leach

cecile.leach@sympatico.ca



RWTO/OERO Insurance Plans

Hospital & Home Care Plan
Personal Accidental Death & Dismemberment Plan

Benefits of Membership
in The Retired Women Teachers of Ontario Organisation
des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario

 **Manulife** 

Program Committee-Mary McCully

Mary McCully (chair), Norma Brown, Pat DeMille, Maureen Downey, Helen Elmer, Bonnie Folkard, and Nancy Parkhill. Each member of the committee convenes a luncheon meeting. They look after the event from start to finish arranging greeters, thank you notes, payments, and all the little details that make your experience as fine as possible.

As a committee, we try to put together a program that our members will find interesting, informative, entertaining, and/or fun. In co-operation with the Executive, we plan meeting dates, locations, menus, and some recurring activities. These include the Book Table, Share the Wealth, the Purse Project, the Penny Auction, and the gathering of hats, mittens and socks, etc.

Planning the program is a big and ongoing process. We want to know about your preferences, likes, and wishes. We are always interested in the recommendations our membership may have to offer. If you have an idea that you would like to share with the committee, please feel free to speak to one of our members.

The Program Committee is always delighted to have new members. Please contact Mary McCully or Claudia Stewart if you are interested in joining us. It's fun and we're nice!

Mary McCully - mmccully888@gmail.com or Claudia Stewart - stewartcj@me.com

Treasurer's Report

The Branch Treasurer is responsible for collecting Annual Membership fees and forwarding payment and updated membership information to RWTO/OERO Provincial. Our fiscal year end is March 31. All outstanding business must be completed by that date. An audited year-end report is also sent to RWTO/OERO Provincial by April 30th and is then shared with the BurlOak Branch members at the May Annual General Meeting. At that time, our Branch also presents a proposed budget for the following year which members are asked to review and approve. We encourage all members to attend the AGM meeting in order to provide input into the running of your Branch.

RWTO/OERO Provincial has increased the Membership fees for 2024-2025 to \$50.00, thus, our Branch fee will be increasing \$60.00. As everyone is aware, costs continue to rise for everything we do for you.

The Treasurer is also responsible for collecting Luncheon payments. The Branch focus for 2023-2024 has been donations. At the Christmas Luncheon we encouraged our membership to donate personally to various Food Banks in both Burlington and Oakville. In February, when times were leaner for these organizations, our Branch followed up with a \$200 donation to each of Burlington Food Bank, Compassion Society, Kerr Street Mission, Food for Life, Foodshare Food Bank, and Food4Kids Halton.

We have also donated \$422 to the Angel Project as a result of our Share The Wealth draws at our Luncheons.

RWTO BurlOak Branch now offers E-transfers for membership, luncheon, and activity payments. The email for this process is rwto BurlOak20@gmail.com. Please delete any other email addresses that you might have used in the past.

We will continue to accept cheques for payments as well but we ask that you email the Treasurer to let us know that you are sending a payment by "snail mail" as delivery of mail has not always been reliable.

Carolynn Blake - carolynnablake@gmail.com

Rising Costs & Membership Fees

At the April 22, 2024 Executive meeting, rising costs were discussed. Food costs have risen, ergo our luncheon costs have risen. All BurlOak luncheons have all been subsidized this year. Since Provincial RWTO has raised the membership fee to \$50.00, it was decided that we would **NOT** raise our social fee, although it has remained at \$10.00 for more than 15 years. All other branches have raised their fees several times over that time.

Membership Fee Breakdown is :

\$ 50 to Province + \$10 social fee for BurlOak Branch = \$60.00 for membership.

Since it seems as though PENTA is no longer a viable affair, those funds will not be required for future PENTA planning. Therefore the Executive made a motion that \$5.00 per member would be taken from the Penta GIC fund to cover extra expenses incurred by the Branch for the fiscal year 2024-2025.

The motion reads:

Moved by Mary McCully and seconded by Diane Sinden that \$5.00 per BurlOak member be taken from the Penta GIC Fund to cover extra expenses incurred by the Branch in the current fiscal year 2024-2025. This motion to be reviewed annually beginning in April 2025.

Goodwill

This year we sent over 300 cards. Every member received a beautiful, creative, handmade card for Christmas courtesy of Kay Smoke. A big thank you to Kay from everyone.

Congratulations to Gail Cargo who celebrated her 99th birthday on January 26th.

Thank you to everyone who kept me informed of significant events in our members lives. Please remember to contact me during the summer months as well if there is a need to send a card, make a phone call or a visit. It could be for a special Birthday, Anniversary, Get Well, Thinking of you or Sympathy card. We wouldn't want any of our members to be overlooked.

Virginia McKee

905-335-8723

ginim@cogeco.ca

Visiting

Our mandate as an RWTO group states we are a Caring & Sharing Organization. It is never more obvious how important this is than when you see a smile on the faces of those we visit. Please help us to keep in touch with any member whom you think would benefit from a visit or phone call. If we do not know about an illness or any need for help or a visit we are unable to help. **PLEASE** make sure to contact Pam or Virginia if you see or hear of a need from any of our members. This is a very enriching & rewarding time for everyone. We must keep a link with our members.

Pam MacDonald 905-689-3493

Virginia McKee 905-335-8723



Telephone

Telephone calls are made to those members without e-mail access to remind them of luncheons and upcoming events and sometimes just to have a pleasant chat.

Virginia McKee - 905-335-8723

ginim@cogeco.ca



Communications- Diane Sinden

Cecile Leach, Bev Hilton, Diane Sinden (Communications Convenor), and Virginia McKee help with the communications that go to our members. Newsletters go out in September, January and May.

Bev receives articles and edits them and sends the edited copy to Cecile. Cecile prepares the Newsletter: layout, design, etc. She then prints the Newsletter for those without email.

Diane emails the Newsletter and other announcements from the Executive Members. Virginia mails the Newsletter and phones those without email with the information that has been sent by Diane.

Nomination Report- Mary McCully

The current members of the Executive were polled to determine who would be willing to return for another year of service. At this time, the following members are willing to serve on the Executive and Standing Committees:

The proposed slate of Officers is:

Executive

President:	Claudia Stewart
Past President:	Mary McCully
First Vice President:	Vacant
2nd Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Lynn Haniuk
Treasurer:	Carolynn Blake
Insurance:	Vacant

Standing Committees:

Membership	Moira Plexman
Program	Mary McCully
Archivist	Peggy Blair
Communication	Diane Sinden
Goodwill	Virginia McKee
Visitation	Pam MacDonald

Member at large **Vacant** **...duties include:**

- Be prepared to offer any assistance to the executive as needed.
- Be a member of the Program Committee.

Please don't wait for a phone call – volunteer to serve on your executive. It is possible that several of the positions can be shared by two people! It's fun and interesting, and besides – we're nice!

Please call or email:

Claudia Stewart at stewartcj@me.com or (905) 320-6639

Mary McCully at mmcully888@gmail.com or (905) 632-7589

Activity Group Reports

BOOK CLUBS

Our two book clubs meet monthly in each other's homes. The Wednesday group meets on the second week of the month. The Tuesday group has room for more members and meets on the last week of the month. Both meet at 1:00. We also have social gatherings, such as a visit to a winery, pool party, or lunch meeting in a member's home or at a restaurant.



Both clubs read a variety of books chosen by the members. Here are the books we read this year:

The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pipa Williams
 The Jane Austen Society by Natalie Jenner
 The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris
 The German Wife by Kelly Rimmer
 Black Cake by Charmaine Wilkerson
 What the Wind Knows by Amy Harmon
 Foster by Clare Keegan
 The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese
 From the Ashes by Jesse Thistle
 All the Colour in the World by CS Richardson

Bluebird by Genevieve Graham
 Eternal by Lisa Scottoline
 Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus
 The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict
 Homecoming by Kate Morton
 Tom Lake by Ann Patchett
 This is How it Always Is by Laurie Frankel
 100 Years of Lenni and Margot, by Marianne Croni
 Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

If you would like to join contact:

Heather White at 905-639-2922 or dheatherwhite@gmail.com.



Book Review: Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

“Lessons in Chemistry” is not the most inviting title for a novel though it did cover many aspects of chemistry - in the air we breathe, the food we eat and even chemical reactions within our bodies.

Women's issues also not inviting, but from their status in the world, legally and personally, to health care, to rape and many others were also covered in this novel.

All of this was wrapped in a fast moving story of a woman who was very intelligent but not good at getting along with people. The difficulties she faced in life and how she dealt with them, the people she met along the way, an intense love story, and even humour dotted throughout made this book a really good read.

When I asked for it at the library, I was told there were 150 on a waiting list, so it seems many others thought so too.

Submitted by Marilyn Ricker



Paper Crafting

The paper crafting group started out quite large this year, but as the year progressed people got busy and dropped out. We had a solid group of 4-6 members who attended regularly. We met at the Haber Community Centre, usually the second Thursday of the month. Kay and Bonnie shared their ideas and card making skills. We made a variety of cards that could be used for Thinking of You, Sympathy, Birthday, Friendship or Just Because.

We didn't restrict our conversations to cards and materials, but branched out to travels, medical situations, and funny stories. It is a fun time with good friends, good conversations, and sharing of experiences. We hope to continue next year.

Bonnie Folkard



Euchre Group

The Euchre Group has enjoyed a very successful year. We have been meeting twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month. We play at Port Nelson Church. There is always a lot of laughter and camaraderie. We enjoy sharing stories and learning about each others' lives.

We are a very friendly group and would welcome new people to join us.

For more information, contact **Pam MacDonald** at **905 689 3493**.



Tea Room Adventures

Any member of BurOak branch may attend our Tea Room adventures. These happen at random intervals throughout the year, though not so frequently in the winter because of possibly poor driving conditions. The location, time, and cost for these adventures is advertised by email to the entire membership. We have had as many as 18 and as few as 4 for tea and each time was an enjoyable experience. It's great fun to compare the various tea menus and decide which scones we like best. We always have a wonderful conversation.

We have been to The Escarpment Tea Room, Maddie Hatter's, The Golden Tea Pot, Tea on the Grand, The White House, The watering Can, to name a few. We will be returning to some of our favourites in the coming months, so watch for an email invitation. If you know a new "tea room" please let us know.

Everyone is welcome and transportation can be arranged.

Mary McCully



Lunch Bunch

Several members have enjoyed trying various restaurants in the Burlington Oakville area for lunch about once a month. Some of the restaurants we have dined at included Cynthia's, Lowville Bistro, and the Olive Press. Good food and friendly conversation were had by all who attended, not to mention meeting new faces and friends! There is no commitment other than emailing Maureen Downey to let her know of your intention to attend so she can make reservations. We have received several ideas for restaurants, and the upcoming year promises to be a delicious one! Look for Lunch Bunch emails next year for places and times. Hope to see you there!

PS. The final Lunch Bunch for this year will be at The Boathouse in Brontë harbour on Friday, June 7 at 1 pm.

Maureen Downey - mgdowney@live.com

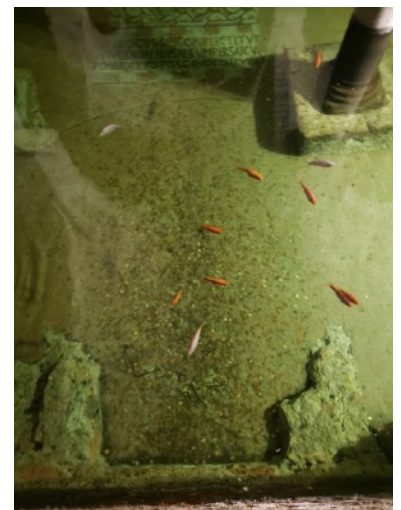
Travel Club

Hello fellow travellers. It seems that so many are once again setting out for travel adventures. And so it is time to come together to share our last travel destinations and chat about future plans. I always learn so much from other travellers. Our group is so willing to share good travel tips, cautions and locations of unexpected delights. Arm chair travellers are welcome.

Mark your calendars for the next 3 meetings.
 1:00 Friday, May 17th. Place to be confirmed.
 1:00 Friday, September 20th.
 1:00 Friday, November 15th.
 I hope to see you in May.

I am including a few pictures to puzzle over.
 #1 where am I? A sun filled afternoon in one of my favourite cities.
 Friends snapped this on our fall River cruise up the Po River with Croisi,
 a European cruise company.
 #2 Where can you find gold fish swimming in the crypt of an ancient basilica?

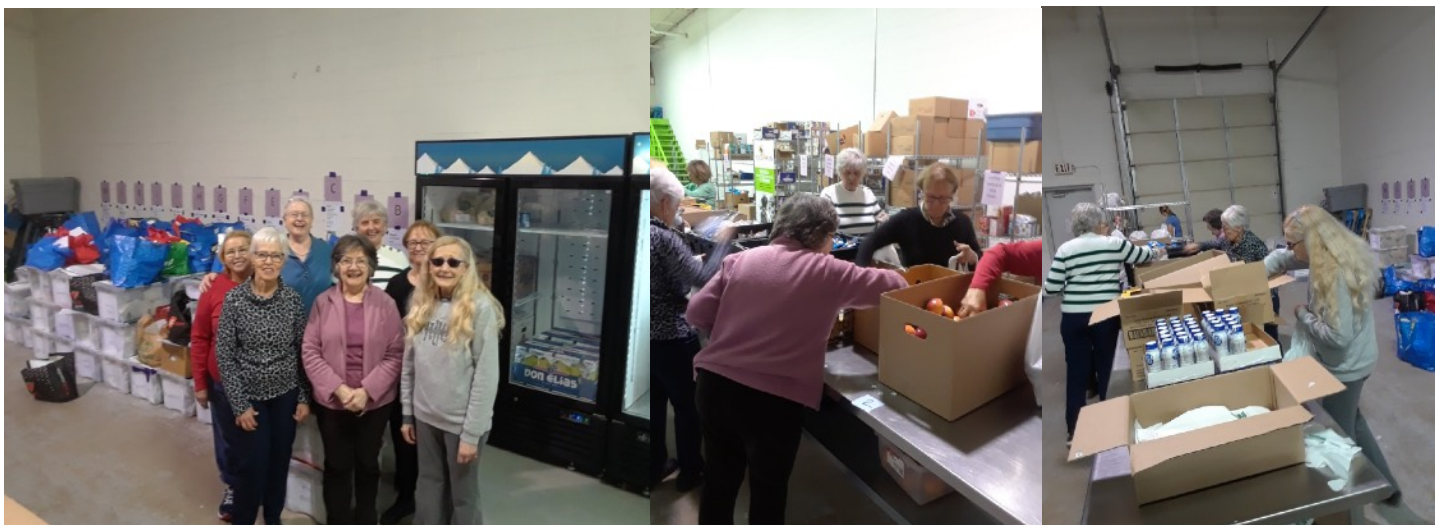
Bev Balch bbalch1@icloud.com



Food4Kids

Many thanks and lots of kudos to seven of our members for packing 513 bags of food on April, 3rd. That works out to each person packing about 73 bags. The bags will be delivered to specific Burlington and Oakville schools for needy students to take home on the weekend. We certainly got our steps in, walking around and around the counter that many times! As pictured in the group photo from left to right: Bev Hilton, Bev Thomas, Leslie Watkins, back row: Barb Longo, Diane Sinden, Marjorie Julian, and Betty Doyle. **Our next packing session is on June 12th.** If you are interested in joining us please contact Diane Sinden: diane.sinden@bell.net

Diane Sinden



Community Donations Made by RWTO- Burlington

Food for the Food Bank

Hats, Scarves and Mitts- HCSSB, HDSB

The Purse Project -41 filled purses,
-25 empty purses,
-7 full bags of personal products
and \$148.00 in cash donations.

Compassion Society \$200.00

Food for Life \$200.00

Burlington Food Bank \$200.00

Compassion Society of Halton \$200.00

Kerr Street Mission \$200.00

Foodshare Food Bank \$200.00

Food4KidsHalton \$200.00



Member Donations at Christmas:

Food4KidsHalton 800.00

Kerr Street Mission 340

Burlington Food Bank 735

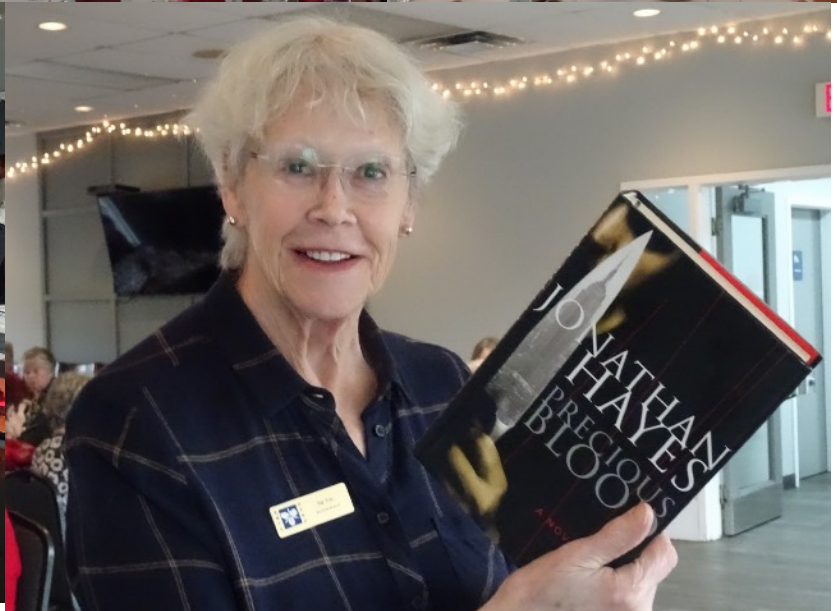
Compassion Society of Halton 250.00

***“ Kindness is sharing the best parts of our hearts
with those around us who are less fortunate
In a world where you can be anything be KIND”***

February 12 Fun, Games & Luncheon



What a great day it was! The ladies arrived wearing Red for Valentine's Day. Thank you to Pat DeMille for so much fun playing Bingo! There were many winners and many prizes. The conversation was lively and there was much laughter all around. The lunch was delicious followed by the energetic movements with the NIA exercise program. Everyone participated and were energized and uplifted !





March Luncheon - Bonnie Folkard



Monday, March 25 was a cold, but bright and sunny day for our luncheon. We had to change our location to the Laurie Branch Auditorium in the Mainway Community Centre. Not as cozy as Tyandaga, but a good room for the displays we had. There were 70 members and guests in attendance. Lunch, as usual, was very good and there were lots of smiling faces.

Our speaker, Judy Lyons, spoke about the history of quilts and quilting around the world. She brought her husband and a couple of friends who helped her bring in the

numerous suitcases of quilts and display boards and helped her set up. She only brought a small selection of her quilts. **Wow!**

Judy has been collecting quilts for 25 years and she had several interesting stories about how she acquired them. She talked about what to look for when appraising quilts and she stressed it takes a long time to determine the value of a quilt.

When speaking about individual quilts Judy had us looking for patterns and specific items. One of the major quilts was the Teen Tour Band Quilt made after the band returned from celebrations at Juno Beach. Each band member made a square for the quilt as a memory of their trip.

It was quite exciting to watch the faces in the audience who hung on Judy's every word. We have a lot of quilters in our group.



I would like to thank Betty Doyle, Linda Painchaud, Penny Hambly, and Mary Lyons who were greeters. Also, Beth Anger, Diane Sinden, Bev Thomas, Heather White, and Marilyn Park who helped hold up and carry around the quilts and material samples. As well, the group who brought in the quilt that the former Oakville members had made in one of their interest groups.

Nancy Parkhill was overjoyed with all the donations she received for her upcoming trip to Ghana in May !





Thank you to all our Volunteers who displayed and carried the quilts



And of course, our own Donna Kiss modelling fabrics of times gone by!





**TeenTour Band Quilts
to commemorate
War Veterans**

Left -photo - Juno Beach

**Bottom photo-
Liberation of the Netherlands**





Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards recognizes adult and youth volunteers for their outstanding contributions and years of **continuous service** at organizations such as non-profits, schools, community centres, hospitals, libraries and community associations.

The awards are presented to adult volunteers **who contribute consecutive years** of service to a single group within Ontario, and whose work is characterized by the following:

- * Volunteer time given on an ongoing and active basis to the same group for which no payment has been received
- * Membership alone is not a qualification for recognition
- * Services performed during the normal course of professional or business duties are not eligible for recognition.

Since 1986, more than 250,000 volunteers have been recognized through the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. This year, 642 youth and 6,008 adults will be recognized for their volunteer service at 1,450 organizations.

Volunteers nominated by an organization will receive a personalized certificate and lapel pin celebrating their years of service during one of the local award recognition ceremonies taking place in April 2024. The awards recognize adult volunteers for five to 65+ years of continuous service in five-year increments and youth volunteers for two or more years of continuous service.

The Ontario Volunteers Awards this year were presented by Natalie St.Pierre, MPP from Burlington.

The RWTO honourees were :

- Pam MacDonald (25 year pin)
- Virginia McKee
- Bev Balch (15 year pins)
- Moira Plexman

Unable to attend were

- Heather White (10 year pin)
- Beth Anger (5 year pin)

These will be presented at our AGM

Congratulations to our honourees!




From left to right, Natalie St.Pierre, Bev Balch, Pam MacDonald, Virginia McKee and Moira Plexman

Purse Project

Members of RWTO BurlOak may wish to participate in the worthwhile Purse Project again next year. Participants are asked to fill a gently used (or new) purse with the items on the list. Purses will be collected at the fall luncheons and donated to organizations that help women who are re-establishing themselves in the community. Members can check out sales and bargains on personal products throughout the summer. Perhaps Participants would like to “buddy up” with another member to share the cost i.e. two people fill one purse.

Maureen Downey -
mgdowney@live.com



The Purse Project Network
 Fill a Purse with LOVE ...
 and a Woman's Heart
 with HOPE

What is The Purse Project Network?

The Purse Project Network exists to bless & encourage women in need in our communities

Annually, in the fall, we collect new or gently used purses that are filled with essential personal care items which we donate to local charities to hand out to the women they serve. Every purse also includes a "Card of Blessing", which is a hand-made, hand-written card of encouragement.

[f /ThePurseProject-CardsOfBlessing](#)



"This is such a great idea! A purse is a symbol of dignity for a woman and gives her a sense of belonging in society. And the Card of Blessing in each purse is the "icing on the cake" as it makes this donation very personal for the women when they realize that others really do care about them."
 - from a local charity

There are many different opportunities for you to get involved with this project!
 Contact us to join our team & make a difference in the lives of women in need in your local community!

Purse Guidelines

10 ESSENTIALS!
 Our Organizations have asked that donated purses include **ONE of EACH** of these following items:

1. Toothbrush
2. Toothpaste
3. Body or Hand Lotion
4. Deodorant
5. Hand Sanitizer
6. Shampoo (OR 2-in-1 shampoo/conditioner)
7. Body Wash (OR bar soap with plastic holder)
8. Socks
9. Hat OR Scarf
10. Mitts OR Gloves

The Purse Project Network

After you have the ESSENTIALS in your purse, you may add any of the following **optional** items:

- Coffee, Walmart or Dollar store Gift Card
- Face Mask
- Journal & Pen
- Purse-size Tissues
- Facial Cleanser
- Hair Conditioner
- Gum or Mints
- Purse-size Feminine Products
- Snacks or Protein Bars
- Makeup Case
- Mascara or Eyeshadow
- Dental Floss
- Lipstick or Lip Balm
- Body Spray
- Nail Polish
- Bath Scrubby
- Nail File, Emery Board
- Small Umbrella
- Nail Clippers
- Makeup Remover Pads
- Foot Scrubber
- Small, On-Tips Package
- Rain Poncho

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS:
ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW - NO USED PRODUCTS

- Ensure purse is **CLEAN** inside & out, and in **VERY** good condition
- **NO** evening bags, overnight bags, school-type backpacks
- Remove or cover all price stickers
- **NO** empty purses
- **NO** super-sized containers
- **NO** glass jars, vitamins, medications, essential oils
- **NO** mouthwash, razors, nailpolish remover, books

[f @ThePurseProjectNetwork](#)
 www.thepurseprojectnetwork.com
 thepurseprojectnetwork@gmail.com

See our FB page
 or Website for
 ALL the
 details!

In Memoriam

BurlOak Branch lost 4 dear friends this year. We will honour them at our In Memoriam Ceremony in May and they will also be honoured at the In Memoriam Ceremony held at the in June. Those we love don't go away,

*They walk beside us every day
Unseen, unheard, but always near
Still loved, still missed and held so dear.*



Marguerite Murphy

July 23, 1921 - December 26, 2023

Marguerite passed away peacefully at the age of 102 years. Predeceased by her husband Bernard. Mother to Bernie (Gretta), Marie (John) and Pat. Grandma to Alexandra, Cynthia, Chris and Michelle. Great Grandma to Darren, Kyle, Emma, Ivy and Kal. Aunt to many nieces and nephews. Marguerite's career as a teacher and educational consultant spanned many decades. After retirement she was very active with the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario who, among other activities, supported women in need. Marguerite was installed as Oakville Branch's First President in 1987. She served 3 terms as president. She also served as Area director for Area 5 from 1994-1998.

A life-long learner who earned a Masters of Education after many years of part-time study, Marguerite also enjoyed travel, opera and playing bridge. She will be missed by many good friends.



Gail Cherrington

December 27, 2023

Gail Cherrington passed away on December 27, 2023 at the age of 82. Born in Oakville, she was predeceased by: her parents, Leonard Cherrington and Dora Cherrington. She is survived by : her brother Douglas Keith Cherrington (Irene); her niece Kimberley Ann Cherrington (Chris); and her nephew Michael James Cherrington (Cindy). Gail was a member of Oakville Branch RWTO. She was the photographer for the branch for many years. Gail loved to play Bridge and belonged in one of our Bridge Groups.

Gail was also very much involved in her community and church (Knox Presbyterian Church 16). She will be deeply missed by the many friends and acquaintances she made over her many years of teaching and also her volunteer work at the I.O.D.E. They will remember Gail for her hard work and incredible energy.





Muriel Nightingale
January 15, 1932-December 7, 2023



Muriel passed away on December 15, 2023. She was pre-deceased by her loving husband Abel. Muriel is lovingly remembered by her daughter Ellen Nightingale Berry (Jim), her grandchildren, Andrew (Julia), and Amanda (Matt). She will also be missed by her great-grandchildren, Emily, Josephine, and Brady. Her brother, Graham, has been a dedicated friend and support and he will truly miss their many conversations.

Muriel led a very busy and active life. During her long teaching career, she touched the lives of many students and colleagues. Her passion for music shone when she led numerous choirs and musical plays. Muriel was also an avid artist, exploring her many talents with paint and brush.

Her paintings hang on the walls of her many friends and family.

Muriel also was devoted to many social groups. She loved being a member of her sorority for over 60 years, involved in Probus, and RWTO Burlington/BurlOak Branch.

In Muriel's last few years she was a member of Lowville United Church. She enjoyed the fellowship and particularly singing in their choir. She was always appreciative of the friends who ensured she had rides to and from the church activities, and the RWTO luncheons. She will be sadly missed by many.



Joan Slingerland
July 15, 1941-March 28, 2024



Joan Audrey Slingerland passed away on March 28, 2024. She was predeceased by her parents Albert (Ted) and Evelyn Slingerland and her brother David. Joan was a classroom teacher and a special education teacher with HDSB until her retirement. She was a member of RTO, RWTO, the Oakville Place Mall Walkers and Oakville Osteoporosis Support Group.

As a member of RWTO Oakville Branch, Joan always enjoyed being a greeter at Branch luncheons. Joan enjoyed travelling with friends, collecting small articles on her travels especially relating to mice. She will be remembered as an exceptional teacher, a friendly and helpful person. Joan held a special place in the hearts of all who knew her and will be greatly missed.



A Message For My Mother

*How can I find the words
To let you know how much I care?
To thank-you, Mom, for all you've done,
For always being there.*

*You've been "friend" as well as Mother,
Walking with me all through life,
Through the joy and through the laughter,
Through the heartache and the strife.*

*You're the best I could have hoped for,
And with gratitude I see...
The sweet lifetime of devotion,
You invested here in me.*

*I am proud that you're my Mother...
I've been deeply blessed...it's true,
And I can't imagine anyone,
Could be more loved than you!*

Copyright 1993 Genie Graveline



*Happy
Mother's Day!*

