



Retired Women Teachers of Ontario / Organisation des Enseignantes Retraitées de l'Ontario

## President's Message

It is with gratitude that I assume the Presidency of this wonderful organization. I was fortunate as I had some trail blazers ahead of me. I worked with Nancy Bell and Nancy Papiez and was totally in awe of their commitment and tenacity as they soldiered through the COVID years. New frontiers with unprecedented challenges. It was a pleasure working with Kathy Gallagher and Judith Bennoch as we mastered new technological changes. Regular meetings took place with the introduction of Zoom and we had effective and productive Virtual Conferences. These are just a few of the many people who work hard to ensure our organization remains successful. Sandie Bender and Jane Cartier are our living Archivists, guiding us through RWTO/OERO Policies and the Constitution. We have an organization filled with traditions, while adapting to changes in the world around us.

According to Hazel McCallion "It is important to try new things, to challenge yourself as you age." She stated, "I've noticed that as people move into midlife, they often stop doing new things. That's why at age eighty-nine I zip lined a thousand metres above the grounds of Italy." Hazel was an individual who

I admired. She ensured that her life had a purpose; she was socially active and engaged with individuals well into her nineties. She retired as the Mayor of Mississauga at the age of ninety-three. Hazel also concluded "The wise person doesn't expect life to be worth living, he or she makes it that way." We are fortunate that as an organization we have many talented women with Hazel's attitude. They are in our Branches. Relationships are important, not solitude. To sustain our Branches, we need more people to get actively involved. To obtain the full benefits of being in an organization you have need to play a role no matter how minor.

At the Provincial level there is a way to get involved, join an Ad Hoc or a Standing Committee. Generally, the commitment is for one year (Sept.-May), and the committee meets on average once a month on Zoom. Ad Hoc committees have a specific mandate as their focus. They report their results in the spring to the



Jan Murdoch,  
Provincial President

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## Retired Women Teachers of Ontario Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario

### Provincial President:

**Jan Murdoch**  
905-691-8407  
rwtopresident2425@gmail.com

### First Vice-President:

**Linda Sargeant**  
905-575-3831  
rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com

### Insurance Convenor:

**LeAnne Taylor**  
905-877-7030  
rwtoeroinsurance@gmail.com

### Manulife Financial 1-800-268-3763

**Broker: Terry Kennedy**  
**The Dolphin Consulting Group**  
519-583-0098 • Fax: 519-583-2876  
tkennedy34@bell.net

### Provincial Office

### Executive Secretary-Treasurer:

**Linda Huffman**  
2736 Twelfth Conc,  
Tecumseh, ON, N8N 0H9  
Toll Free: 1-877-607-6696  
Phone: 519-979-7030  
Email: info@rwto.org  
**Website: www.RWTO.org**



## President’s Message – Continued

Board and to Membership. In the fall of 2024, the new Ad Hoc Committee examining a potential name change of our organization will start. Those interested in joining should contact their Area Director prior to the September 18, 2024 Board Meeting.

I leave you with one last thought. We now know about Neuroplasticity and the Brain. Here are two links to interviews with Dr. Michael Merzenich. Please take the time to watch them as they may help you to understand why getting actively involved in your Branch’s operations makes your brain smarter. Problem solving, continuous learning and changing what matters to the brain makes a huge difference as you continue in life’s journey.

Dr Michael Merzenich’s Interviews on “Make Your Brain Smarter” Copy and paste the links below into your browser.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6y7cFqLOEk&amp;t=246s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0sn6MjoFI8>

Nancy, Nancy, Kathy, Judith, Sandra, Judy, Sandie and Jane - thanks to the changes and new technologies we endured due to COVID our brains are extremely smarter!

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Murdoch, Provincial President

## Convention 2024 – “Growing Forward Together”

Our 68th Convention, held virtually, focused on “Growing Forward Together” as an organization.

A choir of 19 singers from 13 Branches opened the Convention with a beautiful rendition of “Why We Sing”. Many thanks to the talented singers, Program Director Judith Bennoch and her technical support staff, including Kathy Gallagher, for successfully bringing this choir together.

Sandra Salerno, in her keynote address, stressed the need for members to actively support their Branches to ensure the continued existence of RWTO/OERO.

The resolutions reflected our theme as we added Retired Women Speech and Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Social Workers, Psychologists and Office Support Staff to our RWTO/OERO family.

On Tuesday afternoon Linda Huffman gave a Branch Treasurers’ workshop. Terry Kennedy, LeAnne Taylor and Kathy McLean revealed during the insurance workshop that Manulife has agreed to another Open Window!

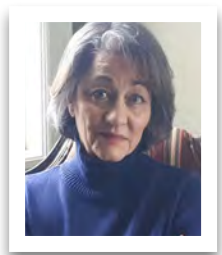
Members returned in the evening to enjoy an encore performance of the Liverpool 4. The Closing Ceremonies began with a moving “In Memoriam” for our members who passed in 2023 – 2024. Thanks to

Susan Rose and Suzanne Rondeau for the beautiful presentations.

Nancy Bell, Honorary President, installed the 2024-2025 Board of Directors. Newly installed President Jan Murdoch addressed the members and adjourned the 68th Convention.

We eagerly await the 69th Convention in Brantford, hosted by Area 4 – A Grand Getaway!

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandra Salerno, Past President



# Convention 2024 – “Growing Forward Together” -ctd.



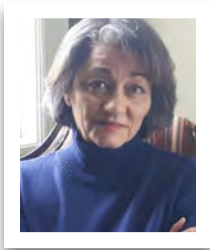
## Honorary Membership Award Recipients for 2024

Honorary Membership is the highest attainable award bestowed on a member for exemplary service to RWTO/OERO Provincial. The committee members are pleased to introduce the two recipients who received this prestigious award. These members demonstrated outstanding leadership skills, shared ideas and carried out many responsibilities while on the Provincial Board.

We are pleased to honour Sandra Salerno and Lynn Sulman for their dedication to our organization.

### Sandra Salerno

Sandra Salerno was nominated by the Honorary Membership Committee and highly supported by her RWTO/OERO Haldimand Branch. She was a very deserving candidate for this special recognition highlighting her many exceptional contributions at the provincial level and for sharing her time so generously.



Sandra’s journey to the Provincial Presidency began in 2021 when she was elected as Second Vice

President taking an active role as Goodwill Convener, Chair of the Handbook Revision Committee and Cost Savings Committee, as well as a member of the Finance and Privacy Form Committees. She worked diligently and her enthusiasm and willingness to support our wonderful organization were evident.

During 2022-2023, as First Vice-President, Sandra was Chair of the Resolutions Committee which dealt with an unprecedented number of resolutions, discussions and networking with Branches. She participated as a member of committees dealing with Privacy Forms, Membership Forms, Review, Finance and Branch Leadership and Organization. With every position, Sandra was open-minded, committed and reflected a genuine caring and sharing outlook.

As Provincial President and Ex Officio Officer to all committees, Sandra has given selflessly to RWTO/OERO. She chaired the Finance Committee and was actively involved with Marketing, Branch Leadership and Organization, and Resolutions. She prepared meeting agendas, chaired Board meetings

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## *Honorary Membership Award Recipients for 2024 - Continued*

and dealt with extensive follow up, emails, and phone contacts. Sandra has worked extensively with the Virtual Convention Committee to offer a virtual AGM, entertainment and workshops. Sandra visited thirty-three Branches in her travels throughout this beautiful province, enjoying many new friendships at luncheons, and supporting Branches needing her guidance. With others, she helped them find interesting speakers and consider different ideas for the makeup of their executives or event planning.

Sandra's professional approach, hard work and willingness to listen thoughtfully have been a great asset on the Provincial Board of Directors. Her leadership style was supportive to colleagues as well as to Branches, offering ideas and solutions with care, kind-heartedness, empathy and understanding. We have benefitted from her careful attention to complete tasks in a thoughtful, timely manner.

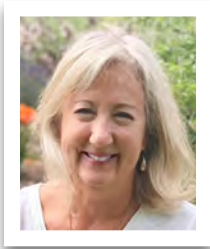
Congratulations, Sandra, as you receive the Honorary Membership Award for 2023-2024 in acknowledgement and appreciation for your dedication and exceptional contributions to RWTO/OERO.

### **Lynn Sulman**

Chatham-Kent Branch was pleased to nominate Lynn Sulman for the Honorary Membership Award.

Lynn has been a respected and knowledgeable member. She served as Branch President and then in 2020 became Provincial Director of Area 3, the largest area, having approximately one thousand members.

When the Covid-19 lockdown occurred, Lynn navigated Zoom technology and encouraged her Branches to embrace technology which became an important method of maintaining contact during the isolation years. Lynn's meetings were planned with precise attention to detail. As a true leader, Lynn was always positive and encouraging towards her area Branch Presidents and was available, whenever needed.



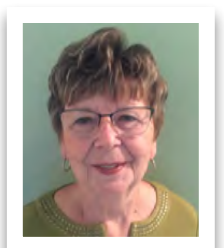
Lynn has also been very active and generous with her time and skills. Her involvement included a supportive presence on a number of Provincial Committees: Membership Extension, Convention 2022, Common Initiatives and Social Justice. Lynn's excitement for new learning experiences resulted in her also serving on the Financial Alignment Committee, aligning RWTO/OERO's Policies and Constitution Documents. She enjoyed challenges and new endeavours and was a steady participant in all of her Ad Hoc committees. Lynn helped organize and assist Area 3 Branches in their commitment to run the Silent Auction and supported the Core Organizing Committee for Convention 2022. She has also been involved with planning the 2024 Virtual Convention this year.

Lynn speaks and writes with a professional, thought provoking and insightful manner. For the past two years she has been contributing informative and well-researched articles for Issues and Concerns in RWTO/OERO *Connections* newsletters. She has contributed to the Common Initiatives by creating the explanation letters for the package to support Branches in reaching out to seniors and working teachers. This has generated awareness of RWTO/OERO. For the Social Justice Committee, Lynn composed a Position Paper to present to the Board of Directors.

Lynn is modest, supportive and compassionate and highly deserving of this honour. Congratulations Lynn, as you receive the Honorary Membership Award for 2023-2024 in acknowledgement and appreciation for your dedication and exceptional contributions to RWTO/OERO.

Congratulations, to our award recipients and a huge thank you to the Committee for their assistance.

Judy Drummond  
Honorary President



# *Award Winners 2024*

## *Feather In Your Hat Award*

The Feather in Your Hat Award recognizes creative, innovative, and successful activities, carried out by a Branch or group of Branches, that have clearly enriched the programs offered by RWTO/OERO.

Submissions for this award must be made to the Membership Convenor between January 1st and March 1st, 2024.

2024 Feather In Your Hat Award Winners listed alphabetically.

### *2024 Feather in Your Hat Winners Listed Alphabetically*

#### *Tier 2*

Lanark  
South Niagara

#### *Tier 1*

Haldimand  
Ottawa-Carleton  
Windsor-Essex

**Please check the Awards Page on the RWTO/OERO website for details on each project.**

## *Barbara Bain Membership Award*

The Barbara Bain Award is named in honour of our longtime, London-Middlesex member, Barbara Bain, who served on the Provincial Board of Directors for 11 years. The formula for calculating the award is straightforward... how many members join your Branch minus the number of existing members who do not renew during the April 1st to March 3rd period.

### *2023-2024 Barbara Bain Membership Winners*

#### *Tier 3*

1st place - \$400 - East Parry Sound  
2nd place - \$300 - Daisy Wilson Coldwater  
3rd place - \$200 - Wiarnton

#### *Tier 1*

1st place - \$400 - Haldimand  
2nd place - \$300 - Windsor-Essex  
3rd place - \$200 - Belleville  
3rd place - \$200 - Ottawa-Carleton

#### *Tier 2*

1st place - \$400 - Sault Ste. Marie  
2nd place - \$300 - Niagara Falls  
3rd place - \$200 - Upper Canada East  
3rd place - \$200 - Lanark

Respectfully submitted by  
the Membership Committee (2023-2024)  
Kathy McLean (Ottawa-Carleton, Convenor)  
Pat Emmerton (South Bruce)  
Margaret Geare (Mississauga)  
Brenda Johnston (Lanark)  
Nancy Strutt (Dundalk-Flesherton)  
Joyce Ratz (Central Algoma)



## Insurance Matters

Hickory, dickory, dock...don't you run out the clock! Now, I'm certain you're asking, "Has she lost her mind?", but no...I still have my faculties! Rather, the mouse that ran up the clock is here to announce a very special opportunity for RWTO/OERO members and their spouses. Once again, Manulife Financial is opening a window to enable members and their spouses to enrol in the Hospital & Home Care Plan and their acceptance is guaranteed! You cannot be declined the coverage, even if you were previously declined. During this window you can enrol with no medical questions asked, no medical exams required, regardless of the state of your health.

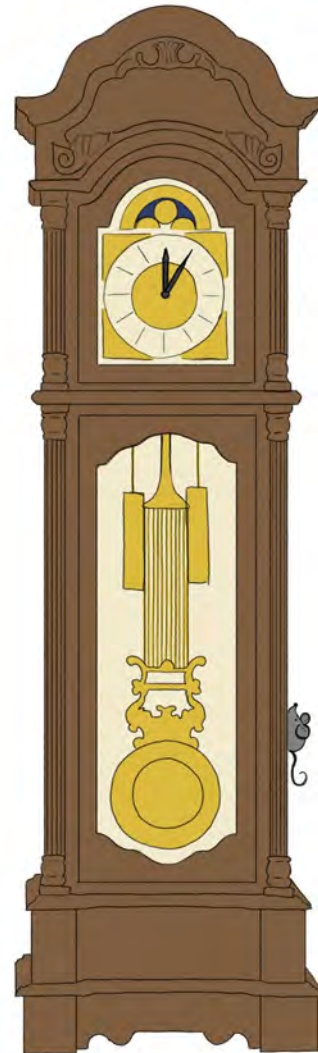
To qualify, you must be a member of RWTO/OERO in good standing and continue to live independently. There is no age maximum to enrol in the Hospital & Home Care Plan and you can continue to be covered under the plan for as long as you live independently. Please don't be confused by the age maximum for the Accidental Death & Dismemberment Plan, as it does have an age maximum, however the Hospital & Home Care Plan does not.

Premiums continue to be a very affordable \$14.49 a month for a member, and \$15.57 a month for a spouse. That's less than a cup of coffee a day!

The window opens **September 15th** and continues until **November 15, 2024**. Please ask your Branch Insurance Convener for a brochure and take a look at the many supplemental benefits this plan offers. We think you'll find it is a very good value. And please tell your former colleagues who are not members about this opportunity. Don't keep it a secret!

Finally, to update our members who did not attend the Convention this year, the Hospital & Home Care Plan continues to perform well and generated revenues to the RWTO/OERO totalling \$99,425.13. The Profit Sharing cheque presented at Convention was \$78,436.55 and the plan provides an ongoing Administrative Fee of \$20,988.58.

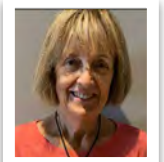
So remember, the window opens September 15th. Make sure you get a brochure so you know what fabulous benefits are available. Don't let the clock run out on you!



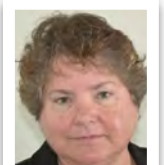
Insurance Convener  
LeAnne Taylor  
905-877-7030  
[rwtoeroinsurance@gmail.com](mailto:rwtoeroinsurance@gmail.com)



Assistant Insurance Convener  
Kathy McLean  
613-277-9771  
[badgerkat2016@gmail.com](mailto:badgerkat2016@gmail.com)



Manulife Financial 1-800-268-3763  
Broker: Terry Kennedy  
The Dolphin Consulting Group  
(519) 583-0098 Fax: (519) 583-2876  
[tkennedy34@bell.net](mailto:tkennedy34@bell.net)



# Resolutions for 2024 Annual General Meeting

## *Oops! We missed it!*

Last year, at our 67th Convention, Motion #6 passed. It was missed accidentally in the publishing of the resolutions. Our apologies. We are publishing this motion now.

Motion #6 AGM 2023

Moved by Judith Bennoch (Board of Directors) and seconded by Lynn Sulman (Board of Directors) that the RWTO/OERO regular membership fee be raised from \$40 to \$50

effective 2024.

Rationale: A deficit budget was just passed. Projections indicate that the trend will continue even with Virtual Conventions being planned. It was noted that with the increase in fees the Branch rebate will also increase. The Board of Directors will continue long range planning to maintain fiscal responsibility.

**Carried**

## *Resolution # 1*

Be it resolved that Constitution, Article III, Membership and Fees, 1. Regular Members; be amended with the addition of **Retired Women Educational Speech and Language Pathologists.**

**Carried.**

## *Resolution #2*

Be it resolved that Constitution, Article III, Membership and Fees, 1. Regular Members; be amended with the addition of **Retired Women Educational Audiologists.**

**Carried.**

## *Resolution #3*

Be it resolved that Constitution, Article III, Membership and Fees, 1. Regular Members; be amended with the addition of **Retired Women Educational Social Workers.**

**Carried.**

## *Resolution #4*

Be it resolved that Constitution, Article III, Membership and Fees, 1. Regular Members; be amended with the addition of **Retired Women Educational Psychologists.**

**Carried.**

## *Resolution #5*

Be it resolved that Constitution, Article III, Membership and Fees, 1. Regular Members; be amended with the addition of **Retired Women Educational Office Support Staff.**

**Carried.**

## *Resolution #6*

Be it resolved that the organization currently known as Retired Women Teachers of Ontario/ Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario change its name to Retired Women Educators of Ontario/ Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario

## **Motion #13 AGM 2024:**

that Resolution #6 be referred to the Board of Directors to study, obtain input, and bring a recommendation to AGM 2025.

**Carried.**

The passing of Motion #13 precluded a vote on Motion #12 and no vote on Resolution #6 was required.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Murdoch, Provincial President





## **RWTO/OERO welcomes Retired Women Educational Professionals:**

- ~ **Audiologists**
- ~ **Child & Youth Workers/Counsellors**
- ~ **Early Childhood Educators**
- ~ **Educational Assistants**
- ~ **Office Support Staff**
- ~ **Psychologists**
- ~ **Social Workers**
- ~ **Speech & Language Pathologists**
- ~ **Teachers**

**Please share with  
your friends!**



### ***Branch Resolutions for the 2025 Annual General Meeting***

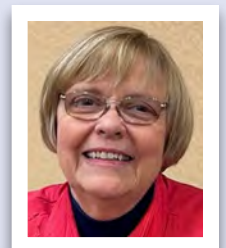
- Resolutions for the 2025 AGM and their rationale must be submitted to Linda Sargeant, Convener of the Resolutions Committee, by November 15, 2024.

- “Each resolution must contain only one key issue for decision. The intent of the resolution should be clear and concise.” (ARTICLE X: AGM, 2. Resolutions)

- Resolutions to amend the Constitution, Policies and Procedures Manual, or other issues are acceptable. You will find the newest editions of our documents on the website under the ABOUT and GOVERNANCE tabs.  
<https://rwto.org/>

- When your Branch is preparing to submit a resolution, questions and concerns should be directed to Linda Sargeant, First Vice-President and Jane Cartier, Parliamentarian. [rwtoparl@gmail.com](mailto:rwtoparl@gmail.com)

Linda Sargeant  
First Vice-President  
905-575-3831  
[rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com](mailto:rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com)



# Issues and Concerns

## Fraud and Scam Alert

Last year I received an email from what I thought was my service provider, so I clicked on it. It wasn't too long before I started getting texts, calls and emails from my friends and family wondering if I had really asked them to send a gift card to help me out of a jam. Needless to say, I no longer arbitrarily open emails that look like they come from my service provider.

According to a spokesperson for the Halton Regional Police, the Anti-Fraud Centre of the RCMP lists the top four scams last year (in terms of money lost) as Investment scam, Romance scam, Service scam, and Emergency scam.

As seniors, we are prime targets, whether by door, phone, text, or email. The important thing is to be aware, to avoid falling into the traps.

**Phishing** is when you get an unsolicited email that claims to be from a legitimate organization such as a financial institution, business or government agency. Scammers ask you to provide or verify either via email or by clicking on a web link, personal or financial information, like your credit card number, passwords and social insurance number.

**Smishing** is the same thing, except it occurs via text messages.

**Scammers** are always on the lookout to collect or reproduce your personal information to commit fraud. Thieves can make purchases using your accounts, obtain passports, receive government benefits, apply for loans and more.

When booking travel, the best option is to use your credit card instead of debit or e-transfer. If there is any kind of scam involved, your credit card offers the best protection.

To protect yourself from these and all the other scams out there, here are a few suggestions:

**Phone:** Don't answer or respond to any unknown caller.

**Email:** If you don't recognize the sender, be very cautious. Do not click on anything contained in the email.

**Texts:** Don't respond to suspicious texts or pop-up windows. Delete immediately!

My thanks to Dwain from the Halton Regional Police for providing me with "The Little Black Book of Scams" published by the Government of Canada, and several information pages from the Halton Police Fraud Unit. As I'm sure is the case with speakers from Police Fraud Units across the Province, he has offered to come and talk to our Branches about this very important topic.

Submitted by  
Diane Sinden  
Area 12 Director





## Board Reports

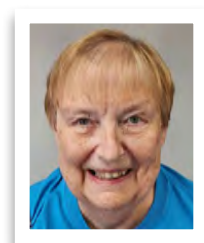
### *Provincial Program Coordinator*

As our organization embarks on expanding our membership to include other Educational Professionals, I'd like to welcome our returning Area Directors, Joanne Weeks, Area 4; Judy Anderson, Area 5; Lynda Sommers, Area 7; Joan Gamble, Area 8 and Brenda Johnston, Area 9 and the new Area Directors, Nancy Strutt, Area 1; Colleen Robertson, Area 2; Mary Maxwell, Area 3; Pat Steer, Area 6; Hénédine Weiman, Area 10; Carol Neave, Area 11; Diane Sinden, Area 12; and Linda Gaudet, Area 13. As well thanks to all the Branch members who have volunteered to take on the important role of President for 2024-2025. Thank you for your commitment and together, we are moving our organization into the future.

For me, the role of Provincial Program Coordinator is new this year and I look forward to

supporting and working with all of you. Our website, under Branch Activities, has great membership ideas and under Branch Resources, several program ideas that individuals new to the leadership role might find useful. I hope you will find the Timelines for Directors and Presidents a useful guideline for the year. Please refer to them often! Feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Margaret Geare  
Provincial Program Coordinator  
rwtoprogramcoordinator2024@gmail.com



### *Archivist Report*

Thank you to Susan Rose, Suzanne Rondeau and all the Area Directors for the beautiful 'In Memoriam' virtual service presented at the June Convention.

I am the RWTO/OERO archivist for 2024-2025, in charge of the 'In Memoriam' service in 2025. Branches, please send the name of your deceased member(s) to Linda Huffman at the Provincial office and the photos to me at hen.wei29@gmail.com. I will acknowledge receipt of your email. Susan Rose, previous archivist, forwarded to me

the photos she received since February 1st, 2024. I will try my best to include all the photos in the 'In Memoriam' service.

At the September Board meeting, I will collect, from the Area Directors, the Cora Bailey recipients' information sheets so I can file them into the archives.

Hénédine Weiman  
Provincial Archivist



## Board Reports

### ***Connections Newsletter***

Branches were asked to share information about the interest groups and activities offered to their members, other than the regular luncheons, for this year's *Connections*.

Members who are involved and participate in these activities tend to retain their membership and recruit others to join them. Enjoy and share these ideas from the Branches with others! Maybe there is an idea that your Branch could offer the members.

Thanks to Christine Roberts (South Bruce), Sharon Chop (Ottawa-Carleton), Margaret Dempsey (Ottawa-Carleton), Margaret Hauwert (Guelph-Wellington) and Lynda Sommer (Area

7 Director) for their assistance with the editing of the newsletter.

Please keep your contact information updated with Linda Huffmann (info@rwto.org) so that you receive all communications from RWTO/OERO.

Kathy Smith  
Communications Newsletter Convenor  
rwtoconnections@gmail.com



### ***Website Convenor***

Wow, what a wonderful year we've had this year across the province! If it's been a while since you've checked our website or your Branch Web Page, go to <http://rwto.org> to see all the changes and read about all the news and wonderful events that have taken place, including our Virtual Convention that was held this past June.

For Branch Website Convenors, it's time to check your local Branch Web Page to see what information needs to be updated such as executive member contact information, membership fees and new photos if you have them. Please send all Branch updates to [rwtowebite@gmail.com](mailto:rwtowebite@gmail.com).

If you have news about events that have taken place in your Branch or new events coming up, please use the form that's found on our Main Page under the BRANCHES dropdown menu.

Just click on Branch News & Events and then

“click [HERE](#) to set up your post”, fill in all the required fields and click **SUBMIT POST FOR APPROVAL** at the bottom of the page and I will post your News and Upcoming Events on your Branch Page and Calendar.

I'm looking forward to working with all the returning Branch Website Convenors and meeting all the New Branch Website Convenors too. Remember, I'm only an email away if you need any help.

Jane Macdonald  
Communications Website Convenor  
[rwtowebite@gmail.com](mailto:rwtowebite@gmail.com)





## *News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"*

### *Dundalk-Flesherton and District*

All of our activities involve some kind of food element. Our regular meetings always have a meal and then a social/educational component that is of interest and support to our members and potential new members. We have had the local pharmacy come to discuss medical aids available ranging from CPAP supplies to blister packs. We have questioned the local Public Health representative about best before dates, farm gate eggs and how often to reheat leftovers. A local Private Investigator (imagine that) shared information and tips on avoiding some of the telephone and internet scams targeting seniors. Our last outing was to Neustadt for lunch, some shopping and then a tour of the Brewery there along with some beer tasting. We also sneak in some seasonal crafting ideas and our sewing members will meet later this summer to work on a community project. We are a busy bunch.

Submitted by  
Barb Henry, Branch President



### *Owen Sound and Area*

There is nothing that the members of our Branch like more than a wonderful social activity! Last year we started a new tradition of a lovely summer picnic. This event is hosted by one of

our long-time members at her lovely home and beautifully landscaped property. Under the shade of some magnificent trees, we gather to share a terrific picnic lunch, and chat among friends new and old. It is a perfect opportunity to connect, reconnect, share memories and make new ones.

We also have a "back to school" breakfast annually. This is again a perfect social gathering at a picturesque inn in our local area. A wonderful buffet breakfast is provided. As we enjoy the wonderful array of breakfast offerings, we also enjoy the luxury of retirement. There are, of course, good discussions or our back-to-school memories (and nightmares)!

We are very fortunate to have members who organize these wonderful events for us!

Submitted by  
Cynthia Lemon, Branch President,

### *South Bruce*

These are some of the activities, past and future, that our Branch has experienced. A craft season creating a greeting card; learning from a travel agent how to pack a suitcase efficiently for a trip; creating and singing new words for a Christmas carol; Belly Dancing with scarves; hearing how the Books in the Bruce Program promotes reading and donates a new book to young children; asking a Pharmacist anything medically related; the behind the scenes operation of our Food Bank; how a local couple personally sponsored, found employment and opened up part of their home to a refugee Ukrainian family; collecting, sorting and helping needy families select donated clothing; painted with, and experienced participating in a Drum Circle which promoted a sense of balance, equality and connection.

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## News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"

Submitted by  
Frances Nixon, Branch President

### *Brant*

The Brant Branch celebrated the first day of summer with a "Picnic in the Park". Although it was a small gathering, all enjoyed it. There was a prize for fanciest summer hat and best dressed lunch box. We even managed to have a quick executive meeting.

In July, an executive meeting (including a BBQ) was held to co-ordinate the events of this next year—our annual breakfast, our Elfin Tea with donations to the women's shelter, Nova Vita, and of course an afternoon of Court Whist. There may also be a summer picnic. There may be other activities added to the list.

This Branch looks forward to helping with the 2025 RWTO/OERO Annual Convention to be held in Brantford next June 3-5, 2025. Exciting times!

Submitted by  
Anna Brady, Branch President



### *Haldimand*

There is nothing like the excitement and conversation that happens at each of our three Haldimand luncheons when members see one another

after a long period of time. This is especially poignant when teachers meet up with our new members coming from the new membership categories—members they shared their classrooms with. We have Share the Wealth draws at two luncheons. We so enjoy our December luncheon with carol singing and draws for wrapped gifts. Different areas of the Branch are responsible for bringing in the gifts and then there are lots of fun draws. The welcoming ambiance is key to all of our events.

Submitted by  
Anne Mageran, Branch President

### *Hamilton-Wentworth*

Activities abound at the Hamilton-Wentworth Branch. We have 17 interest groups in addition to our major luncheons. The focus will be on three non-luncheon experiences.

The owner of Mountain Lanes, makes up bowling teams as we arrive. Marlene shoots a strike before we all sit down! We wonder how Cheryl can get gutter balls when we use bumpers! When our score is over 100, we relax.

Golfing gives us the opportunity to connect with other education professionals as well. We think of ourselves as "just beginning", however we've been playing for over twenty years. We welcome those who still have not seen a straight ball. Some days we look like the pros!



Continued ►



## *News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"*

Card making uses creative and fine motor skills. There is evidence of group "caring and sharing". Besides for individual use, the group has made cards that go to community projects.

In all, these are great additional experiences to add to retirement!

Submitted by  
Ann Louise Gloyn, Branch President

### *Belleville*

The Belleville Branch has general meetings four times a year. Fifty to sixty members enjoy a home-made church meal and are entertained by musical groups or guest speakers. To keep our members connected, we have many interest groups. The purpose of these groups is to offer support, fun and entertainment to all members. The popular Diners Club meets the second Tuesday of the month at various restaurants in the area. We have a Euchre Club and a Book Club that meet monthly at different member's homes. The Walking Club meets once a week. We are fortunate to live in a city that has many walking trails. Some of them follow the shore of the Bay of Quinte and the Moira River. Our Chit Chat group meets the 4th Tuesday of the month to chat over tea. Monthly, we have a group that attends the Quinte Film Alternative movies. We stay connected.

Submitted by  
Lynda Rollins, Communications

### *Durham North*

Durham North provides a variety of activities each month trying to meet the interests, needs and requests of our membership. We have two "formal" business meetings a year - a Spring Luncheon and a Fall Luncheon which includes entertainment.

Durham North does not have a formal way of organizing our monthly events. Our Monthly Activities are organized and promoted by our executive. They include euchre tournaments, red desserts day, book clubs, pole walking, wreath making workshops, entertaining at senior facilities leading sing a longs, a corn roast, soup and sandwich days, kayaking, lawn bowling, perogi making, paint afternoons, certified graphologist presentation - to name a few. A new addition - one of our members wrote a play about the history of women in education which we performed at a local senior's residence.

As our membership increases, we may need to consider a different format for organizing our special events.

Submitted by  
Marie Geelen, Branch President

### *Northumberland-South Durham*

The Northumberland-South Durham Branch, although it includes a large area and has an aging population, offers a variety of activities for members if they wish and are able to participate. We constantly try to reach out to and welcome new members. Besides our General Meeting Luncheons, once a month we hold a RWTO lunch at a restaurant. We have offered Zentangle Instruction, Crock-a-Doodle pottery making, supper and a movie, supper and a play, a visit to the Tea Grannies, a visit to the Bowmanville Museum with an Edwardian tea, attending the Peony Festival in Oshawa, a visit to a recycling plant, a winery tasting experience, hand-writing analysis, costumes through the years, Dressing Mrs. Passmore. Area 7 has an annual all Branches lunch and entertainment. We have started a book club. We send birthday cards to our over 80s and 90s and are

*Continued* ►

## *News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"*

preparing to celebrate the 100th birthday of one of our members.

Submitted by  
Julia Esford, Branch President

### *Peterborough*

Peterborough's sixty members have many opportunities for fun and fellowship. Our interest groups include a monthly book club in members' homes, cards and games at a retirement home, eating out in the area on the first Tuesday and occasionally enjoying the sights of the Trent-Severn Waterway on a beautiful patio. Golf is popular on a Friday and includes an end of season celebration lunch. We've made hundreds of milk bag mattresses to support those in need and have started sewing walker bags for seniors. We host a Birthday Bash at a retirement residence, providing cake, ice cream and entertainment for ourselves and the residents. Special events like the Valentine Dessert Day, a potluck lunch at a cottage on Stoney Lake, The President's Tea overlooking the Otonabee River and a visit to the Turtle Conservation Centre or Canoe Museum remind us how special it is to enjoy the Kawarthas with our colleagues.

Submitted by  
Judy-Anne Tumber, Branch President

### *Trenton*

The planning committee of Trenton & District has been planning an exciting range of programs and venues for 2024-2025, Our guests will be local people with a variety of skills and presentations. We are expecting a lawyer speaking on wills and power of attorney; an OPP officer speaking on frauds and scams; a local author with his latest book and a representative from Trenton Air Force Base to speak on the 100th anniversary. We will have a Bingo game (or two), lots of visiting and an

accessory exchange where members can donate scarves, purses and jewellery. The proceeds will be used to cover expenses of programs. Our Trenton members are great at Caring, Sharing and Growing Forward!!

Submitted by  
Linda Huizenga, Branch President

### *Niagara Falls*

At one time, Niagara Falls Branch offered casual lunches, movie, book club, and knitting interest groups. Eventually, Knitting Club and Book Club (renamed Retired Readers) separated from the Branch. In 2020, COVID-19 ended meetings of the remaining groups. When we again held luncheons in 2022, Retired Readers rejoined, and one executive member created a Photography Group. No new members joined. The executive persevered, suggesting other interest groups and encouraging members to take the lead. No one accepted or offered other options. Despite our continued efforts, we haven't had the desired result. When we're together at luncheons, we're models of caring and sharing. However, given that so many members are busy with other activities, leading an interest group for the Branch is a challenge. The executive can offer opportunities, but we need volunteers. We'll try again in the 2024-2025 membership year. Hope springs eternal!

Submitted by  
Diane Ewen, Branch President

### *Niagara South*

The Niagara South Branch fosters vibrant engagement through its Afternoon Walking Group and Quilting Group. The Afternoon Walking Group, held





## *News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"*



weekly, explores various scenic trails across the Niagara South area, from Port Colborne to Wainfleet. Meeting at 1:30 p.m., members enjoy an hour of walking followed by refreshments and fellowship. Walks are planned from Sep-

tember to June, with notable routes including the Welland Canal Parkway and Friendship Trail. The group's leader has adapted a successful model from the St. Catharines Branch, focusing on local trails. Meanwhile, the Quilting Group dedicates its Tuesdays to crafting quilts for the Warm Up Winter Project, contributing 15 quilts to the initiative, which donated 300 items to local agencies. Meeting from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Concordia Lutheran Church in Fonthill, the group combines skill with community service, highlighting their commitment to both creative expression and social impact.

Submitted by  
Lidia DiLorenzo, Branch President

### *Niagara West*

As a small Branch, Niagara West members do not plan any extra activities together as a group, apart from our four regular meetings. That doesn't mean we don't do anything else! Our members are highly active in any number of activities that promote their connection to a healthy, wholesome lifestyle.

Many volunteer with one of our three local community care centres, a variety of church programs, choirs, hospice care and others.

We stay healthy attending yoga class, the YMCA aquatics program, swimming, walking (the dog, alone or with friends), activities at a senior centre, painting, crafting, gardening, meeting regularly with former staff members, attending plays and theatre productions, travelling, to name but a few.

We are involved with our families from 'grandbaby' sitting to being chauffeured by our children and grandchildren. We stay connected to all of those family, friends and neighbours who are so special to us!

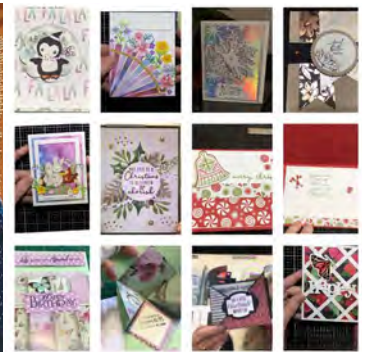
Submitted by  
Diana Bujas, Branch President

### *St. Catharines*

St. Catharines Branch continues to be a very active Branch with 335 members. We welcomed 15 new members this year. Our interest groups are key to the success of this Branch. We sing, walk, bowl, play cards, make jewellery, read and chat and, we love to "dine". We have offered an Out n' About Garden Tour, Shaw Theatre Productions of Gypsy, My Fair Lady, and Sherlock Holmes, Christmas Urn-making, a Garden Tea and stunning Christmas and Spring card-making workshops. In all we have 15 active interest groups. Our luncheons all have an interesting program, from a fraud detective to an author of young adult literature. An Ad Hoc committee has prepared a Continuum of Care Guide regarding Aging in Place for our members. Our Branch supports and recognizes our members in many ways, including connecting our Forever Young members through cards, baked treats, calls, and visits. Members needing some TLC are supported with cards, calls and hand-knit blankets.

Submitted by:  
Melanie Kelch, Branch President

# News from the Branches – "Interest Groups and Fun Activities"





# A GRAND GETAWAY!

## 69th RWTO/OERO AGM CONVENTION

AREA 4 ~ Brantford ~ June 3-5, 2025

Brant ~ Haldimand ~ Hamilton-Wentworth

Marriott TownePlace Suites - 519-720-2777

Hilton Hampton Inn & Suites - 519-720-0084

For more information contact the Convention Convenors

Lynn Anderton [rwto.lynn@gmail.com](mailto:rwto.lynn@gmail.com) 905-308-1133

Linda Sargeant [rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com](mailto:rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com) 905-575-3831



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and ENJOY!



Erica (Rosa) Mills

# *RWTO/OERO Board of Directors 2024-2025*

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<b>First Vice-President</b>	Linda	Sargeant	905-575-3831	rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com
<b>Second Vice-President</b>	Betty	Lee-Daigle	519-995-5878	rwto2ndvp2425@gmail.com
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Sandie	Bender	289-389-5799	sbender1@cogeco.ca
<b>Program Coordinator</b>	Margaret	Geare	416-988-2810	rwtoarea12director@gmail.com
<b>Sales Material Convenor</b>	Joanne	Weeks	289-442-5730	rwtoprovsales@gmail.com
<b>Insurance Convenor</b>	LeAnne	Weeks	905-877-7030	rwtoeroinsurance@gmail.com
<b>Assist. Ins. Convenor</b>	Kathy	McLean	613-277-9771	rwtomembership@gmail.com
<b>Honorary President</b>	Judy	Drummond	613-275-1354	jjdrum@explornet.com
<b>Resolutions/Constitution</b>	Linda	Sargeant	905-575-3831	rwto1stvp2425@gmail.com
<b>Goodwill</b>	Betty	Lee-Daigle	519-995-5878	rwto2ndvp2425@gmail.com
<b>Nominations Co-Chair</b>	Sandra	Salerno	905-765-0201	smsalerno@rogers.com
<b>Exec.Sec./Treasurer</b>	Linda	Huffman	1-877-607-6696	info@rwto.org
<b>Parliamentarian</b>	Jane	Cartier	519-676-4495	rwtoparl@gmail.com
<b>Issues &amp; Concerns</b>	Diane	Sinden	905-257-1408	diane.sinden@bell.net
<b>Archivist</b>	Henedine	Weiman	705-969-1795	hen.wei29@gmail.com
<b>Convention Convenor</b>	Lynn	Anderton	905-308-1133	rwto.lynn@gmail.com
<b>Membership Convenor</b>	Joan	Gamble	613-928-2427	rwtoarea8director@gmail.com
<b>Comm. Nwsltr Convenor</b>	Kathy	Smith	289-820-7615	rwtoconnections@gmail.com
<b>Comm. Website Convenor</b>	Jane	Macdonald	519-495-2337	rwtowebsite@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 01</b>	Nancy	Strutt	519-986-3359	gnstrutt@bmts.com
<b>Director - Area 02</b>	Colleen	Robertson	613-474-3155	ncrobertson20@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 03</b>	Mary	Maxwell	519-660-0174	mmaxwell@rogers.com
<b>Director - Area 04</b>	Joanne	Weeks	289-442-5730	rwtoarea4director@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 05</b>	Judy	Anderson	365-770-1331	ukeladyjudy@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 06</b>	Pat	Steer	905-407-7505	psteer2@rogers.com
<b>Director - Area 07</b>	Lynda	Sommer	613-242-3625	lynsommer@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 08</b>	Joan	Gamble	613-928-2427	rwtoarea8director@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 09</b>	Brenda	Johnston	613-914-0404	brendahjohnston@yahoo.ca
<b>Director - Area 10</b>	Henedine	Weiman	705-969-1795	hen.wei29@gmail.com
<b>Director - Area 11</b>	Carol	Neave	705-575-8383	gcneave@live.ca
<b>Director - Area 12</b>	Diane	Sinden	905-257-1408	diane.sinden@bell.net
<b>Director - Area 13</b>	Linda	Gaudet	289-687-4367	lgaudet7@gmail.com

# *RWTO/OERO Calendar 2024-2025*

Sept. 1, 2024	Annual Provincial Membership Fees due - to be sent to the Provincial Office by Oct. 15th. Fees for new members must be forwarded to the Provincial Office when received.
Sept. 17, 2024	Executive Meeting.
Sept. 17, 2024	Area Directors Meeting.
Sept. 18-19, 2024	All Board Meeting.
Oct. 31, 2024	Submissions due for December Newsletter Areas: 5,6,8,10,11
Nov. 15, 2024	Resolutions due for 2024 Annual General Meeting. Submit to Linda Sargeant Resignation of any Directors to Provincial President.
Nov. 30, 2024	Calculations of branch numbers for 2025 AGM delegates based on official membership count as received and recorded in the Provincial Office
Jan. 30-31, 2025	Board of Directors Zoom Meeting. (If required)
Jan. 5-10, 2025	Annual Report and Branch Membership Forms sent to branches.
Jan. 15, 2025	Submission of each new Area Director's name to the Provincial President.
Jan. 31, 2025	Nominations for 2025-2026 Board to the Provincial Past President. Membership and Communications Committee applications to the Provincial Past President. Nominations for Honorary Membership Award presented at 2024 AGM. Submissions for March Newsletter Areas: 2, 3, 9, 12
Mar. 1, 2025	Submissions for Feather-in-Your-Hat-Award
Mar. 15, 2025	Branch Annual Reports due to Directors.
Mar. 31, 2025	Director reports due to the Program Coordinator. Unpaid members are taken off the list. Insurance may be in jeopardy. Financial Year End.
Apr. 15, 2025	All delegates names are to be in to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer. All registrations are due for Convention 2025.
Apr. 30, 2025	Branch Financial Reports are due to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer.
May 6-8, 2025	Virtual Provincial Executive and Board Meeting
May 15, 2025	Branch Executive names for 2025-2026 due to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer.
June 3-5, 2024	Convention 2025 and AGM, Brantford



## **RWTO/OERO**

RWTO/OERO Provincial Office  
2736 Twelfth Concession,  
Tecumseh N8N 0H9

**PM Agreement  
40739021**