



RWTO/OERO

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



St Catharines Branch Newsletter, October 2025



President's Message Judith Bennoch, 2025-2026

The leaves are rapidly changing, and we have left the very hot, humid and long summer that stayed with us even into October! Now our thoughts turn to the Fall and before we know it...dare I say...the Holiday Season.

We welcomed back everyone at a very well attended first luncheon in September enjoying the wonderful cuisine provided by St. John's Activity Centre. We were engaged and informed with the presentation 'Happy In My Home' by Carolyn Askeland supported by Nadia White. A highlight for me was our annual recognition of our Forever Young members. Eight members were able to join us!

Our Interest Groups are now up and running with so many activities to choose from. Kudos to all who give of their time to organize these events. The 70th Anniversary Party Planners are busy with the preparations for our very special celebration at our April 22, 2026, luncheon where we will welcome our Provincial President, Linda Sargeant. Thank you to all who volunteered their time this summer to get us started and continue their tasks. Our Provincial organization is 70 years old - and did you know our branch will be 56 years old in 2026 too!

I also attended the Area 13 Presidents and Insurance Convenors annual meeting, hosted by Area 13 Director, Patti Malkiewich. Joining me were Vice President Violette Hagerty, Insurance Convenor Susan McLaughlin and Treasurer Linda Foster. Terry Kennedy, our broker, and Claudia Stewart, Provincial Insurance Assistant Convenor provided an interesting and informative presentation. It is important that we are aware and reminded of all that the RWTO Insurance offers to us. Of note, this coverage continues for your spouse/partner, even after you pass with no need to continue an RWTO

membership. We are fortunate that we have a long-standing Insurance Convenor who is extremely knowledgeable.

The October luncheon includes a presentation by Lisa Cosens-Brillon, the Director of The Niagara Performing Arts Festival. Lisa will share information about this festival which includes all of the performing arts - plus we will be entertained by two of the festival winners, Celine Harb and Emma Zhang. As well, Area 13 Director, our very own Patti Malkiewich, will bring greetings from Provincial. She will also have special 70th Anniversary pins available for purchase, as she has taken on the responsibility for Provincial Sales and Materials as part of her provincial role.

In November we will honour those who have served on Remembrance Day. RWTO St. Catharines wreaths will be placed at the St. Paul Street and Port Dalhousie Cenotaphs. We will kick off the holiday season in December with our annual Christmas Buffet at the Holiday Inn and enjoy a singalong led by our talented Carol Morningstar.



In closing, I want to thank all the executive who give of their time and talents supporting our St. Catharines Branch. And a reminder - we can only continue to provide the excellent programming and events when we have members who will step forward and spend a year or so on the executive. I urge you to very seriously consider taking on a role when approached by the Nomination Committee. It does not need to be a long-term commitment, but you will learn so much about our organization and have a wonderful time with the others on the executive.

Let's keep St. Catharines thriving!!
Judith Bennoch, President

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Four Points by Sheraton Niagara Suites

Presentation by Lisa Cosens-Brillon,
Director of the **Niagara Festival of the Performing Arts**
and performances by Festival participants

Collection of items for **Westview Centre 4 Women**

For example, clothes, bedding, money, especially Winter apparel

Menu: Arugula & Pear Salad w/ Candied Walnuts, Parmesan Cheese & Balsamic Vinaigrette
Creamy Tuscan Chicken w/ Roasted Garlic Green Beans & Toasted Garlic Bread
New York Style Cheesecake w/ Season Fruit Coulis

\$40.00 Due to Linda Foster by October 15, 2025



Wednesday, December 3, 2025

***CHRISTMAS BUFFET LUNCHEON
AT THE HOLIDAY INN***

327 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, ON

**Christmas Sing-Along with Carol Morningstar
Community Care Donation Presentation**

\$55.00 Payment Due by November 26, 2025

Community Care Donations can be sent with your luncheon payment.

Menu:

Assorted Rolls and Butter
Potato Salad, Pasta Salad
Pasta with tomato sauce, Rice Pilaf (with vegetable)
Honey Glazed Ham with Pineapple
Dessert: Apple Crisp Cheesecake served with Coffee,
Tea, and Decaf

Tossed Garden Salad with dressings
Relish tray
Roasted Turkey, Apple Sage stuffing, Cranberry Sauce,
and Gravy
Mashed Potato, Seasonal Vegetables

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Club Italia

Special 70th Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

**Betty's Restaurant, Niagara Falls (Chippawa)
AGM Meeting**



General Luncheon Information

- All meetings begin at 11:00 am. Doors open at 10:30 am, unless otherwise indicated.
- The name tags are on the table close to the entrance and are displayed in alphabetical order.
- The cost for the luncheon will depend on what the facility is charging.
- Payment for luncheons must be received by the Wednesday prior to each luncheon, whether by cheque or e-transfer. If you are late in mailing your cheque, let Linda Foster know that you are planning to attend and that your cheque is in the mail.
- There are no luncheon tickets. As your payment is received, your name is added to the list of attendees. You should receive a call or an email when the Treasurer has received your payment.
- Cheques are payable to: **RWTO St. Catharines** and mailed to Linda Foster. E-transfers, use the **rwto@catharines@gmail.com** address.
- Luncheon payments will be returned if cancelled by the Wednesday prior to the luncheon. Call Linda Foster to cancel.
- You will receive a phone call or email reminder several weeks prior to the luncheon.
- Pictures are taken at luncheons. If you do not want to be in a picture, speak up and tell whoever has the camera.
- Escorts needed. Sometimes our members need a ride to the luncheon. If you require a ride, or could offer assistance with driving, please call Janis Harlos.

We are a Fragrance-Free Environment.



COMMUNITY CARE OF ST. CATHARINES & THOROLD CHARITABLE DONATIONS *RWTO/OERO CARES!*



**In the spirit of the season, let us rise to the call to make a difference
for those families facing challenges at Christmas.**

In "Caring and Sharing", thank you!

Be a part of making Christmas as Merry as possible! *Please act now!*

Donations to **Community Care** are requested before the Christmas Luncheon and by Wednesday, November 26, 2025



RWTO St. Catharines' donation will be presented at the Holiday Inn Christmas Luncheon on December 3rd, 2025, to Betty-Lou Souter, the Chief Executive Officer of Community Care, St. Catharines & Thorold.

Community Care provides tax receipts for donations over \$10.00.

e-Transfer donations to Linda Foster at:

rwto@catharines@gmail.com.

Cheques are payable to: **Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold**. If mailing donation

cheques, send to Linda Foster.

With gratitude for your contributions,

Your RWTO/OERO St. Catharines Community Care Fundraiser Team,

Judith Bennoch, President; Violette Hagerty, Vice President; Linda Foster, Treasurer; Carol Morningstar, Secretary.



Answers to the Sept. 24, 2025, Luncheon Presentation (Courtesy of Happy in My Home, Carolyn Askeland)

1. What insurance do you need on your vehicle if you volunteer to drive?

For most, the current insurance policy you carry for your vehicle is sufficient, of \$1 million liability. No additional clauses are required due to volunteer capacity.

Happy in My Home also holds an insurance policy to protect our volunteer drivers. All volunteers also require a clear driver's abstract.

2. How do friends of mine who are seniors 85+ deal with families who want to put them in a home, only because of their age?

Each family is unique, but I would recommend starting with open honest communication about their desires.

Providing additional information about services to support older adults to live in their home may also prove helpful.

3. Is there a similar Agency/Group that services the Burlington area?

Community Support Services are available across Ontario. I would suggest calling Health Ontario at 811 to find out about services in a specific community.

Have you more questions?

Contact: Violette Hagerty, Vice President,
RWTO/OERO St. Catharines Branch



Directory

Directories will be handed out at the October luncheon or mailed to those who could not attend. You should get them shortly.



NOTE: If you change your mailing address, email address or phone number, please let Linda Foster know ASAP.



Friday Afternoon Walkers on a beautiful October day.



2025-26 Cora Bailey Award Nominations

The Cora Bailey Award is a Branch Award and the highest recognition a Branch may bestow on a member. It has been presented since 2003 to Branch members who have demonstrated outstanding service, dedication and leadership to the St. Catharines Branch. Members may only be nominated once.

We will be accepting nominations at the October luncheon. If you are unable to attend, contact Violette Hagerty.

PAST ST. CATHARINES BRANCH CORA BAILEY AWARD RECIPIENTS

***NOTE:** Recipients may receive the Cora Bailey Award **ONLY ONCE** from the BRANCH to which she pays her Provincial fees. She may **NOT** receive the Award **twice** from the **same** Branch.

2003 - 2004	Juanita Rathbun	Elsie Seddon	Joan Sisler Wells
2004 - 2005	Jean Johnston	Rose Stacey	Agnes Wieler
2005 - 2006	Tory Cuff	Bonnie Taylor Gillings	Anne Manjos
2006 - 2007	Carol Bell	Sharon Thorne	-
2007 - 2008	Marilyn Emmett	Carol Pushie	-
2008 - 2009	Marion Ballinger	Susan Lockyer	Glennice Wilkinson
2009 - 2010	Not Awarded	-	-
2010 - 2011	Marg Ewert	Beth Kent	Geraldine Waud
2011 - 2012	Linda Foster	Anja Jokela	Myrna Kroeker
2012 - 2013	Joanne Atkinson	Sheila Bengier	Chereen Osborne
2013 - 2014	Donna Genge	Arlene Molnar	Margo Smith
2014 - 2015	Nancy Iannizzi	Susan McLaughlin	Marg Newby
2015 - 2016	Judy Crompton	Ann Snider	Anne Marie Stockwell
2016 - 2017	Patt Chivers	Clarice West-Hobbs	-
2017 - 2018	Judith Bennoch	Kathleen Bradley	Violette Hagerty
2018 - 2019	Alice Bradnam	Marilyn Weber	-
2019 - 2020	Patti Malkiewich	Nadine Martin	-
2020 - 2021	None Awarded - Covid Year		
2021 - 2022	Susan Lewis	Janis Harlos	Louise Farquhar
2022 - 2023	Jessica Thomson	Christine Graham	-
2023 - 2024	Betty Axon		
2024 - 2025	Linda Gaudet		
2025 - 2026			
2026 - 2027			

REPORTS

Goodwill Report

by Kathy Trussell, Goodwill Convenor

The September luncheon signaled the beginning of our 2025-2026 year. At this luncheon each year we invite the "Forever Young" (over 90 years of age) members of our organization to attend as our guests. We currently have 17 Forever Young members and this year eight of them were able to attend the luncheon. We presented each with a yellow rose symbolizing friendship. Five more

roses were delivered to those who were unable to attend and *Thinking of You* cards were sent to the four shut-in members. Thanks to the Goodwill team for sitting at the tables with the older ladies.



We have 85+ members who are over 80 years of age. These gals receive a birthday card. I'd like to acknowledge Catherine Cookman and Jennifer Di Marco who faithfully send out the cards to these members, on your behalf.

We will continue the tradition of delivering a box of goodies to the Forever Young members as a Christmas treat. A group of ladies from our branch, do the baking for this. Please let me know if you are willing to help with this again this year. As well, holiday greeting cards will be sent to the older members.

Please let me know if someone you know is in need of a little TLC and I will be happy to send a sympathy, thinking of you or get-well card. We also still have a few "We've Got Your Back" blankets that were knit by members of our branch and are ready for someone who needs a warm snuggle.

Call or email Kathy Trussell.

Yours in Caring and Sharing, Kathy Trussell, Goodwill Convenor and the rest of the team... Linda Borland, Catharine Cookman, Jennifer Di Marco, Chris Graham and Wendy Kuenzel.

Membership Report

by Clara Warden, Membership Convenor

Welcome back and thank you for renewing your membership.

I am happy to announce that we have four new members this year. We welcome Darla MacLean, Erna Antaya, Margret Bousfield and Erica Phair to our organization.

Currently, we have 302 paid members, 9 Social members and 8 Life members.

At our September luncheon we were pleased to award three free memberships to members who had sent in their renewals by August 31st. The winners were Margot Smith, Sandra Flegg and Verna Leger. Congratulations ladies!

If you are aware of newly retired women educational professionals, as well as those who have been enjoying retirement for a while and might be interested in joining our organization, please contact Linda Foster or myself. Our best advertisement is through word of mouth, and we rely on you to promote our organization.

Yours in Caring and Sharing, Cara Warden

Insurance Report

by Susan McLaughlin, Insurance Convenor

This month I would like to remind you of the benefits that you can claim during a time when you are convalescing from surgery. You can receive \$350 a month for up to 6 months after a hospitalization stay of 3 days or more. If you had day surgery, you may claim \$72.50 per week for up to 4 weeks. There is also a home nursing benefit. It pays 80% of incurred services that are recommended by a physician up to \$1,500 for any one injury or sickness. Make sure that you save copies of all your bills and include the form filled out by your doctor. All the forms that you require can be found on the RWTO website under Insurance or you can enter your claims online. Remember that you have up to one year to send in your claims online.

Susan McLaughlin



Here is a picture of some of the Morning Walkers on the new crosswalk in front of the Port Dalhousie Cenotaph. Thank you, Marilyn Weber, for the photo, October 2025.

Remembrance Day Services will be held at the St. Catharines Cenotaph November 11th, and the Port Dalhousie Cenotaph November 9th.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2025

A Tale of One Who Lived to Tell His Story



Remembrance Day in Canada is celebrated on November 11th as well as many countries, particularly those of the Commonwealth. On this Remembrance Day I would like to share a family story of bravery with you.

My father-in-law, Christopher Grierson Bennoch, 'Kit' born 1922, was raised in Scotland. In 1940 after turning 18, he joined the army and served with the Gordon Highlanders regiment until 1945. In January of 1945 he was shot multiple times in the arm by a machine gun while defending from a doorway in Tunis, Africa. After collapsing he was then stabbed with a bayonet 3 times. He was taken to a hospital in Tunis and once they knew he would survive, was returned to Scotland where he was hospitalized for three and a half months.

The war had taken its toll on this young man from the small town of Auchentiber. But this story has a happy ending...upon his release from hospital, he married his love, Jean Latimer Shanks, a conductor on the buses in Lanarkshire and they lived in a Council House in High Blantyre.

Jeanie and Kit emigrated to Canada on Kit's retirement from the South of Scotland Electricity Board where he worked as an underground cable joiner. Not surprising that he rose to such a dangerous position, obviously a fearless man.



Kit was always a quiet man and rarely spoke of his experiences in the war, but I saw firsthand the damage done to his body. He loved to garden, having had a small front garden full of roses back home in Scotland. For many years my in-laws would spend Sundays with us, tending my garden and teaching me about my roses - his favourite. The first time he removed his shirt I was shocked to see his scars and wondered how he had ever survived. He quietly shared very little of his experience...as many survivors - reluctant to dwell on the past.



'Kit' received 5 medals from his service in the war, where he often served alongside other allied soldiers from Italy. He never displayed these medals. When Kit passed, just a few months after their 50th anniversary in 1995, this box of medals was passed along to my husband, his only son. For a special birthday gift one year I had these medals mounted and framed for him.

We are very proud of his service, and it reminds us of all the Canadians who also served, and the many who gave their lives. or came home with injuries.

Let us remember them all this November 11, and every day, and thank them for the life we are able to live because of their sacrifices.

INTEREST GROUPS

NEW:

Are you interested in playing **Mahjong**? If you're an experienced player - do you have a 2025 Mahjong card? We're not experts but we'd love to get a group together to play. Sounds like lots of fun!



If Mahjong is not for you, would you like to play **Rummikub**? An easy game where you make sets and runs with coloured, numbered tiles. Again, not experts but looking to provide you with an opportunity to spend an afternoon with friends.

Look for the new sign-up sheets at the October Luncheon.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Urn With A Twist Workshop

Wednesday, November 26, 2025 @ 1 pm

\$88.50 Payment due Nov 1

The Watering Can, Vineland

Make a seasonal display to decorate your entrance / porch for the holidays.

Sign up at the October luncheon
or contact Kathleen Bradley.



Christmas Card Making Afternoon

Make four Christmas cards using two different designs.

All materials supplied.

\$20.00, cash or e-transfer.

Three dates are still available.

November 6, 20 or 21st at 1 pm

First come, first in. Up to six people per afternoon.

Sign up at the October luncheon or call Fern Lackenbauer



SHAW FESTIVAL

Funny Girl!

If you're interested in a premium seat to see an afternoon performance of FUNNY GIRL at the Festival Theatre, NOTL, please be sure to sign up.

A final date and price will be announced once the tickets go on sale. When the date is chosen, if it conflicts with your schedule, you will be able to opt out if necessary.

Sign up at the October luncheon
or contact Kathleen Bradley.

