

The 3R's of Membership – Recognition, Recruitment and Retention

The ideas included in this handout are in keeping with our Membership theme, ***The 3R's of Membership- RECOGNITION, RECRUITMENT and RETENTION***. Some suggestions will apply to more than one category.

We have compiled 52 offerings from 52 branches. Of course, there is bound to be some duplication or similarities of suggestions and there may be ideas that your branch has already implemented.

The ideas offered below have come from branch submissions in recent issues of *Connections*, reports in the *AGM Handbook* and/or from direct contact with those involved.

For further information regarding any particular idea of interest to you, please contact the branch directly involved.

Beaver Valley annually offers a non-profit *Summer Art Camp*. The camp runs for one week in the mornings. There is a fee which covers the rental of the facility and the remuneration for the instructor. Branch members assist. Local merchants display the artists' work in their store windows.

Belleville has an interest group called *Chit Chat*, which meets monthly to discuss current topics of interest. Also see co-sponsored activity with Trenton below.

Blue Mountain has a charity that has widespread recognition in the community- *Books for Newborns* They approaches service clubs and retail establishments in the area for donations to help fund their cause.

Brant has decided that all of their charitable efforts will be for children in their local area.

Brockville has asked its members to give specific, honest feedback regarding their satisfaction with the number of meetings, the format, the type of program (speaker or entertainment) and the desirability of having draws and incentives. Brockville plans to use this information as it moves forward.

Burlington participates in an annual event in *Area 12* named *PENTA*. All branches in the area meet for this annual event and the branches take turns hosting, planning the venue, food and entertainment. This year it is Burlington's turn to host the area's other four branches.

Cambridge maintains a library at a homeless shelter and provides a daily newspaper for the shelter.

Central Algoma has an incentive for members who pay their dues before a specified date. Names go in a draw for a free one-year membership.

Chatham-Kent has one meeting where storefronts are set up to present community information and members can learn more about activities and volunteer opportunities which may interest them.

Daisy Wilson Coldwater has teams of three volunteers who plan each meeting. Each team plans the venue, the food and the program. The President takes care of the business.

Dundalk- Highpoint has compiled a book called *The Way We Were*, with one page for each member to share highlights of her career and special memories- enlightenment for younger members, treasured memories for older.

Durham North members meet one morning monthly to work on their *Victoria Quilts* for cancer patients, then enjoy lunch together at a local restaurant.

East Parry Sound honours an *Uncommon Woman* in the branch who has contributed significantly to the wider community. She may or may not have received the Cora Bailey Award.

Flesherton presents *Caring and Sharing Awards* to graduating *Grade 8 students* selected by the school staff (see sample of criteria on table).

Gananoque makes use of the *Welcome Wagon hostess* in the area to provide information and extend an invitation to new residents, who are retired women teachers, to consider joining RWTO/OERO.

Guelph-Wellington has a *Joy Group* which visits shut-ins and elderly members regularly, provides transportation, takes those able out to lunch, etc.

Haldimand makes *Tactile Lap Quilts* for those in need. The quilts have pockets, buttons, and zippers and are made from materials that have special memories for the members involved.

Hamilton-Wentworth has an *Annual Special Outreach Project*, for which they receive applications and must choose. (eg. pay for car repair so that a single mother can take two autistic sons to appointments).

Kingston sends personal copies of their newsletters to retired teachers who have let their membership lapse and to other retired or retiring teachers of whom they are aware. They have had recruitment success using this approach.

Kitchener-Waterloo chooses a different theme and speaker/presenter for each of its meetings- (eg. social justice, personal care, safety, local interest).

Lanark rewards members who wear their RWTO/OERO pins to each meeting by giving them a chance to win a gift card from a popular area business.

Lincoln West invited a class to perform for them whose own teacher was taught by one of their branch members. The children were in awe as they met their teacher's teacher!

Listowel donated a *Buddy Bench* to a local school, intended to help eliminate loneliness and foster friendship. *Trenton is doing the same.*

London- Middlesex has a very appropriate name for their branch newsletter- *Chalk Talk*. In that newsletter is a column *In Memoriam* which branches may wish to use as an idea.

Lydia Snow North Halton donated a copy of *Canada: Our Road to Democracy* to the libraries of all 50 schools (Public and Catholic) in North Halton. As well as recognition for the branch, **some** royalties from sales are being donated to scholarships for Humber College students in need.

Mississauga invited the Mayor of Mississauga to join them for a spring meeting, an excellent way of publicizing their good works to the broader community.

Muskoka challenges branches to take the RWTO song, written by the branch president's husband, and add one or two verses applicable to your own branch. The song is on the website. In memory of those early educators to whom the song refers, Muskoka continues to give each member a Carnation for Remembrance at every meeting.

Napanee finds it worthwhile to participate in *International Women's Day* programs each year, an opportunity to share knowledge about RWTO/OERO.

Niagara Falls has "adopted" a Salvation Army residence in their area and is very hands-on with helping the residents with gardening, reading, transportation- whatever will improve the residents' quality of life.

Niagara South has expanded upon the idea of bringing books and the usual needed items to their Christmas meeting by having each member bring a pair of pyjamas.

Northumberland South Durham is an example of a branch that promotes recognition for its members beyond their contributions to RWTO/OERO. The branch worked diligently to ensure that one member received a Governor General's Award for Meritorious Service for breaking barriers in a male-dominated sport (see Sept. 2016 Connections).

Oakville uses many inspirational quotes in its newsletter, interspersed among the various columns of interest.

Orillia has a slot called *One Minute Speakers* as part of its business meeting. The member must advise the president beforehand that she wishes to briefly publicize a local event unrelated to RWTO/OERO. This works best in smaller branches.

Ottawa-Carleton had a unique method of deciding how money that was available for charity would be dispersed. Members were asked to nominate charities, several were chosen, and the nominating member presented a cheque to the charity. Later, the member outlined to the Branch how the work of that charity furthered the goals of RWTO/OERO.

Owen Sound starts each year with its very popular, well-attended "*Forget the Bell*" breakfast. Some recently retired members may know this practice by another name!

Palmerston has an interest group called *In Your Own Backyard*, which tours facilities of interest close to home.

Peel North promoted talent within its branch by involving some of its members in entertaining the branch with a *Murder Mystery Whodunit*.

Peterborough plans day trips with a neighbouring branch and continues to meet informally during the summer for bridge, theatre, lunch, golf and more.

Rendezvous is a very special branch because of its efforts to improve the pensions of women teachers. The Membership Committee challenges your branch to recreate, as a skit, the meeting held at 33 College St. Toronto on April 3, 1956 with women teacher representatives from across Ontario. (See *Uncommon Women* written by *Lenore Beech*). Hamilton-Wentworth has done this. East Parry Sound presented it at the Hamilton AGM, as one of the workshops, and called it *Uncommon Women, The Musical*.

Sarnia-Lambton has expanded upon the idea of member names going into a draw for \$10 gift certificates if they bring a friend to a meeting. All the names of members who have brought a friend during the year go into a final draw for one of two \$50 gift certificates.

Sault Ste. Marie has a Scrabble interest group which meets regularly at a Retirement Home so that residents of the home can participate.

Scarborough provides laundry baskets at each luncheon for the collection of current magazines and personal hygiene items.

South Bruce has honoured their members who were teaching in 1956, when our organization was first formed.

St. Catharines' largest interest group is their *Revolving Book Club*, which is different than the usual discussion-type of club. Members receive one book per month to read, pass it along to the next person on the list and keep the last book that is received. *See outline of how this works on the display table.*

Stratford – Past Presidents and Goodwill began '*Keeping in Touch*', members not regularly attending meetings are called, visited or contacted by letter.

St. Thomas-Elgin produced a *Trivia Brochure* with 60 facts about RWTO/OERO and its own branch. The Membership Committee challenges other branches to research their own archives and compile facts specific to your own branch.

Sudbury annually sends special Christmas cards to the city's shut-ins and is expanding the project to include other occasions.

Trenton co-sponsored, with Belleville, a community information evening for area citizens to learn from the *Ontario Securities Commission*.

Upper Canada East includes one fundraising activity at each meeting, organized by the members in the locality responsible for that particular meeting.

Warton annually twins with a neighbouring branch for a summer pot luck picnic when Branches are not meeting regularly.

Windsor-Essex has a *Rewards Incentive Program* involving a *Rewards Card* with 5 areas. Participating in one activity earns the member one punched number. When all 5 are punched, the card is entered in a draw and a new card issued.

York North has, as one of its ideas for fundraising, a *Bottle Raffle*, where all items to be raffled must come in a bottle or jar- jams, maple syrup, preserves, salad dressings, vinegars, etc..

Compiled by the Provincial Membership Committee for the

RWTO/OERO Annual Meeting and Convention 2017

Additional Committee Suggestions

- An appropriate name for an arts-related interest group is *Cultured Pearls* (visits to art galleries, theatre, concerts, etc.)
- An appropriate name for presentations given about trips is *Armchair Traveller*
- Mark New Member's name tags with a star so everyone is able to make them feel welcome and assist as necessary
- If your branch holds no meetings in the winter, consider a short two page newsletter to keep in touch....focus on activities that continue even though there are no formal events scheduled.....