



A NEWSLETTER

FROM RTOERO DISTRICT 9

HURON-PERTH

<https://district9.rtoero.ca>



2022 Fall Edition

Coming Events

For your calendar:

Spring General Meeting & Luncheon
 Wednesday, May 3, 2023
 Mitchell Golf and Country Club
 See form on page 12.

An Excursion to Wingham
 Wednesday, June 7, 2023
 Sweets 'N Treats, Britespan
 Manufacturing, and Royal Homes
 Factory
 Details can be found on page 13.

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President's Message



Code Blue! Code Blue! When I came back, a dozen doctors, nurses and a crash cart hovered over me so that I'd enjoy the rest of July 27, 2022 and beyond. I can say without equivocation, that the Stratford Hospital staff were second to none. (Including the kitchen). Had I been elsewhere, you'd be getting this note, posthumously... from Heaven, of course!

You can take pride in those young medical professionals because you helped mould them in Huron-Perth schools. They were short-staffed because some senior staff simply retired during Covid 19. Morale was hurting but they never let it interfere with care. Nurses were heroes during Covid, then zeroes when rewarded with only a 1% raise, while elected politicians were far more generous to themselves. Realize that inflation was in the 8% bracket. Sadly, government sold off the 407 cash now which could be paying medical staff now.

It does not end there. Some of you have walked with our partners in education to protest also being treated as zeroes at the bargaining table, after surfing the brave new world of on-line learning during Covid.

Education support staff will tell you that their pay is at the poverty line. If you are as old as me, you will recall that teachers in bygone days pumped gas, waited tables and worked at campgrounds because government did not value teachers with living-wage pay. Consider yourself blessed that we wrestled our pensions away from the Provincial Government, so that we can now retire in dignity with an indexed pension and good benefits. Thank you RTOERO.

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**RTO
 ERO** A better future,
 together
 Ensemble pour
 un avenir meilleur

District 9
Huron-Perth

Continuation from page 1

The government response is more virtual learning to support budget savings. The heck with student learning. Kids can go to a McDonald's parking lot to do homework, if there is no internet access in their community or family paycheques don't stretch far enough to include WiFi.

RTOERO is too valuable to take for granted. We advocate for retirees, for colleagues in the trenches, for the medical community and for quality nursing home care. Are you prepared to pay \$400 a day if you turn down a nursing home bed away from your own locale? Code "0" means there are no ambulances available and/or the emergency room is closed. Advocating is an essential component of the RTOERO reason for being. However, Bay Street RTOERO is only as strong as the component Districts. Without a District 9 executive, we are on life support. Is Code Blue next?

We are fortunate to have John Herbert as our webmaster chair, who takes over that responsibility with efficiency and knowledge. Please be sure to use the new link to access our local RTOERO District 9 website, given on the first page of the Clean Slate newsletter, and save it to your bookmarks within your browser.

Dear members, a mistake has occurred in the previous Clean Slate newsletter in naming members from a photo situated on page 3 left bottom corner of the Highlights of the Spring Annual General Meeting in May 2022 in Mitchell. You should have read Gloria Hutchison instead of Ann Zwaan.

Bruce Whitmore
President of RTOERO District 9

Community Grants

Greetings to Members.

District 9 was fortunate this year to send in an application for the 2022 RTOERO Community Grant. Ron Dodson and team requested the grant on behalf of the Stratford Arts and Culture Centre (SACC). This project reflects a vision for a community-based space that will serve the needs of the area's extensive local arts and cultural organizations. This space would be located in the sanctuary of the Knox Presbyterian Church. The Centre will be primarily a home for community-based arts and culture for a wide range of arts organizations, independent artists, and audiences of all ages and demographics. District 9 received notice that the project was not successful in receiving the 2022 RTOERO Grant. District 9 donated \$500 to Ron to support SACC and wish this project the best of luck.

Community Grants are designed to encourage all RTOERO Districts to support and partner with local organizations to promote projects that help our organization to meet our strategic goals of improving lives of members and seniors. The updated criteria and the application will be available January 2023 on the RTOERO website. RTOERO Districts are eligible to receive a grant of up to \$4000.

RTOERO members are encouraged to recommend students in their lives, including family members, who meet the criteria, to apply for a Post-Secondary Scholarship valued at \$3000. This is available to students enrolled in programs that lead to careers in senior's health and well-being; education, environmental stewardship.

Applications are due January 13 2023. For more information visit scholarship@rtoero.ca

Jean Weigand (519-238-2127)
Community Grants Chair



Health Benefits

Appreciation of the privileged position that we are in as members of the RTOERO benefit plan is evident as we read and see in the media the plight of many who are not so well positioned in retirement. When we check out the Compare Insurance Plans of RTOERO’s health benefits for education retirees, it is with gratitude we recognize the work of the Board and the Benefit committee in bringing about this sense of security and well being as we age.

Benefits of Technology for Seniors:

Having elected to attend the RTOERO Health Workshop, October 11, 2022 online, I could not have foreseen that at that time I would be recovering from COVID!

Practical Technologies that Can Enable Aging in the Right Place was the title of the opening presentation by, Dr. Samir Sinha MD, DPhil, FRCPC – Chair in Geriatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital. An appropriate thought-provoking topic for me in my convalescence!

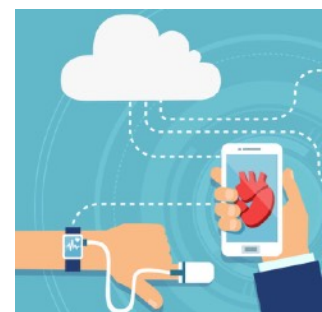
Dr. Sinha brought to our attention the fact that most older Canadians wish to maintain independent and remain in their homes as long as possible as they age.

From research, Dr. Sinha spoke of the openness of seniors and their families in receiving advice on how to do this (85%); however, they are often unaware of the questions to ask of primary care givers, and the care givers in turn are unaware of the rapid changes in technology that can enable their clients to age where they wish.

According to Dr. Sinha, 30% of older Canadians do not feel prepared should they be alone when a medical emergency occurs. He reminded us that 1 of every 3 senior Canadians fall each year - that 50% of those falls are in the home, and that 82% of these falls occur when the elderly person is alone. Sharing how such a fall would be handled has been discussed between **only 21%** of elderly clients and their health care providers! Providing older Canadians with the right information and tools to age in the right place can be provided by health care professionals and advocates.



In order for the elderly to remain independent, Dr. Sinha brought to our attention the wealth of such supportive technology as smart phones, virtual care, remote health monitoring, fitness trackers and smart watches, smart home devices, and Personal Emergency Response Services (PERS).



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Studies of the impact of PERS reveal positive outcomes such as rapid emergency response, extension of the time users are able to remain living at home, increase in sense of security and confidence in performing every day activities.

In order to maintain their independence, older adults, and their care givers can benefit from cost effective at home technology solutions such as: **Living Well Companion by TELUS Health starting at \$15.00 per month; PHILIPS Lifeline starting at \$36.00 per month; Life Assure starting at \$29.00 per month, and Galaxy Medical Alert starting at \$29.95 per month.**

While COVID-19 has led many Canadians to reconsider their opinions on living in a retirement home or long-term care, it has amplified the need for home-based supports to enable aging in the right place. Dr. Sinha emphasized the importance of **talking** about *Aging in the Right Place*, and to enable this concept of aging, he suggests an OT Home Safety Assessment (OT was recently added to RTOERO Extended Health Care Plan!), staying active (150 minutes of exercise a week), and staying connected with loved ones and community care through **digital devices** which support aging with independence and peace of mind.

In this area, to help us hone our skills with technology, we can contact Stratford Public Library at (519) 271-0220. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, Tech Tutors can help us improve our comfort level in using our devices.

The Clinton Public Library offers One on One with a staff computer trainer. Call (865) 457- 0519 for more information.

From The Benefits Committee:

For the Benefits Committee, during the thick of the COVID -19 pandemic, the updates were frequent and the work was epic! In early 2020, Global Excel Management Inc. took over administration of the RTOERO Travel Plan. Before taking a trip, we need to check out the RTOERO Pandemic Preparedness, Insurance Plans booklet online at rtoero.ca/prepared

Should we suffer a medical emergency, when away from home, we must contact Global Excel before seeking treatment, and have on hand our RTOERO Benefit Card.

IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY, YOU MUST CALL GLOBAL EXCEL IMMEDIATELY BEFORE SEEKING TREATMENT. THEY ARE AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK AND CAN BE CONTACTED BY CALLING:

From Canada and the United States,
call TOLL FREE **1-877-346-1467**

From Mexico, call TOLL FREE **01-800-062-4728**

From anywhere else in the world,
call COLLECT **+ 819-780-0647**

NOTE: The complete emergency telephone numbers are also listed on the back of the benefits card provided to you.

Express Scripts Canada Pharmacy:

An optional benefit of our Extended Health Care plan, is Express Scripts Canada Pharmacy to fill prescriptions for a maintenance medication which, for a \$6.99 dispensing/delivery fee, gives us access to a Canadian Pharmacist 24/7. This service is completely voluntary and offers a higher reimbursement of up to 100% reimbursement for generic drugs or 90% for eligible brand-name drugs. A 90-day supply of our maintenance medications are refilled automatically, and are delivered to our door anywhere in Canada. Our medications are automatically checked for possible drug interactions against the medical information we have provided. Express Scripts Canada Pharmacy contacts us when a refill is required or there is an option whereby, they will contact the doctor's office on our behalf.

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For more information on this program go to rtoero.ca/express-scripts-canada-pharmacy

For information regarding any of our RTOERO Insurance plans

<https://rtoero.ca/resources/communique-insurance-plan-updates/>

Health Benefits Chair
Pauline Shore



New retirement planning resource bundle to share with friends

RTOERO's ultimate retirement planning resource bundle is now available and ready for you to share with your friends. Find it here: rtoero.ca/retirement-bundle.

The bundle was developed in response to feedback from education workers that they want help with practical to-do tasks for retirement.

One of the most common ways new members hear about RTOERO is through a friend or colleague. This speaks to the spirit of RTOERO and its deep roots as a non-profit for education retirees. We want to be there for others.

Be sure to share the bundle with education workers in your life who are starting to think about retirement—it could save them time and reduce stress.

From the RTOERO Toronto Office



Terms to know: Environmental racism

Environmental racism is a form of systemic racism that exists in Canada and around the world. The term was developed in the 1980s to highlight how climate change and environmental harm are disproportionately harming Black, Indigenous and people of colour. It's caused by development, policies or practices that intentionally or unintentionally result in more pollution or health risks in Indigenous and racialized communities. Unequal access to clean water, air and green space are also part of environmental racism.

This information was adapted from an article from the David Suzuki Foundation. Read the article for more information on environmental racism and specific examples: david Suzuki.org/expert-article/environmental-racism-what-is-it-and-what-can-we-do-about-it/

From the RTOERO Toronto Office



Political Advocacy

Retired teachers and education workers have multiple interests and are very involved in advocacy of many kinds in their retirement years. Many District 9 retirees are activists and advocates in their own right with regards to the three RTOERO pillars of Geriatric Health, Seniors Issues and the Environment, and may volunteer with organizations already that also promote these goals. As political advocates we need to harness the power of these retired teachers and education workers through partnerships with the groups they are already involved in. This was one of the messages we heard from other PAC Chairs in our November 10 meeting with RTOERO's southwest cluster.

Nationally, this is already happening. RTOERO is forging strong relationships particularly with as many Canadian seniors' and health lobby groups as possible to further strengthen their message to governments both in Canada and on the international stage. Their connections with these groups, and with environmental agencies as well, has also provided RTOERO with some excellent Vibrant Voices workshops over the past two years that all members can access. Be sure to tune in to these online resources which are emailed to every member and can be accessed after the fact online at Vibrant Voices.

Locally, we need to act in similar partnerships if we can. In September, a number of retired teachers joined with Green Goderich in their Day of Climate Action event, for instance. There are often calls to action coming to me particularly from a variety of environmental groups to attend an action when a specific issue comes up, and I would be pleased to share it with any members who want to participate. Let me know if you are interested and we will pass this along. Word is that there may be a big day of action in November happening across the province on the Farmland vs Freeways front. This is in response to the current government plans to attack the Greenbelt and overrule Conservation Authorities with building expansion and the Premier's Highway 413 vanity project.

On Hallowe'en a few of us participated informally in a protest at Lisa Thompson's office. An announcement from the financial accountability office of Ontario had announced that the current government has hoarded \$40 billion in unallocated funds (read grant money they were supposed to spend) and a further \$44 billion contingency fund. (read rainy day fund) In the meantime, ERs are closed, children are unable to access care at the overcrowded Sick Kids hospitals and are being shunted around to empty beds, and hospital wait times for surgeries and in ERs keep getting longer. The protesters picked up on the Halloween theme and the "scary" plans of the current government for health care and managed to bring awareness with some media coverage.



Halloween Protest. Former teachers Laurie Hazzard and Willi Laurie along with their friend Dan, were among the Halloween protestors highlighting the unspent funding of the current government while healthcare suffers.

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In November we were given an opportunity to support current CUPE education workers in their protest against the draconian Bill 28, a pre-emptive piece of legislation aimed at stopping a strike by imposing an agreement on the thousands of underpaid CUPE education workers in the province. Across the country labour unions, politicians and even the Prime Minister stood up for workers' hard won collective bargaining rights.

Section 17 of the RTOERO Policy Book states that "RTOERO supports the right to strike of teachers, support staff and faculty in publicly-funded school boards, colleges and universities in Ontario, both as a basic condition of employment and a legitimate means to achieve collective agreements." A public statement to this effect went out to the media across the province. "As a member organization of 82,000+ education workers and retirees, RTOERO supports the collective bargaining rights of our CUPE Ontario education colleagues. We urge the Ontario government to continue to bargain in good faith, rather than imposing a contract settlement."



Joe Tigani and Audrey Bergsma
President and VP of CUPE at the protest



Willi Laurie and former student and education worker
Christine Lapp at the CUPE protest

These invaluable CUPE education workers keep our schools running in a myriad of ways and are crucial to the education system. Yet many of them are among the working poor or take on more than one job to stay above the poverty line. The average earned wage of education workers in our District is in the neighbourhood of \$32 000 per year. The current government's Bill 124, which placed a ceiling on the raises of educational workers (among others) and effectively gives these workers a wage cut when inflation is factored in, also needs to be repealed. (These staff members have seen an 8-10 percent loss of income over the past ten years after inflation.) They need to be paid a decent wage or, as we have seen in healthcare, they will start to leave their chosen profession and go elsewhere.

On November 2nd our District Executive voted unanimously to support the CUPE workers. The District 9 Facebook page posted an all-call to RTOERO members to don a sign and swell the ranks of the CUPE members who work for the Huron Perth Separate School Board. (Avon Maitland District School Board education workers, represented by a different union, were not in a strike position and unable to assist) Only part-time members of other unions, supply education workers and union released persons from the public board were able to attend the CUPE protest. The CUPE members were most welcoming and so pleased to find members of RTO, Unifor, and OPSEU on the lines, as well as the Presidents of the other education affiliates. And it was fun for us as retired teachers to find a few former students in their ranks!

RTOERO members who were not able to attend the protest, were asked to sign a form letter to support their fight on CUPE's Tell the Ford Conservations: Don't Be A Bully website, and to make use of shareables on their personal social media.

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As it happened the one-day protest across the province was enough to convince the government to repeal Bill 28 in exchange for a return to the bargaining table. A popular opinion poll that weekend also showed 62% of Ontarians were on the side of the workers when it came to taking away bargaining rights.



A look at the protest in Blyth

On the Friday of the protest, with further action still expected, RTOERO sent letters to each District to provide some funding to cover refreshments or other similar support to those involved in a local job action.

In the last bargaining year before Covid, we saw that what happens to CUPE sets the stage for how the Ford government will treat the other education workers in their respective unions later in the year. So, we will keep this funding in our back pocket in case it is needed later on.

Willi Laurie
Political Advocacy Chair



Membership Report

District 9 currently has 1104 retired members including 16 actively employed (still working in Education).

To report a change of name, address, phone or email contact Provincial Office at: membership@rtoero.org or call **1-800-361-9888**; it helps to have your membership number on hand when submitting changes. Prospective new members can go to the website, www.rtoero.ca, to join RTOERO and to explore all the benefits of membership including the group health insurance plan.

Included in this report on page 10 is the most recent Age Banding graph from Provincial Office which provides an interesting picture of our membership. Note the three members who are 100+ years of age.

The information in the following lists dates from October 31, 2021 to November 1, 2022.

New Members

We'd like to welcome the following new members who joined or transferred to District 9 this year:

Richard Promane	Paul Wreford	Thomas Bishop	Donald Brodie	Ross MacSorley
Paul Pickett	Teresa Wetherbee	Pauline Shore	Douglas Stewart	Deborah Wrack
John Aggett	Leo Alber	David Bennett	Sarah Coleman	Laura Hodgins
Josef Sinko	Paula Robinson	Joyce Statia	Cynthia Carlson	Janet Shivas
Robert Putherbough	Donald Robbins	Colleen Murphy	Sherry Lalani	Theresa Knarr
Jacqueline Timmermanns				

IN MEMORIAM

The members of District 9 extend their sympathies to the families and friends of the following:

George Gracey	Barbara Cooper	Richard Rigg	David Shearer	Joan Allan Brodie
Margaret Mountain	Louise Bosman	Carl Cornelissen	Eleanor Rupert	Wilma Kelterborn
Larry Hossack	James Kelly	Doris Marran	Raymond Donnelly	Robert Hoy
Margaret Rogerson	Frederick Waltham	Doris Bartlett	Beth Eickmeyer	Bruce Perry
Robert Ritter	Paul Statia	G. Alice Herbert	Maxine Robbins	Ruth Boyce
Robert Airhart	Margaret Drummond	Louise Schroeder	Ken Scott	Elizabeth Putherbough
Elaine St Pierre Fleming				

Dixie Lee Arbuckle
Member Services Chair

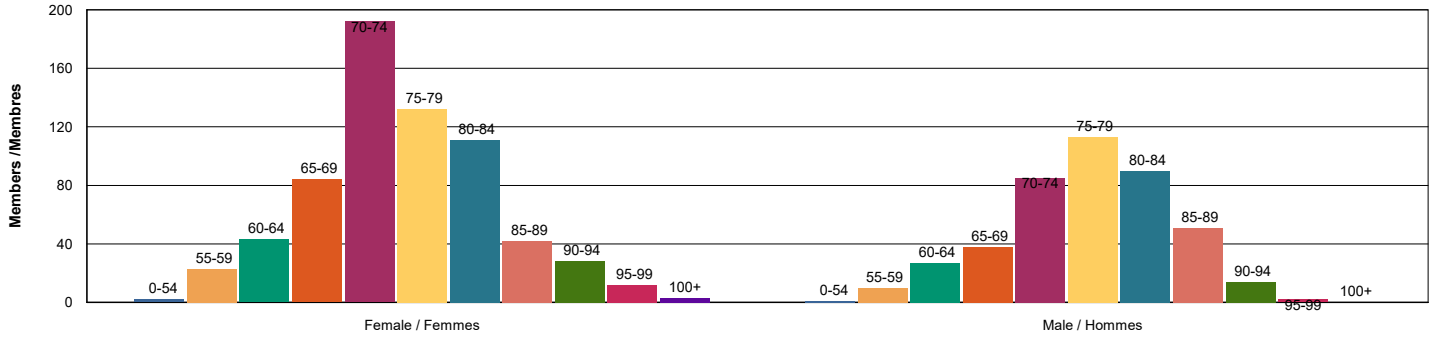


11/1/2022

Age Banding Report for Huron-Perth

Membership by Age/Gender

Membres par catégories d'âge/de sexe pour



@Gender & @Categories

	Female / Femmes	Male / Hommes	Total
0-54	2	1	3
55-59	23	10	33
60-64	43	27	70
65-69	84	38	122
70-74	192	85	277
75-79	132	113	245
80-84	111	90	201
85-89	42	51	93
90-94	28	14	42
95-99	12	2	14
100+	3	0	3
Total	672	431	1,103

Dixie Lee Arbuckle
Member Services Chair



After Orange Shirt Day: A time to reflect and look inwards

Written by Shaneeka Forrester for RTOERO, Cree artist, mother and advocate from Brunswick House First Nation, planting roots in Simcoe County, Ontario.

Orange Shirt Day, which is also known as “The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation” was on September 30. These days and the terms used to describe them may leave some of us with questions. So, let's chat! Why is Orange Shirt Day important and what can we do to honour Truth and Reconciliation year-round?

Orange Shirt Day is an important day to reflect and learn about the legacy of residential schools in Canada. It gives us a chance to explore stories and share knowledge that has not always been readily available. As we listen to and honour the stories of residential school survivors, we are actively participating in the reconciliation process. By allowing a platform to share these experiences, we are emphasizing the truth portion of truth and reconciliation.



The residential school system is a legacy that has impacted all Indigenous communities across Canada in some form. However, this is not the only legacy being etched into Canadian history books. Alongside these stories are stories of endurance, resilience and ancestral strength. It does not take much looking to see the resurgence of Indigenous culture in communities across Canada. However, it is important to honour the past as we are taking gainful steps toward reconciliation as a nation.

Understanding the basis of truth and reconciliation can feel like a daunting or overwhelming initiative. So here are a few suggestions on how we can begin unravelling that task. Firstly, read the Final Report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Explore websites like First Nations Child & Family Caring Society to teach children and grandchildren about Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Listen to many stories from a variety of territories. Each territory has a unique culture and history. Lastly, don't forget to look inward. If you have questions, confusion or misunderstandings about Indigenous people in Canada, explore those more deeply.

Participating actively in reconciliation is a task that we can all do. When we make space for conversations and education, we are helping move forward collectively as a nation.

From the RTOERO Toronto Office





RTOERO District 9's Spring General Meeting & Luncheon Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, April 12, 2023

Mitchell Golf & Country Club
81 Francis Street West, Mitchell



Provincial masking regulations will apply at our event.

We are asking you to register in advance, as always, however should provincial/local COVID regulations change prior to May 3, preventing this event, your cheque will be destroyed. Further, if **you** become uncomfortable with attending the SGM, please contact me at 519.524.2267, by Tuesday, April 25, to cancel your attendance and payment.

As at last year's SGM, we will be able to accommodate a **maximum of 120** on May 3. So ... first come, first served! You will be notified if there isn't room for you.

Agenda

09:45 Registration and Coffee/Tea/Juice

10:15 District 9 Spring AGM

11:15 Guest Speaker: Mark Nonkes, Economic Development Department of Huron County. His topic will be "Ukrainian immigration to Huron County". Case studies, procedures, and stories will be shared via presentation supported via Power Point. Thirty minutes plus 10 minutes for questions.

12:00 Luncheon Menu: Chicken Cordon Bleu — breaded chicken breast stuffed with ham and Swiss cheese; with garlic mashed potatoes and seasonal vegetables, salad, veggie tray, coffee, tea and dessert.
(Note: a vegetarian meal can be provided if you request ahead.)

We are reverting to a 2008 price for this Spring General Meeting — just \$18 per person, whether member or guest!! So send your registration early!



Spring General Meeting & Luncheon, May 3, 2023

Please complete, detach, and return with cheque payable to
"District 9 RTOERO"
to Marty Bond,
33833 Fullerview Circle, R.R.2, Goderich, ON N7A 3X8
by April 12, 2023 at the latest please.



Name: _____

Guest: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Number of lunches: _____ @ \$18 each = \$ _____

Leisure and Recreation

We are back! Hope we are back to stay with in-person gatherings.

Dave McClure took the mike on Oct 5th offering to put together a group to assume this portfolio, since Bruce has moved on to President. I am aware that he has recruited Arnold Mathers, Clare French and Jim Chapman, maybe others by now. They might consider a theatre excursion in June.

In the meantime, we have brought forward, an excursion to Wingham for June 7, 2023. It was already in place until Covid19 so rudely intruded on our plans. Here is the outline modified a bit from pre-Covid. Something for everyone! Guests welcome.

The date is Wednesday, June 7, 2023. The destination is Wingham. Arrival time is 9:15 am.

1. Sweets 'N Treats: 9:15 am. -10:00 am at 14 B Line Rd.

The first arrivals will be the Group #1, who will have a hands-on candy making session, approx. 20 minutes. You will take your creation home. You will then enjoy shopping in the store front for additional goodies to enjoy later. While you are making candy, Group #2 is shopping, then they make candy. Google says it is one minute travel time to Britespan Manufacturing.



2. Britespan Manufacturing: 10:15 am-11:15 am--71 North Rd. (the other side of the curve on Hwy #4); Safety glasses and jackets provided. It is a weekday, workday. They make building trusses for barns and sheds etc. A learning experience for us.

3. Wingham Golf Course: 11:30-12:40 am--40292 Jamestown Rd. (South side of town). Soup and sandwich/wrap buffet approx. \$10, subsidy to be decided to reduce this cost. Drinks approx. \$6.

4. Royal Homes Factory site 1 pm SHARP- 2 pm. -213 Arthur St. Tour house assembly indoor site. Then go across town to the east side to tour 3 model homes either guided or self-directed. Amberley Rd or Hwy 86 east. Phone 519.357.2444 ext. 226 if you wish to pre-book a consultation with Tracy.



Can sign up at Mitchell on May 3rd. Bring a friend to Wingham.

Bruce and Margaret Whitmore



News from Malawi

The new Change Her World library and learning resource centre is almost ready for books. Exterior construction is completed with solar panels installed, plumbing and water supply is in the final stages, painting wrapped up, and lighting completed. Several desks for the librarian and the Change Her World office, shelving for the library books and both adult and child-sized tables and chairs are being built by local tradesmen in order to support the economy in the surrounding region.



Linda Willis is spearheading the task of developing CHW's Library Policies and Procedures document. The CHW Board of Directors will adopt this document and use it to inform decisions about the use and operation of the library. The committee in Chilumba has been directed to the UNESCO document, Libraries for All! for guidance. As directors here in Canada we will also be making use of this UNESCO document to inform our decisions regarding the library.

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Linda is also developing a list of books needed to support the elementary and secondary studies. This list will include fiction and non-fiction reading materials that present a global view as well as focusing on selections that feature aspects of day-to-day life and culture in Malawi. It is surprising what has turned up in her search. Members who attended the Fall AGM had a chance to browse some of the books she has found for beginning readers. I heard many comments about the quality of those books. Also, it was interesting to note the similarity between these books and the books on offer to beginning readers in our Huron Perth classrooms.



Students in Malawi have found this school year very busy with the move to four terms rather than the usual three. This is an attempt to provide support for students after school disruptions and online learning as a result of COVID restrictions. It is hoped that one year of this measure will suffice and next year there will be a return to the usual three terms. Of course, this extra term means an increase in the amount of funding necessary to meet tuition fees and support student needs of our girls from Nursery School through post-secondary education. They number just over 200.

Change Her World supporters here in Canada have ramped up fundraising efforts to meet the increased funding needed. A good number of you helped out with this by purchasing Rheo Thompson mint smoothies from me at the Fall AGM. Many thanks for that - and wasn't the chocolate delicious! As well we just wrapped up our Chocolate Extravaganza with a successful day in Stratford and another in Belmore. So, things have been very busy on this front too. The support from individual RTO members and the donation made by our local on behalf of the general membership has been greatly appreciated this year more than ever.



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Before closing I'd like to wish everyone a meaningful holiday season. Hopefully each of us can gather with cherished family and friends to celebrate whatever customs we hold dear. I also hope Mother Nature is kind to us in the weather department and kindness prevails.

Pat Evers
Change Her World Director and RTOERO Liaison



Single-use plastic ban begins staggered rollout

For several years, we've heard about the single-use plastic ban in Canada. Consultations have been ongoing and in June 2022 the government published the Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations. The manufacture, import, export and sale of the following six categories of single-use plastics will be banned by the end of 2025:

- checkout bags
- cutlery
- food service ware made from or containing "problematic plastics" (expanded or extruded polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride, oxodegradable plastic or black plastic made with carbon black)
- ring carriers (for 6-packs of cans for example)
- stir sticks
- straws

The sale of checkout bags, cutlery, straws, food service ware and stir sticks is prohibited in Canada as of Dec. 20, 2023.

We can expect to see some changes in packaging over the next year, and maybe you've already noticed it, as other local jurisdictions and companies implement their own bans. It's important to know that plastic straws for accessibility needs are excluded from the ban.

From the RTOERO Toronto Office



What does 'We're all treaty people' mean?

You may have heard the phrase 'we're all treaty people.' Have you considered what the phrase means for us collectively and for you as an individual?

The phrase is meant to highlight how we all have responsibilities based on the treaties signed between the Crown and different First Nations. The historic treaties are agreements that describe rights and relationships between the First Nations people and the European newcomers – a relationship that was meant to be respectful and mutually beneficial. It's important to recognize that while there are written treaty documents, these documents didn't capture the spirit and intent of treaties. There is an oral history that provides the First Nations peoples' perspective.

There are both historic and modern treaties (often called comprehensive land claim agreements). Treaty rights are protected in the Constitution Act of 1982.

Learning about treaties is included in a number of the 94 Calls to Action. Including Call to Action 62, which relates to education and Call to Action 92, which covers the corporate sector in Canada.

Here are some ways to learn more about treaties:

Trick or Treaty is a 2014 documentary by Alanis Obomsawin about Treaty No. 9, which covers a large area in northern Ontario. The documentary sheds light on the importance of oral history in understanding the original intent of treaties. It's available to stream on Amazon Prime and the National Film Board website: https://www.nfb.ca/film/trick_or_treaty/

CBC created a short explainer video talking about treaties: cbc.ca/player/play/727151683808

Treaties are covered in the University of Alberta's open online course called Indigenous Canada, offered through Coursera: coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada

Do some searching to find out about the treaties in your area. If you live in Ontario, you can look up your address on an interactive map offered by the Ontario Government. Find the map here: ontario.ca/page/map-ontario-treaties-and-reserves

Information for this article comes from:
teaching.usask.ca/curriculum/indigenous_voices/land-agreements/welcome.php
rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100028574/1529354437231

From the RTOERO Toronto Office



Terms to know: Abolitionist

An abolitionist is a person who is opposed to any law or practise deemed harmful to society.

George Brown, the editor of the Globe and Mail, was a well-known white Canadian abolitionist, as was Ontario premier Oliver Mowat. Both were involved in the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada (as were members from some Christian denominations).

And you've no doubt heard of The Bryce Report. Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce was a Canadian public health official fighting to expose the atrocious conditions in Canada's residential 'schools.' He eventually published his report, called The Story of a National Crime: An Appeal for Justice to the Indians of Canada, despite efforts to suppress it. 2022 marks 100 years since its publication.

Learn more about anti-slavery in Canada: thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/anti-slavery-society-of-canada

Learn more about Dr. Bryce: definingmomentscanada.ca/bryce100

From the RTOERO Toronto Office



Do We Have Your Email Address?

Occasionally, RTOERO District 9 Executive likes to communicate with its members for certain items of interest, and we can't wait for the next issue of Clean Slate.

If you haven't already sent your email address or if it needs to be updated, send it to Beth Hazlitt, District 9's email captain in order to keep her information current at rtodistrict9@gmail.com. Your email address isn't shared with anyone.

Do You Want to Receive your Newsletter Electronically?

If you're reading this issue of Clean Slate on paper and would like to reduce the amount of paper used worldwide, you can choose to read the next issue on your tablet or computer.

Interested? Send an email to CleanSlateRTO@gmail.com with "email" as a subject and your name in the message body. That's it! Your name should match the one given at RTOERO Membership. The next issue will come earlier than the paper version.