

Report Thirty-One

Spring 2014

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No. 57



President's Message



To say that this has been a "long, cold, lonely winter" would be an understatement! However, Spring is here with the promise of good weather just around the corner and we'll soon be coming out of hibernation and enjoying ourselves again.

One excellent way to kick off the spring/summer season is to join us on Thursday, May 8th at Victoria East Golf Club for some stimulating conversation with old and new friends, a delicious lunch and some lively, upbeat entertainment. Please remember that, in response to members' requests, we are hosting a spring luncheon – not a dinner. The luncheon will begin with a social time at 11 a.m. After lunch, we will enjoy the performance of the group "Wizened Old Men", who play classic Rock and Roll songs from the 1960's, 70's, and 80's. People who have heard this group perform guarantee me that we will be singing and dancing – or at least clapping – along. Who can resist the rhythm and beat and energy of these songs? This is just what we need to shake off the grip of winter and welcome spring.

Another excellent way to celebrate the glorious spring and summer seasons is to become involved in the Ontario Senior Games which are coming to Guelph June 2 to June 13 of this year. There are over 20 events which include duplicate bridge, contract bridge, badminton, tennis, horseshoes, cribbage, cycling, swimming, golf, bocce, darts, pickle ball, scrabble, crokinole and shuffleboard. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, please contact Joan Berry at berryjoanm@sympatico.ca. More information can be found at www.ontarioseniorgames.ca. A number of us on the executive are interested in volunteering. Please join us. I would also like to attend the Opening Ceremonies on Saturday, May 31 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden St.

A third sure-fire way to enjoy the season is to join us on

our first outing of the year on June 18th when we will tour the Royal Botanical Gardens, eat lunch on a Hamilton Harbour Luncheon Cruise and visit Dundurn Castle. Lynn Morrison has organized a number of great excursions for us this year which you can read about in her article but I wanted to highlight this trip because it is such a perfect June outing. June, by the way, is designated as Senior Citizen's Month so keep an eye out for some interesting community activities designed specifically for seniors.

I truly hope you will join your friends and colleagues in District 31 at some of these events and I hope that you thoroughly enjoy your spring and summer – especially after this long, cold lonely winter. "Here comes the sun!"

Brenda McGinnis, President



Political Advocacy

As Political Advocacy Rep for our district, I am sometimes asked by politicians and other groups about the issues that are priorities and concerns for our members. I usually respond that health care issues are a major concern for our group and, when we start talking about these matters, we often don't get on to other topics because there seems to be so much to talk about in the area of health care. I am certain, though, that we have lots of concerns in other areas. I know when I wrote about the situation concerning Canada Post that this issue struck a chord with many of our members who phoned, wrote, and emailed me their agreement. Many other groups, including CARP, a number of charities, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, are also angered by the Crown Corporation's plans. Only one of our members told me that he thought the government's approach was correct. Also, recently, our executive decided to nominate "The Canine Companion for Veterans Program" as our suggestion for our annual provincial charity and it became quite clear that our executive members care very

deeply about our veterans and are troubled about their treatment by our federal government. Further, a number of our members have expressed some worries about the proposed Federal Fair Vote Bill. Voting in elections has always been very sacred to our members and our group ranks high among the population that takes the time and makes the effort to vote in elections at all levels of government. What else are you concerned about?

I recently saw an excellent email from the Chamber of Commerce asking its members for feedback on issues that they felt were important to raise during the municipal election. I thought that this was a very good idea and that we too would like to get a sense of our priorities and concerns from retired seniors' points of view as we move toward provincial and federal elections. What issues do you care about? What issues should be raised and discussed during the election campaigns? You can email me at dmcginc602@rogers.com or drop me a note or letter at 32 Gazer Cres., Guelph ON N1E 5Z7. Phone calls are okay but I am often out during the day – especially now, too, that the weather is finally improving! I prefer emails and letters because I can respond when I have time and without disturbing people – especially if it's late at night or early in the morning.

Remember RTO/ERO is non-partisan and does not endorse any candidate or party but works to help its members become more informed on issues so they can take an even more active role in the democratic process. RTO/ERO also tries to express the concerns and views of our members to politicians and other community groups. It is important that we know what issues are important to you.

A few quick follow-ups :

- Starting April 12, 2014, drivers aged 80 and over will no longer have to complete a written knowledge test. Instead, they will participate in a shorter, simpler renewal program that includes a vision test, a driver record review, an improved in-class group education session and two short, in-class screening exercises. The new renewal session will take approximately 90 minutes, or less than half the time of the current program. The current cost of renewal for seniors will remain the same at \$32. There is no additional cost for a road test if needed.
- The Yorklands Green Hub, which I wrote about in our last newsletter, was one of the top 15 ideas of

Guelph's Elevator Project and received the most votes from citizens who voted on the 51 ideas chosen that would improve the lives of Guelph citizens. This project which is really gaining momentum in terms of support will also enhance the lives of citizens in Wellington County.

- The Ministry of Consumer Services recently launched a very helpful website: www.ontario.ca/consumer-protection where citizens can get vital information about a range of consumer topics, such as home renovations, travel, joining a fitness club, door-to-door sales and gift cards.

As always, there are so many issues and so little space! I would like to hear from you so that we can focus on the issues that matter to you.

Brenda McGinnis, Political Advocacy

ONTARIO SENIOR GAMES ARE COMING TO GUELPH JUNE 2 TO JUNE 13, 2014

There are over 20 events, so **participate** yourself or **volunteer**.

Anyone interested in **convening** an event or volunteering please contact Joan Berry,

berryjoanm@sympatico.ca.

More info can be found at

www.ontarioseniorgames.ca



Frequently Asked Questions

1. *I'm turning 65 this year, so I'll be eligible for the provincial drug program. Do I need to maintain my Extended Care Coverage?*

Yes. While the ODB provides coverage for certain drugs, more than half of the drugs available in the Canadian market today are not covered by ODB. In addition, the RTO/ERO EHC Plan covers much more than prescription drugs. For example: vision care, 15 different paramedical practitioners, private

duty nursing, and travel coverage (including trip cancellation and interruption/delay). If you travel, the cost of medical insurance for a couple, over 70 yrs., for 62 days is very expensive.

Furthermore, there are an increasing number of drugs that are considered "Limited Use" and are only covered by the ODB Program if specific criteria are met. These specific criteria, as well as the list of approved "Limited Use" drugs, change throughout the year. Johnson Inc. requires a doctor's note each year confirming that you do not meet the ODB eligibility criteria. You then may become eligible to have this drug covered under your EHC Plan.

Some additional items covered: Ambulance 80%, ODB fee of \$100 – 85% covered, Glasses - \$325 every two years, Eye Exams - \$90, Orthotics - \$500, yearly hearing test to a limit of \$75, and accidental dental up to \$1,000 per incident. Read about your enhanced benefits in your 2014 Insurance Plan Booklet pp. 12-22.

2. Can I purchase glasses, hearing aids, etc. in another country and submit the receipt for reimbursement?

Purchases can be made outside Canada; however, reimbursement would be made as if the expense was incurred in your own province of residence subject to the RTO/ERO Plan's maximums and limitations. All reimbursements are made in Canadian funds.

3. What is a generic drug?

In order for a generic drug to get its Rx number, the maker of the generic drug must demonstrate that the drug has the same active ingredient and that the identical strength, dosage form, route of administration and labeling as the brand-name drug. The company must also demonstrate that people absorb the drug at the same rate. "People may think that brand-name products are better because they are more expensive, but the body does not know whether the drug came from a brand-name or a generic company," said Dr. Vinod P. Shad, a pharmaceutical scientist of 30 years. Generic medications are here to stay. I find it confusing that some generic meds manufactured by the same company sell for different prices at popular pharmacies. You would think the government would step up and regulate generic drug prices.

Consumers tend to reap big savings when a drug pat-

ent expires, freeing other companies to sell generic equivalents. Worldwide patents are usually for 20 years; however, 4 years ago, our Federal government gave a 5-year extension to certain European Drug companies who sell their products in Canada so that generic equivalents could not be manufactured here at a lower price. As this extension is coming to the end, possibly lower-priced generic drugs may hit the market. If you are on ODB, you know all about generic equivalents.

Health Matters – Please read the insert in Renaissance. You will learn a great deal.

Be Safe! Be Healthy!

Patrick Bruder, Health Chair

JOHNSON INC.

Service 1-800-461-4597 or 905-764-4884

Claims 1-800-461-4597 or 905-764-4888

Website <http://www.johnson.ca>



Our committee continues to share Goodwill to our members by sending cards, and making phone calls and visits to recognize special events and to offer our caring during illnesses and losses.

Please help us to share acts of kindness by contacting any of the members of the District 31 Goodwill Committee listed below. We may also be contacted through the District 31 website, www.rto.31.org.

Please contact RTO Provincial Office at 800-361-9888 if you change your address so our Goodwill records are up-to-date.

Arthur, Mount Forest, Harriston

- Joyce Barnes 519-848-2351
joyce.barnes@sympatico.ca

Drayton, Moorefield, Palmerston

- Jean Brodhaecker 519-638-2291
darje@bell.net

Elora, Fergus, Salem, Alma

- Marg Hall 519-846-5235
margcarl.hall@gmail.com

Rockwood, Hillsburgh, Erin

- Marina Howlett 519-836-8585
marina.howlett@sympatico.ca

Guelph

- Brenda McGinnis 519-824-5263
dmcginc602@rogers.com
- Nancy Baker 519-822-6653
nancyida@sympatico.ca
- Mary Hermann 519-821-3892
maryhermann@rogers.com
- Marie-Claire Recurt
mcrt@sympatico.ca

Keep smiling,
Joyce Barnes



Hi Folks,

We have a great line-up of trips for you this season. Coming first, on June 18th, is a day tour of Hamilton which includes a morning visit to the Royal Botanical Gardens, followed by a luncheon cruise on the Hamilton Harbour Queen. Our afternoon will include a guided tour of Dundurn Castle. All this for \$92.

Because of some unexpected problems, the Toronto Yacht Cruise was cancelled. In its place, we are offering The Gospel Side of Elvis featuring the Blackwood Quartet at the Walters Family Theatre. It is on Thursday, September 11th and costs \$89, with a meal included.

Our 5-day tour of Boston and Salem, September 22-26, still has some seats left. This tour includes four breakfasts and guided tours of Boston and Salem, the Norman Rockwell Museum, the Kennedy Library and the Salem Witch Museum. There is also free time in both cities. This is a tour you don't want to miss.

Last is the show Cabaret at the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake on Friday, October 24th. You will have free time and lunch on your own before the matinee show. This is priced at \$89.

You should book early for any of these trips as they should sell out fast. I will be available by email anytime (lynnmorrison@wightman.ca)

and will be home for phone calls after April 13th at 519 323-2419. To book the Boston Trip, call Great Canadian directly at 519-896-8687 or 1-800-461-8687. Also remember to mention RTO District 31 and my name, if you book any other trips with Great Canadian, to gain us credits for future trips.

Hope you'll join us for our "tour"rific season.

Lynn Morrison



District 31 extends sympathy to all the families and friends of our departed loved ones. We are grateful for their memory, their service and their friendship.

*Marian Adams
Iqbal Chohan
Ivan Kukovica
Sheila Irving
David Marshall
Mary McElroy
Nancy Anderson
Frederick McLarnon
Gordon Rutherford
Jonathan Wright*



The mission of the RTO-ERO Charitable Foundation is "to improve the quality of life for all seniors". The first campaign of the Foundation, thanks to over 1300 donors, to raise \$3 000 000 to create the RTO-ERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine, is now complete.

This Chair will greatly benefit the direction of care for seniors.

As I visit people in Senior Care Accommodations, I am struck by the quality of the buildings and rooms, as well as the care given by the staff. I am also becoming more aware that, although the staff and volunteers work very hard to provide encouragement and support to our seniors, there appears to be much lacking in our understanding of what motivates some seniors to be physically

and mentally active and participating. I am confident that, with our continued donations to our Foundation, more research can be done to ensure that quality of life for seniors is improved.

Each donor and District has been asked for input about our next campaign. I will keep you updated, through the newsletter and the District website, www.rto31.org. Whatever the next campaign is, the foundation continues to require your support through donations and suggestions for other campaigns.

More information is available at www.rto-ero.org/rto-ero-charitable-foundation.

You can mail your donations and suggestions to:

RTO/ERO Foundation,
300 – 18 Spadina Road,
Toronto, ON M5R 2S7

Richard Goodbrand



Website

Members are urged to visit our District website www.rto31.org for up-to-date information about RTO/ERO events in Wellington County and for photos of past events. Each edition of Report Thirty-One is posted on the web usually before you receive your copy in the mail.

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Wellington District 31
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Editor - Anne Smith
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Something to Shout About...



District 31 is blessed with many talented and creative members who are engaged in a variety of interesting and exciting activities. We would like to feature some of these achievements in our newsletters. Please let Nancy Baker, 519-822-6653, know about any of our members who are involved in

intriguing adventures or who have received awards or special recognition for their work. We would like to acknowledge, celebrate and support the accomplishments and endeavours of our members.

Congratulations and thanks to the following RTO District 31 members who recently received Ontario Volunteer Awards for their volunteer work with various organizations:

- **Glen Cox**, 10 years, The Guelph Horticultural Society
- **Anne Holman**, 10 years, Guelph Museums
- **Marion Kasha**, 15 years, YMCA-YWCA of Guelph
- **Helen Sullivan**, 15 years, River Run Centre

Happy 70th Anniversary to **Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF)** and **Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)**.

Simon Leibovitz was the assistant director of the very suspenseful production of *Wait Until Dark* at the Fergus Grand Theatre.

Nancy Baker is appearing in the Elora Community Theatre production of *Narnia The Musical* at the Fergus Grand Theatre in May.

Last year many members took advantage of RTO's project service to others at the Guelph Little Theatre. Next season, **Pam Niesiobedzki Curtis** will be directing in January, a play at GLT by W.O Mitchell "The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon". It is a black comedy involving curling with the devil. Community theatre provides an opportunity for individuals from all walks of life to develop confidence, skills and artistic sensibilities. Whether it is to act, direct, make costumes, create props, build or paint a set, it gives one a sense of accomplishment. An invitation is extended to all members to take this opportunity to join us in this great adventure and to get involved in this show, even curling experts are welcome. Contact is pniesiobedzki@hotmail.com.

Anne Smith has a display of her textile art at the Puslinch Public Library for the month of April and at the Rockwood Library during April and May.

Deborah Dryden, Jean Loney and **Gail Root** are part of the Octarine Women Artists' Collective 'eight dimensions' show May 2 - 4, 2014 at Studio 404, 404 York Rd., Guelph. The opening is on May 2nd from 7 to 9 p.m.



Going Green

RTO DISTRICT 31 NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Thank you to those who said that they would like to receive their RTO District 31 newsletter by email. One hundred eighty-three members have signed up, saving the environment as well as printing and increased postage costs.

If you would like to try this, email me at:
m.anne.smith@gmail.com

4th Annual BRING A BOOK Campaign

Bring a new book (child or adult)
to our **Spring Luncheon**.

Last spring the books were donated to
Action Read Community Literacy
Centre
and were greatly appreciated.

For further information call
Nancy Baker 519 822 6653 or
Mary Hermann 519 821 3892.



Dates to Remember

Thursday, May 8

Spring Luncheon – Victoria East – 11 a.m.

Monday, May 12 to Wednesday May 14th

Spring Senate – Toronto

Friday, May 23

Executive Meeting – 9 a.m. – Upper Grand Board Office

June 2 - 13

Ontario Senior Games (Opening Ceremonies on Saturday, May 31 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden St.)

Wednesday, June 18

Hamilton Harbour Luncheon Cruise Trip

Thursday, September 11

The Gospel Side of Elvis featuring the Blackwood Quartet at the Walters Family Theatre.

Monday, September 22- Friday, September 26

Boston Trip

Thursday, October 16

Fall Luncheon – Fergus

Friday, October 24th

Cabaret at the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake



Pension and Retirement Concerns



New Resources for Districts

The Provincial Pension and Retirement Concerns Committee has recognized the need to provide Districts with information on a series of topics/issues such as:

- Impact retirement has on a retiree's financial, physical and psychological well-being;
- Information alerts on scams;
- Information on the benefits of daily exercise;
- Information on volunteerism.

These topics will be researched and presented to the Districts using a variety of formats when available. The Committee also agreed that a yearly summary of the performance of the OTPP and OMERS pension plans and other significant issues should be sent to the Districts each year. I will provide this information to the District when it becomes available.

Fact Sheets

Two new fact sheets have been created and will be posted on the website. They deal with Sleep for Seniors and On-line Privacy and Security.

The following Fact Sheets have been updated and reposted:

- A-1 Free Chartered Accountants' Tax Clinics;
- A-2 Tax Information;
- A-7 Using Credit Cards;
- A-10 Joint Asset Planning;
- B-2 Guaranteed Income Supplement;
- B-4 Spouse's Allowance and Allowance for Survivor;
- B-5 Veterans;
- C-9 Community Care Access Centre;
- C-11 LHINs;
- C-12 Alzheimer's Disease;
- H-2 Driver License Renewal.

I will be attending the OTF Pension Forum and the OTPP Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 10, 2014. All members are invited to watch the webcast live April 10, 2014 (4:45-7:00 p.m.) or later at www.otpp.com/Annual-Meeting

The Annual Report will be available April 1, 2014 at www.otpp.com. On April 2, 2014, the Toronto Star reported that the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan began 2014 with a funding surplus of \$5.1 billion - the first surplus reported in a decade. The rate of return was 10.9% in 2013; 1.6% greater than the 9.3% benchmark. A copy of the Annual Report will be sent by mail or email to all members.

Marina Howlett, Pension Chair



Returning
ARTS AND CRAFTS
Show and Sale
at our Fall Luncheon
Creative Corner

Register now to reserve your space:
\$5.00 for a table
Set up at 9:00 a.m.

To register, or for more information, call

Nancy Baker, 519 822 6653, or
Mary Hermann, 519 821 3892.

For all others, this will be
an opportunity to do some
Christmas shopping.



“THE GATHERING OF THE GAELS”

160th Anniversary of GCVI

May 23 & 24, 2014

LUNCH AT THE HOLIDAY INN

With GCVI Retirees and Former Teachers

REGISTRATION NOT REQUIRED BUT PLEASE RSVP

Saturday May 24, 2014 at 11:30 AM

Arrive Early for Coffee with Friends

The Wellington Room, Holiday Inn,
601 Scottsdale Dr., Guelph

Lunch Buffet - \$25 per person – 11:30 AM

No advance payment but please RSVP

Dennis Johnson: djdjdj@rogers.com or

Jamie McIntosh: jamiemcintosh2@gmail.com

RTO District 31
c/o Mike Curtis, Treasurer
9450 Copeland Path, RR#2
Erin, ON
N0B 1T0



2013-2014 *District 31 Executive*

- President/ Political Advocacy Brenda McGinnis (519-824-5263)
- Past President Stephen O`Connell (519-265-2125)
- 1st Vice President Richard Goodbrand (519-291-2015)
- Membership Carol Christie (519-822-6307)
- Secretary Joan Miller
- Treasurer Mike Curtis
- Goodwill Joyce Barnes
- Health Patrick Bruder
- Newsletter Editor Anne Smith
- Pension Concerns Marina Howlett
- Travel Lynn Morrison
- Website John Ritchie
- District Councillors: Nancy Baker
Mike Essex Joan Berry
Joe Tersigni Mary Hermann
Pam Niesiobedski

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR STATUS

It is imperative that you let the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board and RTO/ERO know if you have changed:

- ✍ your address (postal or email),
- ✍ phone number or
- ✍ your status.

Please contact:

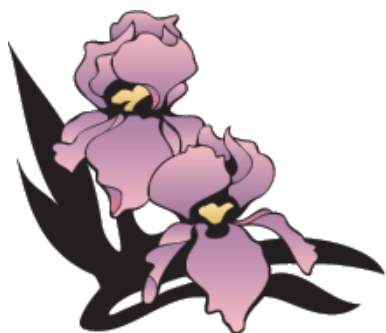
- ✍ OTPPB (5650 Yonge St., Toronto M2M 4H5 or 1-800-668-0105) and
- ✍ RTO/ERO (Diane Vezeau at 1-800-361-9888 ext.223 or dvezeau@rto-ero.org).

The newsletters are now printed and mailed from M&T Printing in Guelph.

Last month`s mailing list was not up to date which is why some of you received the newsletter by email and post. We`ve corrected the issue and apologize for the mix-up.

For emailed newsletters, please remember to let us know if your email address has changed.

You and your spouse/guest are cordially invited to attend the



Spring Annual Luncheon Meeting

OF RTO/ERO DISTRICT 31

Victoria Park East Golf Club. Guelph
Thursday, May 8, 2014

11:00 - 11:30

11:30 - 12:00

12:00 - 1:00

1:00 - 1:45

Social and Collection of Books

Greetings

Business Meeting

Luncheon

Entertainment- *The Wizenod Old Men*

MENU

gluten-free boneless breast of chicken with white wine sauce
or Baked Penne (*made with corn pasta*) with Grilled Vegetables
fresh seasonal vegetables
roast herb potatoes
Spinach salad, rolls
Dessert (variety including pies, fresh fruit)
tea/coffee



Detach and send before April 25, 2014 to

Mike Curtis, Treasurer, RR#2, Erin, ON N0B 1T0

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Subsidized by RTO District 31

Annual Spring LUNCHEON Meeting of R.T.O./E/R/O. District 31 Thursday, May 8, 2014
Please RSVP before April 25, 2014

Please make reservations for:

_____ and _____
Name Name of Guest

Special Dietary Requirements: _____

Enclosed is a cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 31 in the amount of _____ (\$20.00pp)
This meal is subsidized by RTO District 31.