

Report Thirty-One

Spring 2016

Published by RTO/ERO District 31 Wellington



President's Message



By the time you receive this newsletter, it will be officially spring. As I walk around, I can already see crocuses and other plants poking their heads up through the soil. Although we have experienced a relatively light winter, these signs bring hope and a sense of renewal!

As a result of the federal legislation – Canadian Not For Profit Act -- the Provincial Executive established an Ad Hoc Committee on Governance to review the organizational structure of RTO/ERO. As a result of the election of interested District Presidents, I am honoured that I was chosen to be a member of this committee. The committee is chaired by Martha Foster, First Vice-President of RTO/ERO. In addition to the other five Executive members, there are seven District Presidents. The review, and resulting recommendations, will likely be a lengthy process and I welcome your input.

A couple of years ago your District Executive established three student scholarships for graduating students in Wellington County. If you would like to contribute to these funds and receive a charitable donation income tax receipt (for contributions greater than \$20), please send your cheque and contact information to our Treasurer, Mike Curtis (9450 Copeland Path, RR 2, Erin ON N0B 1T0, 905-877-4134).

A review of our District Constitution has been completed by the Provincial Constitution Committee. The Provincial Committee congratulates us on a very "clean" constitution. They have made some recommendations which, after review by our District Executive, we will present to the District AGM for debate and passage, in whole or part.

Please do not forget that a great way to honour and remember those of our friends and colleagues who pass away is by making a contribution to the RTO/ERO Foundation with:

- a *Vision*: The RTO/ERO Foundation intends to

leave a lasting legacy by creating opportunities for research and for initiatives that seek to improve the quality of life of seniors across Canada; and

- a *Mission*: The RTO/ERO Foundation aims to raise funds to increase the numbers of professional and support staff qualified and trained in geriatric care as well as to support research and programs that improve the quality of life of seniors in Ontario and Canada.

Contributions (monthly or one time) may be made:

Online: at RTO-ERO.org, Support the Foundation, Ways to Give;

or by:

Phone: Call Yolanda at: 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888 ext. 245;

Email: ybronstein@rto-ero.org;

Mail/fax: Download donation form and send a cheque payable to RTO/ERO Foundation to:

RTO/ERO Foundation
300-18, chemin Spadina Road
Toronto ON
M5R 2S7.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you will find information about:

- our District RPW on April 16,
- our Spring Luncheon on May 5 at the Italian Canadian Club,
- our trips planned, as well as,
- reports on Health, Goodwill, and Political Advocacy.

Enjoy reading and I look forward to hearing from, and meeting with, you.

Richard Goodbrand
President



Political Advocacy



I recently attended the annual International Women's Day breakfast sponsored by Zonta Club of Guelph. I also attended a fantastic luncheon sponsored by the Waterloo and Wellington Labour Councils as a guest of OECTA. As usual, both events were uplifting and inspiring and very enjoyable. At the luncheon, I won a beautiful International Woman's Day T-shirt designed and donated by ETFO.

The guest speaker at the Zonta breakfast, Sharmilla Setaram from Amnesty International, outlined the three important steps of Political Advocacy.

- The first step is to listen and learn. This step just became a little harder for those of us living in Guelph. Many of us are still mourning the loss of *The Guelph Mercury*. Its demise was a shock and seemed to come out of nowhere but I suppose it shouldn't have been such a surprise. Given that only about 9,000 people were subscribing to the paper and given the trend across the country, we should have seen the loss of the "Merc" coming. Nonetheless it was still a big disappointment and a huge loss to our community. We are fortunate that we still have *The Guelph Tribune*, *The Wellington Advertiser* and *Guelphtoday.com* but it is disheartening that we no longer have a daily newspaper that tried hard to cover local events and issues and to publish the opinions of concerned citizens. A local daily newspaper is an important part of political awareness and political advocacy. I agree wholeheartedly with a recent *Guelph Tribune* editorial that stated "An informed citizenry is the basis of a healthy democracy, and a growing ignorance of what's happening locally and globally is alarming." The editor was referring to a recent Statistics Canada report that talked about a dramatically declining number of Canadians following the news on a regular basis. Equally disturbing, I think, is the trend to just read headlines running across the bottom of our television screens or to listen to "sound bites" on issues. Most issues are not black and white or easily summarized in short "bites". Analysis, context and discussion are needed to fully grasp many of the issues facing us today. The best we can do is to try to be as informed as possible in our increasingly complex and overloaded world. The

loss of the *Guelph Mercury* has just made this job a little harder.

- The second step of political advocacy is to engage respectfully. I think one of the best examples of this type of engagement is the "Women on the Bridge Movement". Every year on International Women's Day, women all over the world gather on bridges in their communities as a symbol of people building bridges to peace and hope. Once again this year, women in Guelph gathered at noon on the Heffernan Street Pedestrian Bridge and demonstrated in a joyful and respectful way their desire to put an end to violence and to enjoy peace.
- The third step of political advocacy is to take action. One of the best examples occurred recently with the Ontario budget. The government announced changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit Program whereby lower income seniors would not have to pay an annual deductible. While most people support this idea, most also thought that the income thresholds to qualify for this benefit were not adequate. Reaction by seniors was swift and loud. Many seniors wrote and phoned their MPP's and, as a result, the government is reviewing the threshold levels. While it is true that seniors in Ontario will continue to have among the lowest out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs in Canada, more advocacy work needs to be done on this issue and a Federal drug program needs to be developed. While there are many other examples of items in the budget that resulted from political advocacy, this example also illustrates the collective power that seniors possess. Politicians know that seniors pay attention and seniors vote. We listen, learn, engage respectfully, and take action.

Brenda McGinnis,
Political Advocacy



Health Matters



Highlights of the Feb. 8-10, 2016 Health Services Insurance Committee Meeting

- HSIC completed the annual review of the Governance Manual.
- Approved the 2016 Renewal

Agreement with Johnson Inc. for the Group Benefits Program

- Discussed the 51 potential changes to our benefits and the anticipated costs
- Planned for the DHR/UHR Workshop on May 29-30, 2016 for Health Reps
-

Some Interesting Observations

- a. This past year's significant shift in the US exchange rates has been a key factor in using our reserves to offset expenses.
- b. Of those retired teachers receiving OTPP, 78% have deductions for the RTO/ERO group benefits and 22% have deductions for our competitor, OTIP (RTIP).
- c. The 2015 change to generic reimbursement has been a positive for our plan financially and has also given members more "room" in the prescription drug maximum.
- d. Chiropractor, Massage Therapist and Physiotherapist combined account for 83% of paid claims for Paramedical Practitioners.

As I mentioned in my January report, the deflated Canadian dollar has a great deal of influence on our own personal purchasing power and that of our organization. Some real changes are happening due to increased drug costs for generic and name brand medications in the U.S. They have risen over 10% for medications and about 5% for medical costs. These increases are sure to find their way across the border.

If you have any benefit changes you would like to see considered for 2018, please forward them to me and I will make sure our HSIC gets them. I also have the opportunity to submit questions at our May 2016 meeting. From 2015, I have posted the 30 questions and answers submitted by our members in 2015 and I will do the same and post the answers to your questions.

Reminder

The Insurance Plans Booklets are produced and distributed every three years. The next distribution will take place in early 2017. You will receive a summary of the 2015 and 2016 changes in November of this year. Please keep this summary with your current booklet.

Government Funding for Physiotherapy

Currently, if you are part of our plan, Paramedical Practitioners Services will be reimbursed at 80% to an annual maximum of \$1,200. Here is another way to get

government assistance. If you have been discharged as an inpatient at a hospital after an overnight stay and require physiotherapy for the condition, for the illness or injury for which you were hospitalized or if you are age 65 or older, contact your physician or nurse-practitioner for a referral. 100% of the cost is covered. Visit www.healthcareahome.ca for more information. This leaves more room in your Paramedical Practitioner fund. Possibly, you deserve a massage.

Food Safety

The federal government doesn't require food manufacturers, except infant formula producers, to carry a date label and the concern there is about nutrients, not safety. In 2015, most food manufacturers in Canada use terms like "sell by", "best by" and "use by". These terms tell the consumer when to eat (or freeze) food for best quality. We dread the terms, E. coli, norovirus and salmonella. Listeria in deli meats is a bacteria which can multiply quickly in a warm environment and make you sick. Older adults and people with weakened immune systems are most susceptible. Consuming deli meats should be within a few days. Most people know that the safe proper temperature for beef roasts, pork roasts and fresh ham is 145°F and all poultry is 165°F (internal temperature). One area of concern is the temperature of our refrigerators. In the past, to prevent food spoilage, you were to set your fridge at 40°F and the new recommendation is 37°F. This temperature is meant for raw meat and vegetable preservation in order to prevent bacterial growth. These extra few degrees could keep you from becoming ill.

5 Warning Signs of Strokes

WEAKNESS - Sudden loss of strength, numbness in the face, or leg

TROUBLE SPEAKING - Sudden difficulty speaking, or understanding, sudden confusion

VISION PROBLEMS - Sudden trouble with vision, even temporary

HEADACHE - Sudden severe or unusual headache

DIZZINESS - Sudden loss of balance

If you experience these symptoms, **call 911**.

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>



Goodwill



"Today, give a stranger one of your smiles. It might be the only sunshine he/she sees all day." (Quoted in P.S. I Love You compiled by H. Jackson Brown Jr.) This quote reflects the work of the RTO District 31 Goodwill Committee as we endeavor to spread some sunshine and smiles in our members' lives by sending birthday cards, sympathy cards, get well wishes or celebrations of special life events.

Please help us to share some sunshine by contacting any of the members of the District 31 Goodwill Committee listed below. We may also be contacted by the District 31 website www.rto31.org.

A reminder that Birthday cards for our members who are 80 plus will be sent at the beginning of the birthday month due to a Provincial RTO/ERO policy change associated with the Privacy Act.

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

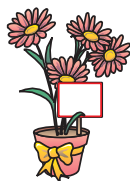
Rockwood, Hillsburgh, Erin

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

Guelph

Brenda McGinnis 519-824-5263
dmcginc602@rogers.com
Nancy Baker 519-82-6653
nancyida@sympatico.ca
Mary Hermann 519-821-3892
maryhermann@rogers.com

Keep smiling and spread some sunshine,
Joyce Barnes, Chair



Travel News



Hi Folks,

Greetings from sunny Florida. I will be back in time to take bookings for our trip to Stratford this fall. The show is A Chorus Line, "On stage they move as one, but each member has unique history of hope and heartbreak. These stories are shared in this inspiring musical masterpiece." The trip is on October 13th, 2016 and the tentative cost is \$110.

Also, please be considering our 5-day tour to Washington D.C. The dates are September 26 to 30, 2016. The prices range from \$855 per person twin to \$1255 pp single. There is a variety of planned tours, as well as some free time. We will have a guided tour of Washington and visit some museums and Arlington National Cemetery. For more information, call me at 813-780-8083 until April 10th and, after April 15th, call 519-323-2419. To book, call Great Canadian Holidays at 519-896-8687 or 1-800-461-8687 ext 280. I can also be reached by email at lynnmorrison@wightman.ca.

This looks like a good travel season, so come along and join us for some fun.

Lynn Morrison



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.





Something to Shout About...



District 31 is blessed with many talented and creative members who are engaged in many interesting and exciting activities. We continue to feature some of these achievements in our newsletters.

Please let our executive know about any of our members who are involved in interesting adventures or who have received awards or special recognition for their work. We would like to acknowledge and celebrate and support the accomplishments and endeavours of our members.

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards: Every year the Ontario Government publicly thanks volunteers for the many hours of volunteer activity that they contribute to the community by presenting them with these awards at a special ceremony. Recently some of our members received these prestigious awards.

- **Carole Ellis** for 10 years volunteering with the Victorian Order of Nurses
- **Margaret Eyre** for 10 years volunteering with the Victorian Order of Nurses
- **Norma Fear** for 15 years volunteering at the River Run Centre
- **Anne Holman** for 10 years volunteering at the River Run Centre

The Retired Women Teachers of Ontario are celebrating the **60th Anniversary** of their organization. **Guelph Wellington and Palmerston Branches of Retired Women Teachers** are joining together for a special celebration on April 27th. Happy Diamond Anniversary and many happy returns!

Barbara Heagy published a book in December titled "Ten – A Story of Love, Life, and Loss". It can be found on-line and in local bookstores.

Nancy Baker was stage manager for the Elora Community Theatre production of "The Drawer Boy" which won an out-of-festival award for best production of a Canadian play, and which was also chosen as one of the five plays to take part in the Western Ontario drama League Festival held in Woodstock during March Break.

Pam Niesiobedzki was part of the costume team that won

an out-of-festival award for best costumes for the Guelph Little Theatre production of "Good Morning, Juliet, Good Night, Desdemona" in the Western Ontario Drama League competitions.

Nancy Baker, along with other members of the West End Art group will have art work for sale at The Evergreen Centre's Art in the Halls space from March 26th to April 23rd.



In Memoriam

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.

Jean Copeland

Joan Leeming

Glennys Stewart

Wendy Young



Know any School Board employees who are retiring in the next five years?

Tell them about our upcoming District 31 RPW:

Saturday, April 16, 2016
12:45 - 4:00 pm
Victoria Park East Golf Course
1096 Victoria Rd S
\$10.00

Register online before April 7, 2016
<http://rto-ero.hs-sites.com/rpw-31-2016>



For more information, you may contact:

✍ Carol Christie (carolchristie2@hotmail.com) or 519-822-6307 or

✍ Pat Bruder (patrickbruder@gmail.com) or 519-823-2399

6th 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.



UPCOMING WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

District 31 is planning on presenting
wellness workshops in the fall of 2016.

Please watch for more information in the fall
2016 issue of the newsletter.



REPORT THIRTY-ONE
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Wellington District 31
R.T.O./E.R.O.
Editor - Anne Smith
519-833-9577
m.anne.smith@gmail.com



Dates to Remember

Sat., April 16	Retirement Planning Workshop Italian Canadian Club
Thurs., May 5	Spring Luncheon Vic East Golf Course
Mon., May 16- Wed., May 18	Spring Senate, Toronto
Mon., June 6	District 31 Executive Meeting, UGDSB Office
Mon., Sept. 26- Fri., Sept. 30	Washington Trip
Thurs., Oct 13	A Chorus Line at Festival Theatre, Stratford



RTO DISTRICT 31 NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

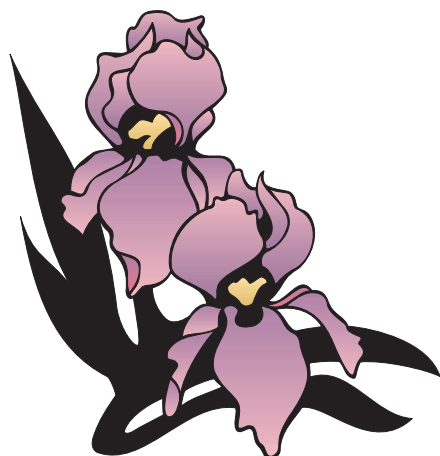
Thank you to those who said that they would like to
receive their RTO District 31 newsletter by email.

Two hundred sixty-nine 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.

***Please remember to contact me if your
email address changes .***





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

Spring Annual Luncheon Meeting

OF RTO/ERO DISTRICT 31

Italian Canadian Club, Guelph

Thursday, May 5, 2016

11:00 -11:30 Social and Collection of Books

11:30 - 12:00 Business Meeting

12:00 - 1:00 Luncheon

Door Prizes during dessert

1:00 - 1:45 Entertainment—

“Intoxicating Sounds by Tim Louis”

Buffet Menu:

Garden salad

Penne with tomato sauce

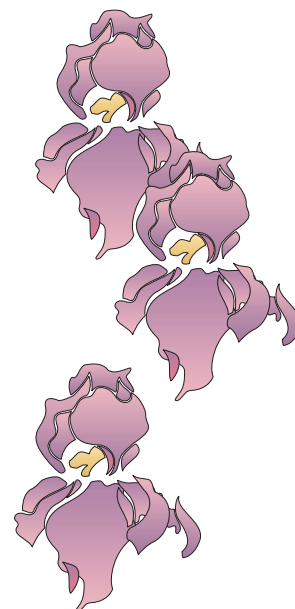
Chicken Parmigiana

Pan-roasted potatoes

Hot vegetables

Dessert buffet of fruit, assorted cakes, pies, squares

Accommodation for members with special dietary needs



Detach and send before April 15, 2016 to:

Mike Curtis, Treasurer

9450 Copeland Path, RR#2 Erin, ON N0B 1T0 905-877-4134

Cost: \$25.00 per person
Subsidized by District 31

Spring Annual Luncheon Meeting and Elections OF RTO/ERO DISTRICT 31

Thursday, May 5, 2016

PLEASE RSVP before April 15, 2016.

Please make reservations for: _____ and
Name _____.

Special Dietary Requirements:

Name of Guest

☐ Vegetarian

☐ Gluten Free

☐ Lactose Intolerant

☐ Other: _____

Enclosed is a cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 31 in the amount of \$_____ (\$25 per person).

This meal is subsidized by RTO/ERO District 31.

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

District 31 2015-2016 RTO/ERO Executive

Past President/
Political Advocacy
President

Brenda McGinnis
(519-824-5263)
Richard Goodbrand
(519-291-2015)

1st Vice President

Stephen O'Connell
(519-265-2125)

2nd Vice President/
Newsletter Editor
Membership




Anne Smith
(519-833-9577)
Carol Christie
(519-822-6307)

Secretary
Treasurer
Goodwill
Health
Pension Concerns
Travel
Website
District Counsellors




Joan Miller
Mike Curtis
Joyce Barnes
Patrick Bruder
Marina Howlett
Lynn Morrison
John Ritchie
Nancy Baker
Joan Berry
Mary Gittins
Mary Hermann
Pam Niesiobedzki
Joe Tersigni

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR STATUS

It is imperative that, if you have changed:

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

you 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)
-  Anne Smith at m.anne.smith@gmail.com
District 31 for emailed newsletters.

To create the label database for the printer to send out the newsletters, the provincial office sends a monthly change list of member addresses. These changes must be made to that database manually. Every attempt is made to ensure that this information is up-to-date and correct. Please let me know if there are any errors or omissions.

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