

Report Thirty-One

Winter 2020

Published by RTO/ERO District 31 Wellington



President's Message *Stephen O'Connell*



Happy New Year! I hope that one of your resolutions for the year is to participate more in district activities, such as our Wellness Workshop, Spring Luncheon and excursions.

One of the resolutions that our executive has made is to try to increase the attendance at our events. With this goal in mind, we have formed a committee that is working on a surveymonkey questionnaire that will ask you to comment on various aspects of our luncheons, workshops, and trips; however, you don't have to wait for this survey to express your views. Please pass on your ideas to any of our executive members. Do you have suggestions for venues, menus, themes, entertainment, trips, wellness topics, newsletter articles? Please let us know what would make you want to attend a luncheon, a trip, or workshop.

In the meantime, we are planning for our **Spring Luncheon** at the Italian Canadian Club where we will enjoy delicious food and, most of all, enjoy each other's company. For our after-lunch entertainment, we have booked a very talented musical duo, Double Impact, who will have you singing and maybe even dancing along to the old favourite classics. Please join your old, and new, friends at this social event where we also support the Literacy Council, J.O.E., and each other. Save the date: May 7, 2020.

Did you know that RTO/ERO is a member organization of the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers (ACER-CART)? It is a non-partisan organization that consists of thirteen retired teacher associations across Canada. ACER-CART provides a national voice for retired teachers and is a means to address issues such as a National Seniors' Strategy, Pharmacare, opposition to privatization of medical services and opposition to any federal legislation that would lead to the demise of defined benefit pension plans. The seven-member executive includes three RTO/ERO members.

You can find out more about the organization at www.acer-cart.org.

Continue to check our District website (www.rto31.org) and Facebook page (RTO District 31, Wellington) for up-to-date information about RTO/ERO news and events.

Let's all try hard to keep our resolutions this year. I'm looking forward to seeing you in person on May 7th.

Past President's Message *Richard Goodbrand*



RTO/ERO has an agreement with some external organizations or businesses. These agreements are called Preferred Sponsors. Each of these is approved by the Board of Directors and the primary reason for these agreements is to provide added value, usually through discounts and preferred rates on products and services, to our members. The Board is diligent in ensuring that these agreements do not jeopardize our not-for-profit status.

Currently RTO/ERO has three such agreements in place benefitting our members — IRIS (for vision care), Hearing Life (for hearing care), and Merit (for travel).

Political Advocacy *Brenda McGinnis*



RTO/ERO has continued to act as a strong advocate for our members and they have provided District Political Advocacy Reps with a great deal of excellent information on a whole range of important federal and provincial issues.

For the third year, RTO/ERO held an Advocacy Day in November at Queen's Park. The Board of Directors, Political Advocacy Committee and senior staff represented our organization in a full day of activities. Our teams met one-on-one with MPPs and government officials to share our issues - geriatric training, elder abuse and age friendly communities. Our members attended and were recognized during the Question Period. More than seventy MPPs and their staff attended the networking lunch.

During the recent federal election period, RTO/ERO reached more than 3 million people through a digital campaign designed to create awareness about our three national priorities: National Seniors' Strategy, Retirement Income Security, and Universal Pharmacare.

RTO/ERO also sent a very strongly worded letter to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, expressing "our deep concern with the proposal by the government to restructure, centralize, reduce and possibly privatize the health care services for all Ontarians and particularly how it will affect older adults". The letter signed by Martha Foster, Chair of our Board, and Jim Grieve, Chief Executive Officer, respectfully requested a meeting with Minister Elliott, "at your earliest convenience, to explore strategies that can help build the health care system for the future, to offer our assistance where possible, and to focus on much needed services for our growing senior population".

One of the most important issues facing us right now, however, because it is so near and dear to all of our hearts, is the situation in the Ontario Education System. I think it is very worthwhile to provide our members with the following information that Provincial RTO/ERO has sent to us.

Ontario teachers and other staff in schools and school boards are engaging in contract negotiations with the government right now. Strike votes and work-to-rule job action have already been announced, and we expect more such news in the months ahead.

We are receiving questions from our members about ways to best support our members and colleagues who are actively working in education and we offer the following guidance:

- RTO/ERO has publicly expressed our opposition to the education funding cuts. We have met with each union and offered our support at the provincial and local levels. We encourage districts to support local unions as you can, within the resources available in

your area.

- RTO/ERO provides a small amount of funding for districts to provide refreshments or other similar support for those participating in job action in your community. District executives have information about how to apply for these funds.
- RTO/ERO is a political, but non-partisan organization. This means we cannot provide or support RTO/ERO signs or banners at rallies, pickets. etc.
- Wearing RTO/ERO apparel, pins etc at events is an individual choice.
- RTO/ERO supports the right of education staff to fair collective bargaining and to strike. We encourage our members to think about ways to best express that support on a personal level. Many of our members are occasional school staff or volunteer in schools and classrooms. We encourage you to consider work-to-rule or strike conditions when making the decision about participating in these activities during the job action period.

We know that you join with the Board of Directors in supporting our education colleagues at this time.

District 31 will do its best to support our education colleagues and promote and advocate for our other provincial and federal priorities.

Health Matters *Patrick Bruder*



Another year is upon us. Some have made resolutions for self-improvement and others have avoided making them. It is easier to look at the past year with 20/20 vision and ask ourselves "What if?"

The world itself at times seems to be in turmoil. We have struggled through political elections and our previous occupations are under attack. Let's take a brief look at the lives of retired seniors. In Canada, we have 37.59 million people and its retirement rate is surging. Stats Canada says that, by 2030, the 9.2 million baby boomers will reach retirement. We definitely have a

powerful voice in creating change and we also control considerable wealth.

As with inflation, your health benefit premiums have increased slightly as of January 1, 2020:

- If you have the couple coverage for the complete package, you were paying \$372.65 a month. Now you are paying \$390.66, for an increased cost of \$18.01 a month or \$0.59 a day.
- If you have the single coverage, you were paying \$187.23. Now you are paying \$196.27 for an increased cost of \$9.04 or \$.30 a day.

In late November, you received the RTO Health Benefits Update in the magazine, "Communique". It is very informative about our membership, ratings of our health plan and understanding the stability requirements for travel.

In mid-December, you received your Insurance Plans Booklet 2020 and your new benefits card. The new card, with the new RTO imprinted logo, lists everything you need to know. Our travel insurance carrier has changed. In your benefit booklet, pages 12 to 26 outline the benefits' coverage available to RTO/ERO members.

Tips to Stay Healthy in 2020

1. Humidity: For healthy breathing, the humidity should be between 40 -50%.
2. Vitamin D: The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) suggests 2,000 IU/day for seniors.
3. Hydration: The Kidney Association of Canada now recommends that, to be properly hydrated, males should consume 3 litres of water per day and females 2.2 litres.
4. Pneumococcal Pneumonia: There was a big increase in the number of cases in 2018. For protection against pneumonia, talk to your doctor about the benefits of the Prevnar 13 vaccination.

As usual, there is so much information on which to report. Hopefully, this column will make you think about your own situation and take action to keep yourself healthy.

Stay Safe! Stay Healthy!

JOHNSON INC.
1-800-461-4597 or 905-764-4888
www.johnson.ca

Pension and Retirement Concerns

Marina Howlett



2019 Inflation Increase
effective January 1, 2020

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTTP)

- OTTP inflation rate increase – 2.0%
- The increase will be reported and the pension adjustment will be reflected on your January 31, 2020 direct deposit. For further information, contact Member Services at 1-800- 668-0105 or www.otpp.com.

Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS)

- OMERS inflation rate increase – 1.89%
- A personal annual statement of pension income was sent to retired members in December 2019.
- For further information, contact Member Services 1-800-387-0813 or www.omers.com.

Canada Pension Plan (CPP)

- CPP inflation – 2.0%
- The cost of living increase will be reflected on your January 29, 2020 direct deposit.

Old Age Security (OAS)

- Adjusted quarterly according to the rate of inflation for the previous quarter
- OAS benefits which consist of the basic OAS pension, the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and the Special Allowances will not increase for the first quarter of 2020 (January to March).
- Effective January 1, 2020, the basic OAS pension will be \$613.53 and the threshold where the clawback starts is \$79,054 (gross income from all sources).



Goodwill Joyce Barnes



“There may be Peace without Joy, and Joy without Peace, but the two combined make Happiness”. *John Buchan*
May you enjoy Peace, Joy and Happiness in this New Year and New Decade.

Thanks to the members of the RTO/ERO District 31 Goodwill Committee of Brenda, Marina, Mary, Nancy, Jean, Marg and Joyce who sent over 300 Birthday and Christmas cards to our members who were 80 plus in 2019. Fourteen floral arrangements were sent to members who were 90 and 95 in 2019. Many get well, sympathy and congratulatory cards were also sent.

In 2020 the Goodwill Committee members look forward to continuing these acts of kindness and caring to improve the quality of our members' lives. Please help us to do this 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.

Arthur, Mount Forest, Harriston

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

Drayton, Moorefield, Palmerston

Jean Brodhaecker 519-638-2291

Elora, Fergus, Salem, Alma

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

Rockwood, Hillsburgh, Erin

Marina Howlett 519-836-8585
howlettmarina@gmail.com

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



Apologies are extended to any member of whose needs we have not been made aware. Monthly reports are received from the RTO/ERO Provincial Office to assist us with our work. Please contact RTO/ERO Provincial

Office at 800-361-9888 if there are any changes in your personal information so our Goodwill records are up to date.

Be happy!



Some information to improve life quality...

Transportation Programs

VON 1-888-506-6353

Wheels of Hope Canadian Cancer Society 1-888-939-3333

Medical Expenses you can claim on Income Tax Return

Travel expenses including mileage, meals and parking to obtain medical services, not available locally, can be claimed where you travelled over 40km one way for care. Many other medical deductions are listed on the Canada Revenue Agency website at www.cra-arc.gc.ca/medical or call 1-800-959-8281.

The N11 Numbering System

- 9-1-1 Emergency Services
- 8-1-1 Non-Urgent Health Care Telephone Service
- 7-1-1 Message Relay Service (MRS) for the deaf
- 6-1-1 Telephone Repair & Customer Service
- 5-1-1 Ministry of Transportation Road & Highway
- 4-1-1 Directory Assistance
- 3-1-1 Municipal Government Services
- 2-1-1 Social and Community Services - a telephone helpline and online database that provides a gateway to community, social, health and government services

Bring a Book Campaign Nancy Baker



Just a reminder that, once again, we will be collecting new books for children and adults at our Spring Luncheon.

Last year, the books from our annual Bring a Book Campaign were donated to Action Read Community Literacy Centre where they were greatly appreciated.

For more information, call Nancy Baker at 519-822-6653.



2019 Project Service to Others - J.O.E.

Our executive is extremely happy and proud that our 2019 nominee for Project Service to Others, J.O.E. (Jobs Opportunities Enterprise), received \$4,000 from RTO/ERO to open a new coffee kiosk at Westminster Woods Medical Centre in Guelph.

If you have attended our Spring luncheons for the past few years, you are very familiar with J.O.E. These enthusiastic young baristas have served you coffee from Planet Bean, a baked good from College Heights or Zehrs and a J.O.E. joke of the day during the social part of our luncheon. You have probably also met these enterprising young adults at the Guelph Public Library, the Dawson Road Medical Centre, the Library's Giant Book Sale, Vegfest, and many other community events. Now, thanks to RTO/ERO, J.O.E. is able to open another kiosk at Westminster Woods Medical Centre.

J.O.E. enables adults with developmental disabilities to build their strengths, abilities and community participation through inclusive work. J.O.E. is all about celebrating ability, diversity and inclusion. District 31 is so very proud and honoured to be a part of this wonderful group and we look forward to continued successful collaborations. J.O.E. will definitely be at our Spring luncheon on May 7th and some of us plan to participate in the Bad Bones Ride for J.O.E. in July (even if some of us just buy raffle tickets and cheer the motorcyclists on!). Some of our more adventurous members ride with the club.

You might have an idea for a Project Service to Others. Districts apply for individual projects that support local, national and international programs that often involve children and/or disadvantaged groups to a maximum of \$4,000 per project. A provincial committee of RTO/ERO assesses the merit of each project according to established criteria, including level of member and District participation in the project.

Check out our website for a list of our past successful Projects. If you have a project in mind, let our President Stephen O'Connell know.



7th Annual RTO District 31 **Wellness Workshop**

May 14, 2020

9:00 am to 12 noon

at the

Guelph Country Club

\$10.00 pp

Register with Brenda McGinnis
(flyer to follow in the Spring newsletter)

The committee has decided to focus on two very important health issues – eyesight and hearing.

IRIS has agreed to present information about eye health and preventative care. There are a variety of lens products and new technologies available.

HearingLife has agreed to talk about hearing health. The presenter will review types of hearing loss and how this loss may affect other areas of your health.

These companies provide special benefits to RTO/ERO members to present at the workshop. As an RTO/ERO member, you may or may not want to take advantage of these offers. It is entirely up to you and there is no pressure on you at all to take advantage of the services they provided but both presenters offer excellent advice on these two very important health issues.

There will be refreshments and door prizes, good information and stimulating discussion. We will also ask you to provide feedback and topic suggestions for future Wellness Workshops.

Here are a few of the many positive quotes from last year's evaluation forms:

- "Very friendly atmosphere";
- "Everyone demonstrated keen interest and lots of questions followed. Likely two presentations would be sufficient."
- "Good to have healthy snacks of veggies and fruit available";
- "Hope this series continues",
- "A valuable way to spend a morning ";
- "Very informative - I learned a lot."

Committee: *Nancy Baker, Joan Berry, Marina Howlett, Brenda McGinnis, Stephen O'Connell, Anne Smith*

In Memoriam

“Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed, and very dear.”

RTO District 31 extends sympathy to all the families and friends of our departed loved ones.

George Brown
Catherine Burns
Beverly Cassidy
Norma Fear
Elizabeth Hause
Fred Hoag
Donald Menhennet
Dorothy Reid
Faker Salie
Bill Scott
Beth Taylor



Travel News Lynn Morrison



Hi folks,

Happy 2020. I have some fun trips being planned to help make it a year to remember.

A spring trip to the Old Mill in Toronto for a Mysteriously Yours Show, *Murder at Sea*, is in the works but no date has been

set yet. The possible cost is \$124 for the meal, show and transportation. This is an interactive show.

In the fall, we plan to visit the Lighthouse Festival Theatre in Port Dover for a hilarious play, *Murder at the Howard Johnsons*, and some sightseeing in the area. The price and date are TBA.

Our overnight fall colour tour is to be Oct. 7–9, 2020 at the Severn Lodge in Muskoka with some side trips and a cruise. Some meals will be included.

I will send out dates and prices when I receive further information from Great Canadian.

2019-2020 Executive

Past President	Richard Goodbrand	519-291-2015
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District 31 Annual Luncheon Meeting

at the
Italian Canadian Club

on
Thursday, May 7, 2020

Entertainment: **Double Impact**

Register with Mike Curtis by **April 23, 2020.**



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.

Patrick Bruder, his wife, Sharon, and two of their grandchildren are featured in Robert Munsch's new book, *Sounds of Christmas*. The two main characters in the book are Patrick and Sharon's grandchildren, Georgia Grace Grebenc and Lincoln Joseph Grebenc.

Nadia Comeau is part of the all female cast of *Always a Bridesmaid* which will be playing at the Century Theatre in Hillsburgh from March 13-21, 2020.

Val Morse is serving as Secretary and Membership Secretary on the Board of Directors of Yorklands Green Hub. Val has served on several Guelph non-profit boards, including the Guelph Arts Platform and the Family Mental Health Network. Val has experience in elementary outdoor education and a strong belief in environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Mike and Jane Nunan celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 21, 2019.

Joe Tersigni wrote three columns for *The Guelph Mercury Tribune* profiling veterans of the Ward Neighbourhood.



Retirement Planning Workshop - Frank Tersigni



Good day. Thank you for your ongoing support and assistance with Retirement Planning Workshops (RPWs). They continue to be the best way of promoting our plan to potential members. In 2019, we exceeded expectations and saw a record number of attendees. Furthermore, survey results were extremely positive, and the growth in membership enrolments confirm the workshops' effectiveness. As a result, RTO/ERO now has decisively surpassed 80, 000

members! 2019 was a fantastic year!

As for spring 2020, we now have a date for our District 31 Retirement Planning Workshop. It will be held on Thursday, April 2nd at Victoria Park East Golf Club, 1096 Victoria Rd. S. All workshops have an approximate duration of three hours from the point of check-in.

You can register online at www.rto-ero.org.



District 31 Financial Report



December 31, 2019

Income

	Budget	Actual
Annual Rebate	20 000.00	20 211.33
RPW	2 000.00	0.00
Luncheons	3 000.00	2 624.00
Bank Error		0.01
Wellness Workshop		260.00
Project Service to Others		4 000.00
RTO Media Campaign		
rebate		899.00
Total	25 000.00	27 994.34

Expenses

Goodwill	2 000.00	1 764.34
Project Service to Others	0.00	4 000.00
RPW	2 000.00	186.28
Executive	400.00	1 458.44
District Luncheons	7 000.00	6 776.26
Forum	1 000.00	1 963.68
Newsletter	3 000.00	3 968.53
Office Expenses	600.00	469.67
Transportation	1 200.00	1 270.85
Website	300.00	292.29
Scholarships	600.00	400.00
RTO Fund	100.00	100.00
Guelph-Wellington		
Community Living	300.00	350.00
Christmas donations	500.00	400.00
G/W Com Soc.Jus.	0.00	1166.21
RTO Election Campaign	0.00	222.87
Wellness	400.00	469.90
Total	19 400.00	5 259.32
Surplus	5 600.00	2 735.02

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



Dates to Remember

Mar. 30, 2020	RTO District 31 Exec Mtg
April 2, 2020	Retirement Planning Workshop Victoria East Golf Club
May 7, 2020	RTO Spring Luncheon Italian Canadian Club
May 14, 2020	RTO Wellness Workshop Guelph Country Club



Visit our District website at 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 website.

If you would prefer to get your newsletter online, email John at mistercanoehead@yahoo.com. He will add you to our 'email the newsletter list'.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR STATUS

It is imperative that , if you have changed:

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

you contact:

- OTPPB (5650 Yonge St., Toronto M2M 4H5 or 1-800-668-0105);
- RTO/ERO rto-ero.org or 1-800-361-9888. Ask for Membership Dept. or email membership@rto-ero.org

Provincial Office sends out a monthly membership list and change report which we use to create a label database. This is used to send out the newsletters. Every attempt is made to ensure that this information is up-to-date and correct.

REPORT THIRTY-ONE is published three times a year
by Wellington District 31 RTO/ERO.
Publisher - Anne Smith
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