



Twenty-Second Report

District 22 Etobicoke and City of York

The Retired Teachers of Ontario
les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l'Ontario



Winter 2022



President's Message



Happy New Year to all of the members of District 22, Etobicoke and York! When this **Twenty-Second Report** reaches you, the Holiday season will be mostly over. In spite of restrictions, I hope that it was a time for you and your loved ones to celebrate in some memorable fashion. We certainly are finding ways to make new traditions! It has been a most difficult time for everyone and we continue to follow the recommended safety protocols. Social isolation has adversely affected many and stress levels are increasing. Please remember there are many help lines available – luminohhealth.sunlife.ca and RTOERO website Resources. The website techserveto.com was established to help seniors manage or use the devices of computers and smart phones as we have come to rely on communication with others.

The District 22 Executive has continued to be concerned about our lack of ability to meet face-to-face with our members. The usual activities that District 22 members were used to enjoying were again cancelled. We have not been able to hold our usual social gatherings, new members' breakfasts, To Hell with the Bell luncheon, Trivia, Fall Luncheon, Spring Annual General Meeting and Luncheon, the one-day trips (arranged by Pamela Guy) – all enjoyed by so many. As an Executive, we have continued to meet on Zoom to conduct District 22 business. Virtual activities have become the norm for our events. This year we have enjoyed a true variety! *Ask Pamela-Tech Talk* (specific dates), *Hava Java* – 3rd Thursdays of the month, 10-11 a.m., *Meditation* – Tuesdays 1-2 p.m., *Movie Club*, May - *Climate Change and Gardening* – Alice Casselman, June - *Tea with Tracy*, October – *For the Love of Chocolate*, November – *Remembrance Month* – 4 Friday events, Circle Entertainment.

RTOERO, Foundation and Vibrant Voices have held many webinars throughout the year – e.g. *Saving the Forest-Saving Us*, Environmental Stewardship, zoom meetings, Social Isolation Awareness Month October webinars. Consider exploring the websites of the *Foundation* – rtoero.ca/Foundation and *Vibrant Voices* – rtoero.ca/vibrant-voices.

It is with heavy hearts that we join others across the country in remembering and honouring the Indigenous children who were discovered in unmarked graves. The wounds from the legacy of the residential schools run deep. We all must be better and do better as we affirm our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Indigenous peoples of the land. We can take meaningful action by

- ☐ understanding the findings of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](https://www.trc.gc.ca) and the [94 Calls to Action](https://www.trc.gc.ca)
- ☐ identify which Calls to Action you, your family and/or workplace can act upon
- ☐ learn about Indigenous peoples in our community.

Karl Sprogis's article on Truth and Reconciliation discusses the efforts of District 22 and some events organized by RTOERO. The Strategic Plan 2025 directs RTOERO's work for the next few years. The three key issues are National Seniors Strategy, Geriatric Healthcare and Environmental Stewardship. Please refer to Janis McCaskill's article on District 22's action on Environmental Stewardship.

As I write this, many Covid-19 protocols have been re-established. Stay vigilant, continue safe practices and be kind. If there are any concerns about any of the information in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me at president22@districts.rtoero.ca. As always, "Here for you now . . . Here for your future."

Anne McIlroy - President, District 22, Etobicoke and York



- ## Calendar of Events

Tues. 7 District 22 Executive Zoom 10:00

A Tribute to District 22 Member MARY LOW

Mary Low was a well respected and beloved Elementary Principal then Superintendent with former Etobicoke Board and TDSB and then administrator with EQAO. Her calm, somewhat understated unassuming style, superb communication skills, work ethic, ability to listen, analyze and assess made her an ideal administrator and was most effective and appreciated during amalgamation.

A true and supportive mentor, she could be depended on to give frank constructive criticism. Generous to a fault she recognized and responded to anyone in need. Her appreciation of the arts, her eclectic taste in music, love of organized sports lead her to attend and share concerts, games with family and friends. Her strong faith resulted in very active engagement in community life.

What did she do during the time listed in her schedule as unavailable for appointment? She would be found in a class room reading to students. Throughout all the demands of administrative duties and setting up EQAO she never lost sight of the fact that she was always an educator, dedicated to support learning, literacy and developing the intellectual growth of the individual student. **It was her vocation. She made a difference to the lives of many. Adieu.**



From the Awards Committee

This year, RTOERO is awarding 20 scholarships valued at \$3000 each to post-secondary (college or university) students enrolled in programs that lead to a career either in education, environmental stewardship or seniors health and wellbeing.

RTOERO members are encouraged to recommend students in their lives, including family members, who meet the criteria.

Over the past 16 years, RTOERO has awarded scholarships totalling over \$500,000

Eligibility

- The applicant must be studying in a college or university program that leads to a career either in education, environmental stewardship or seniors' health and wellbeing.
- This includes fields such as: Health sciences, medicine, nursing, personal care, geriatric health care, research into healthy active living for seniors, architects, designers of age-friendly spaces, conservation sciences, natural resource protection, pollution prevention, waste management and teaching or careers in education.
- Students who are newly entering their programs are eligible provided that they are enrolled in their programs at the time of the application deadline.
- The applicant must be recommended by an RTOERO member.
- Successful applicants may be awarded the RTOERO scholarship only once.
- RTOERO members are not themselves eligible to be awarded the scholarship.
- In addition to the completed application, the applicant must provide proof of enrolment.
- Students are to fill out the application themselves, not the RTOERO member.

How to apply

Please read thoroughly the following [application instructions](#) before completing your application. Applications are due January 14, 2022. For more information contact scholarship@rtoero.ca.

Every year the District 22 – Awards Committee presents to the executive for their approval 3 names for the Outstanding Community Service Awards. This year (pandemic year) the Committee had 4 qualified participants names to submit to the executive.

The following are summaries of the submissions that the Awards Committee received.

MARY BARTLE

Mary volunteered her time with the Dorothy Ley Hospice. She worked from the front desk 4 hours a week completing desk chores, greeting visitors and families, delivering families to appropriate locations and lending a sympathetic ear to upset families. Mary folded hundreds of fundraising letters also. The hospice was fortunate to have use of Mary's musical abilities. She played beautiful melodies on the piano in the lounge once a week for 2 hours at a time.

Her \$1,000 cheque went to the Dorothy Ley Hospice.

CYNTHIA BELLMAN

Cynthia is in her sixth year as a member of the Toronto Symphony Volunteer Committee. The TSVC is currently in its 98th year and its purpose is to contribute "to the financial support of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and to expanding awareness of its musical and education programs."

When she was principal at the TDSB, one of her schools (Mill Valley Junior School) was fortunate to participate in a TSO program call Adopt-a-Player of which the TSVC was involved helping to organize. She was so impressed with the quality of the program and the importance of introducing students to symphonic music and the wonderful Toronto Symphony Orchestra that she decided to volunteer her time and skills to this organization when she retired. Sadly, the Adopt-a-Player program no longer exists. However, the TSVC Education currently consists of: 1) Morning with the Symphony -a docent program where we support the TSO to facilitate secondary school music classes from across Toronto and the GTA to observe a TSO rehearsal at Roy Thomson Hall and participate in a discussion with a member of the orchestra. 2) Young People's Concerts – we accompany pre-concert performers to the RTH lobby and assist with the informal seating of the audience of children and parents. 3) Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra Competition, liaising with the orchestra by attending a rehearsal and providing refreshments and attending their concerts.



As Chair of TSVC Education Committee , she continues to liaise with the Toronto Symphony Education and Community Engagement and Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra by keeping our members up to date through their newsletter with many of the innovative things that have been happening (for example, the updating of the TSO Education website, virtual field trips).

Cynthia's \$1,000 cheque went to the Toronto Symphony Volunteer Committee.

LAURA PARSONSON

Laura became involved with the Metropolitan Toronto Association for the Mentally Retarded when her daughter Emily was born in May of 1983. She supported and worked to have the name changed to Community Living Toronto which endorses the vision of helping people who are developmentally challenged have the opportunity to LIVE, LEARN, WORK and PLAY in their communities.

LAURA PARSONSON - continued

Laura has been on the Etobicoke/York Regional Council of CLT for 36 years and has held every position (except Treasurer) including, Chairperson, Secretary, Fundraising Chair, Pilot Parents Representative, Nomination Committee Chair and Board Representative. She has been the volunteer of the year for the region more than once. On the CLT Board of Directors Laura has been a Parent Representative from Etobicoke/York Region from 2016 –present. She was the 2018 recipient of the Jim Turner memorial Award for Outstanding Volunteerism. She has been in the Education Committee for many years and on the Special Education Advisory Committee Representative to the Etobicoke Board of Education for many years.

Laura worked to develop good practices relating to implementing Bill 82 (The Education Amendment Act of 1988 which is the landmark case establishing the rights of students who require special education). She advocated for programs and support for those students, lobbied for integration and inclusion of children with exceptionalities and partnered with and attended IPRC meetings with parents to help them achieve the best outcomes for their sons and daughters.

Laura has been a Guest Speaker and Lecturer from 1984 – presently at the Canadian Medical Association, Nurses Associations, Parent Groups, Education Conferences and Humber College. The topics include “Life After Down Syndrome”, “Disclosure”, Myths and Fallacies Relating to Down Syndrome”, “The Loss of the Perfect Child”,

Laura’s \$1000 cheque went to Community Living Toronto.



LIDA SAMBORSKY



Lida has volunteered her time at Yahir School of Ukrainian Dance, St. Demetrius Church, Stonegate Community Health Centre Food Drive, RTO Rendezvous Club and the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

As Costume Mistress at the Yavir School of Ukrainian Dance – from 2017 – present –Lida organizes and maintains the costume room, launders and mends all the costumes, fits and alters costumes for the performers and sources new materials and costumes. She works with the Artistic Director to plan different Ukrainian regional costumes for the Yavir school concerts.

As a UCWLC Member at the St. Demetrius Branch – from 2012– present Lida acts as hostess for the St. Demetrius Branch, has been Vice-President for two terms, co-organizer of the Spring Flowers Tea, organized the reception for the Ordination of the Sub-Deacons and the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate Anniversary. She has represented the UCWLC St. Demetrius Branch at other UCWLC branch events, and congress and convention.

Lida has helped to organize, promote and count the donations for the Advent Project for the Stonegate Community Health Centre Food Drive at the Christ the Good Shepherd Parish – from 2013- present.

As the Assistant Captain at the Rendezvous Club from 2010 – presently Lida assists the captain with phoning members and reminding them of the meetings and does a social check in calls to the members.

From 2014- 2019 Lida canvassed for the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Her \$1,000 cheque was divided between the Early Years Program at Stonegate and the Yavir School of Ukrainian Dance.

Sharon Kular - Awards

Benefits Report

“Good health and good sense are two of life’s greatest blessings.”

– Publius Syrus

The RTOERO Insurance Plans Booklet 2020 continues to be your primary source of information regarding your Health Benefits. Communique – Health Benefits Updates will provide information on updates and changes to the plans. These documents are available on the RTOERO Website. Watch for changes and upgrades to the plans for 2022 to be announced shortly, probably by the time you receive this. Ensure that RTOERO has your email address so that you can be informed of these changes.

You may have noticed changes in the members’ on-line claims process. Everyone should now be on the MyInsurance claims portal (<https://rtoero.johnson.ca>), which has replaced the Members Only website. The new features include improved user experience, faster claims approval and payment, enhanced security, and easier access to policy information. Members who have questions about using the new portal should contact the Johnson support team directly.

A District Health Representatives workshop was held on October 4, 2021. A report on this workshop will be made in the next STONY issue.

Successful Ageing: What it Means for Older Adults

Successful ageing has become an important concept to describe the quality of ageing. Despite the growing literature on this topic, there is no standard definition of successful ageing. It is increasingly seen from a holistic point of view. It may refer to maintaining good physical health while also referring to the social and psychological adaptation processes in later life. A recent systematic review of 22 studies examined how older adults define “successful ageing.” Although older adults are not a homogeneous group (since gender, culture or state of health can influence perceptions), 12 themes emerged from the literature:

1. Maintaining meaningful relationships and social interactions with family and friends, engaging in their community, and accessing resources and support.
2. Maintaining and cultivate a positive attitude to maintain emotional well-being.
3. Being healthy to stay independent for as long as possible.
4. Having a financial safety net to meet basic needs, cover living costs, access health insurance and get the care they need.
5. Accepting (and adapting to) physical changes associated with ageing and be open to use assistive devices or gradually adjust activities.
6. Being engaged to stay active (for example, volunteering or pursuing hobbies).
7. Developing spirituality to improve well-being, give meaning to life and prepare for the later stage of life with serenity.
8. Having support from social policies favourable to ageing, such as access to quality health care, free or affordable, access to work, government pensions, access to meals or housekeeping services.
9. Being autonomous and independent to maintain some freedom and continue to perform daily tasks without assistance, as well as to take care of yourself without depending on others.
10. Maintaining good cognitive health to stay alert, reduce memory loss, maintain mental activity and an active mind.
11. Staying physically active to delay old age or to be able to maintain a social or professional life.
12. Having a “good” death, ideally in the comfort of your own home, surrounded by family members.

You may have a different perspective on “successful ageing,” whether you are an older adult, a caregiver, or a family member contemplating the later stage of life. It is never too early to plan and have conversations about your values,



wishes and beliefs related to ageing. Your definition of successful ageing must include elements that matter to you.

Source: McMaster Optimal Aging, March 2021
<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/blog/detail/blog/2021/03/10/successful-ageing-what-it-means-for-older-adults>

Tips to Improve Your Memory

Can't find your car keys? Forget your grocery list? Can't remember the name of the personal trainer you liked at the gym? You're not alone. Everyone forgets things occasionally. Still, memory loss is nothing to take lightly. Although there are no guarantees for preventing memory loss or dementia, certain activities might help.

Consider seven simple ways to sharpen your memory and know when to seek help for memory loss.

1. **Include physical activity in your daily routine** - Physical activity increases blood flow to your whole body, including your brain. This might help keep your memory sharp. If you don't have time for a full workout, squeeze in a few 10-minute walks throughout the day.
2. **Stay mentally active** - Just as physical activity helps keep your body in shape, mentally stimulating activities help keep your brain in shape — and might keep memory loss at bay. Do crossword puzzles. Play bridge. Take alternate routes when driving. Learn to play a musical instrument. Volunteer at a local school or community organization.
3. **Socialize regularly** - Social interaction helps ward off depression and stress, which can contribute to memory loss.
4. **Get organized** - You're more likely to forget things if your home is cluttered and your notes are in disarray. Jot down tasks, appointments and other events in a special notebook, calendar, or electronic planner. You might even repeat each entry out loud as you jot it down to help cement it in your memory. Keep to-do lists current and check off items you've completed. Set aside a place for your wallet, keys, glasses, and other essentials. Limit distractions and don't do too many things at once. If you focus on the information you're trying to retain, you're more likely to recall it later. It might also help connect what you're trying to maintain to a favourite song or another familiar concept.



The better you take care of yourself, the better your memory is likely to be. If you're worried about memory loss — especially if memory loss affects your ability to complete your usual daily activities or if you notice your memory getting worse — talk to your doctor. He or she will likely do a physical exam, as well as check your memory and problem-solving skills. Sometimes other tests are needed as well. Treatment will depend on what's contributing to your memory loss.

5. **Sleep well** - Sleep plays an essential role in helping you consolidate your memories so that you can recall them down the road.
6. **Eat a healthy diet** - A healthy diet might be as good for your brain as it is for your heart. Eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Choose low-fat protein sources, such as fish, beans, and skinless poultry. Too much alcohol can lead to confusion and memory loss. So can drug use.
7. **Manage chronic conditions** - Follow your doctor's treatment recommendations for medical conditions, such as depression, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, and hearing loss.

Source: Mayo Clinic, March 2021

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging/in-depth/memory-loss/art-20046518>

Make Walking More Fun

Older adults in Canada are more likely than any other age group to live a sedentary lifestyle. These days, nearly 70% of people aged 65 to 74 get around by car most of the time, while 5% use public transit. Even fewer – 3% – bike or walk .





Six Qualities of a Solid Estate Plan

by RTOERO Communications

This is a summary of an article prepared for RTOERO by Willful, a Canadian online estate planning platform. Read the full article at rtoero.ca/six-qualities-of-a-solid-estate-plan.

Estate planning and making a will is one of those tasks that can feel extremely overwhelming. It's not surprising that over 57 per cent of Canadians don't have a last will and testament. Here are six qualities of a solid estate plan to keep in mind whether you're creating or reviewing your will. This is an excellent follow-up to the two Speaker's Series presentations held each of the last years with C. Clapperton, Estate Law Specialist (<http://cmlaw.ca/>).

1. Legal in Canada

It may seem obvious, but one of the most important qualities of your estate plan is that it meets the requirements of a legal will in Canada. Despite what many people believe, this doesn't mean you need to visit a lawyer or a notary. What makes a will legal is not how you've made your will, rather that you've met the criteria for a legal will.

While there are some nuances across provinces, the general requirements for a legal will in Canada are:

- The will must be written by you, while you are of sound mind, and over the age of majority. (In some provinces, there are exceptions to the age restrictions.)
- It must be in writing as a physical copy. (You cannot store a will online. The only exception is a Notarial will in Quebec.)
- If the will is typed, it must be signed in the presence of two witnesses who also sign to confirm they witnessed your signature.
- The signatures must be at the very end of the will.
- Your will isn't legally binding until it has been properly signed and witnessed as needed, so it's important you've met the requirements in your province!

2. Customized to your life situation

Every Canadian is different, so your estate plan should be as unique as you are. Many factors should be considered when creating a will. To help tailor your estate plan to your life situation, you might consider asking yourself these key questions:

- Are there any specific gifts you'd like to leave and to whom?
- How would you like to divide your assets?
- Who would you like to appoint as a guardian for any minor children?
- Who will fill key roles, such as your executor?
- What are your funeral and burial wishes?

3. Discussed with your loved ones

Conversations about estate planning and end of life can be tricky. In fact, two-thirds (66 per cent) of Canadians don't know their spouse's end-of-life wishes, and 57 per cent don't know the end-of-life wishes for any of their loved ones. Making a formal estate plan is important but it's equally critical that you discuss your wishes with loved ones.

4. Kept up-to-date

A will isn't a one-and-done document; rather it's a document that should evolve as your life changes. Yet, 64 per cent of Canadians don't have an up-to-date will. The key to a quality estate plan is making sure it reflects your most current wishes. While not every life change necessitates an update to your will, it's important to review your estate plan regularly to make

sure you haven't missed anything.

5. Includes plans for an unexpected emergency

Preparing for death is incredibly important; but, it's just as important to consider what would happen if you were to experience a personal medical emergency or an unexpected accident. A quality estate plan includes making plans for these events. Power of attorney documents allow you to designate someone you trust to make decisions on your behalf in the event you are unable to do so yourself.

6. Leaves a legacy

Your will is a fantastic way to leave your assets to loved ones, but did you know you can also include a gift or donation to the charities you care about? Leaving a charitable gift in your will is called legacy giving. While there is no requirement to leave a legacy gift in your will, many individuals choose to do so as it makes it possible to leave much larger gifts than they could while living.



Honouring the Indigenous peoples of Canada

Introduction:

There have been many studies, reports and commissions looking at the various issues affecting the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The most recent was the June 2015 report from The Truth and Reconciliation Commission which recommended 94 calls to action. Not much has happened to implement these. However, in June of 2015, the Canadian Parliament passed legislation to make September 20th 2021 the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation to honour the lost children and survivors of the horrific residential school system that was inflicted on thousands of Indigenous children over many, many decades. Unfortunately, to its shame, the Ontario Government would not recognize this as a statutory holiday in Ontario. Why September 20th? The reason for this day is that since 2013, this day was designated as Orange Shirt Day by the Indigenous communities across Canada to commemorate all residential school survivors, as a national day of remembrance for them. At District 22, we did what we could to honour this day by sending out an eblast to members with information about it. Tanya Talaga's book, **Seven Fallen Feathers** provides great insight and background for this.

There are many, many issues affecting the quality of life for indigenous peoples. I believe that it is incumbent on us to become knowledgeable about these and to do what we can to advocate for a redress of these wrongs. RTOERO sponsored a webinar by Candy Palmater under its Strategic Plan 2025 to address issues of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Unfortunately, this was not recorded and so we cannot go back and hear what she had to say. The one significant point that she made was that the Indigenous people only represent 6% of the Canadian population. So, if you believe that, for example, the lack of safe drinking water on many, many reservations represent a national disgrace then you need to lend your voice to that of the Indigenous people and demand that the federal and provincial governments stop the delays to fix this problem.

The other thing that we can do is to become more educated about and better understand the issues facing Indigenous people and what they would like to see happening to improve the quality of their lives within Canada.

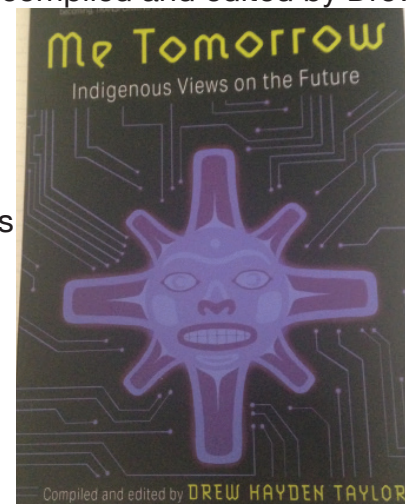
Candy passed away this past Christmas Day at the age of 53.

"She left us smiling a bit bigger, laughing a bit harder and thinking a bit more critically about the world around us."

A Recommendation: ***Me Tomorrow***

In order to understand better what Indigenous leaders and advocates would like to see happen, my recommendation is that those who are interested in the ideas and thoughts of these people going forward read ***Me Tomorrow: Indigenous Views on the Future***, compiled and edited by Drew Hayden Taylor. Drew Taylor is an award-winning writer and journalist who was born and lives on the Curve Lake First Nation in Ontario and has been nominated for two Governor General's Awards.

The essays in the book are written by representatives of First Nations, Metis and Inuit advocates, activists, writers, youth, elders, a former Member of Parliament, artists, playwrights, oral story tellers, educators professors, jurists and business leaders. For them, the past is the past and so what is most important is what is to happen to and for the coming generations of Indigenous youth and people going forward. One very poignant essay is written by Norma Dunning about the lives of the Inuit whom she identifies as "Canada's biggest afterthought". Dr. Norma Dunning is an award-winning Inuk writer based in Edmonton. Roman Saganash, a Cree jurist



and a Member of Parliament from 2011 to 2019 writes about the issue of the need for clean drinking water for Indigenous communities. He writes that: “Some communities had waited 20 years to have the federal government answer their pleas. No child should have to wait for clean water.” There are a multitude of other visions for the future that I am sure readers would find most interesting.

Other Recommendations:

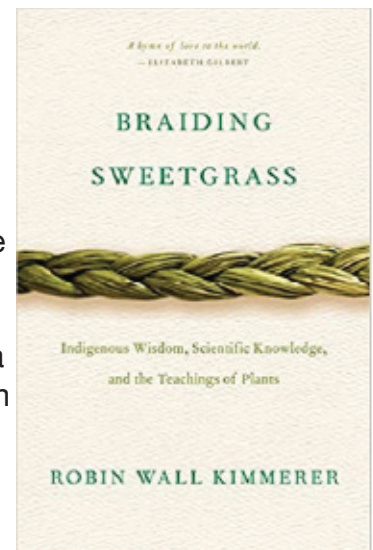
What follows below are other recommendations by District 22 members. The first is by Mary Jane McNamara. Her recommendation ***Braiding Sweetgrass*** complements two presentations that were made this past year. District 22 has adopted the Strategic Plan of Environmental Stewardship as a District initiative. We had Alice Casselman, a District 22 member who received the Outstanding Community Service Award in 2011 for her work in engaging communities in protecting and caring for the environment, do a virtual seminar on the environment. RTOERO contracted Diana Beresford-Kroeger, a world-recognized author, medical biologist and botanist, to do a Vibrant Voices webinar entitled “Saving the Forest ... Saving Us”. This webinar can still be viewed on the RTOERO website by those who have not seen it.

The second recommendation is presented by Lynn Farquharson, a member of District 22's executive, on Jesse Thistle's, ***From The Ashes***.

Submitted by Karl Sprogis, Past President

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants
By Robin Wall Kimmerer

As a recent retiree relishing in the opportunity of taking daily walks, I listened to the audiobook ***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants***, read by the author Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Each day as I walked and listened, I was provided with more and more inspiration to stop, notice, and be grateful for our trees, plants, flowers, and wildlife and their interconnections. Robin Wall Kimmerer is a genuine teacher who speaks frankly about her experiences as a teacher and as a learner. Her acute ability to observe and describe details brings the reader right into unique experiences with her as a mother, a researcher, a student, and a professor (to name only a few roles) and learn deeply from her stories. She blends science, art and stories together which left me with a new and clearly understood appreciation for reciprocity, the gifts we give and receive, symbiotic relationships and the power of gratitude.



During the time I listened to Robin Wall Kimmerer's gentle and persuasive voice, I was led to think deeply, laugh out loud, question, weep and/or wonder about my immediate surroundings and I gained a greater appreciation of the world around us. Since each moment spent with the book brought forward another gem to reflect upon and remember, I was inspired to obtain a hard copy of the book for continued reference and reflection.

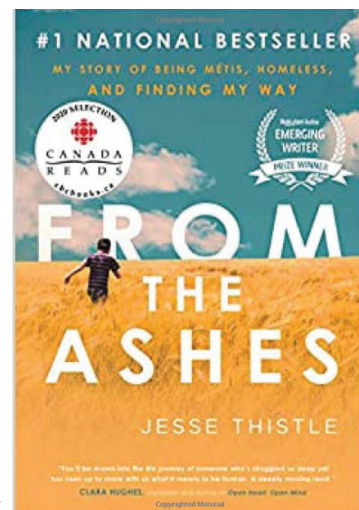
Submitted by Mary Jane McNamara



**Friends don't let friends
prepare for retirement
alone!**

***From the Ashes:* My Story of Being Metis, Homeless and Finding My Way** by Jesse Thistle

Published in 2019, this memoir by Jesse Thistle begins in Saskatchewan in the late 1970's. Jesse is the youngest of three brothers living with their parents and maternal grandparents'. The relationship between his parents was fraught with violence, drugs and alcohol and they soon leave the grandparents home. His parents split up shortly after, followed by his mother relinquishing the boys to their father's care. Left alone for sometimes days at a time, with no food, the boys have to fend for themselves until police arrive and remove the boys. From foster care, they eventually are taken in by their paternal grandparents home in Brampton, Ontario. Jesse recounts a strict household, his experiences attending school as an Indigenous child and his early beginnings of involvement in petty crimes and theft which were to form the backdrop of his life for many years. Mirroring his father's journey of alcohol, drugs and various criminal pursuits, Jesse leaves high school, gets kicked out of his grandparents' home, heads to the west coast and then finds his way back to the Brampton/Toronto area, living in shelters, on the street, using and selling drugs and myriad of other crimes. The experiences over these years are gritty and sordid, where he is both a victim of violence while doing whatever he can to stay alive, before ending up in jail. His journey back from the brink begins at a halfway house where he begins to confront and conquer his demons and reflect on his Metis heritage. He reconnects with some members of his family and with a woman who had befriended him in school. Registering at York University in his thirties, he is able to find peace, understanding and success as he learns about his Indigenous roots and comes to terms with who he is.



Submitted by Lynn Farquharson

RTOERO health benefits continue to improve, with no increase in premiums

You can find **Communiqué** on the website rtoero.ca. As well, the electronic version of the Insurance Plans Booklet has been updated for 2022 and is your go-to resource. If you have questions, contact insurance@rtoero.ca or 1-800-361-9888

2021 -2022 District 22 RTOERO Executive

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| President | Anne McIlroy | Newsletter Editor/ | William McIlroy |
| Past President | Karlis Sprogis | Communications | William McIlroy |
| 1st Vice-President | Marilyn Jones | Nominations | Karlis Sprogis |
| 2nd Vice-President | Paul Woloszanskyj | Political Advocacy | Janis McCaskill |
| Secretary | Mary Jean Ricci | Recreation | Sheila Tait |
| Treasurer | Rose Ramundi | Recruitment | Sheila Tait |
| Awards | Sharon Kular | Social | Judy Paton |
| Benefits | Anne McIlroy | Travel | Pamela Guy |
| Goodwill | Maryanne Chard | Webmaster/Social Media | Arthur Witham |
| Liaison | Claudia Mang | Members at Large | Linda Rodegard, Janet Thacker Gabriela Kurzydowski, Margot Davis |
| Membership | Yadav Bhatia | Foundation Champion | Janet Thacker |
| Membership/Telephone | Lynn Farquharson | | |



Six Habits of Happy Retirees

by RTOERO Communications and Marketing Group

Did you know the term ‘**happy retirement**’ is searched more than 5000 times a month in Canada? If how to create happiness in retirement is on your mind, you’re not alone!

Here are six habits of happy retirees

1) Plan, but expect some uncertainty

Everyone has experienced plans going awry—best-laid plans, right? Life is full of uncertainty, and retirement will be no different. You may have the most detailed plans about what retirement will mean for you, from what you’ll do, to who you will spend it with. But have you considered what you’ll do if those things don’t work out?

One way to protect yourself is to create contingency plans—consider your plans B and C! What will I do if I can’t do an activity the same way anymore? (Hint: you could adapt it or find another activity you want to try). Thinking about these things ahead of time will help you to be prepared if the unexpected happens.

2) Prioritize your health

You may have spent much of your career caring for others—colleagues, students, your family. And sure, your caregiving roles may not stop, but retirement is a chance to replace the time you spent working with some activities and learning to benefit your health and well-being.

Beliefs about aging are an important health factor. Self-directed ageism can impact whether individuals believe they can learn new skills or think a health issue is inevitable versus being something they can affect through behaviour. Research has shown that the association between ageism and health is strongest with self-directed ageism.

3) Nurture relationships

Supportive relationships are critical to overall happiness and well-being. Strong relationships can support stress management, mood, and motivation and even influence positive behaviours, like exercise. Social connection reduces the risk of dementia, heart disease, and mental health issues.

There are likely retirement and seniors’ groups in your community, and volunteering is another great way to meet people. If you’re an RTOERO member (your membership is free until retirement!), you can connect with your local

RTOERO District and participate in social activities.

4) Pursue interests

One of the greatest gifts of retirement is all of the time you’ll have after devoting so much time to your career. So, what will you do with that time? Many of our members suggest exploring a range of activities. Others say it’s a good idea to think about how you want to use your time before you retire—maybe there’s a hobby you used to do that you haven’t had time for when working? Some of our members suggest starting a new hobby in the year leading up to retirement.

5) Cultivate positive thinking

People who practice positive thinking tend to live longer. Positive thinking is linked to better health outcomes, including lower risk of chronic disease and memory loss, less isolation, faster recovery from injuries and more.

Thinking positively doesn’t mean you gloss over or ignore the things that are hard in life. It’s important to feel emotions and allow yourself to work through challenges so you can move forward. You might find it helpful to create a list of the healthy activities that help you feel better during or after a tough time. You may also benefit from showing yourself some compassion during challenges—some people are hard on themselves! Try to speak to yourself as you would a dear friend.



6) Give yourself peace of mind

There are things you can control in life and other things you can’t. It becomes a lot easier to navigate life’s inevitable surprises when you have plans and safety nets in place to help you. Try to take care of necessary financial and administrative tasks as they come up. During retirement, you’ll want to make sure your estate plan is kept up-to-date, including having a power of attorney named for emergencies. You may also find it helpful to create an inventory of important documents. Taking care of to-do tasks can prevent them from piling up, helping to reduce stress!

Do you have suggestions you’d add? Start a conversation by sharing the complete article rtoero.ca/6-ways-to-create-a-happy-retirement/ over on our Facebook page at: facebook.com/RTOERODistrict23NorthYork

In MEMORIAM



With deepest regrets we report the passing of these members.

A donation is made annually to RTOERO Foundation, in recognition of all our passed members.

ROBERT ABRAHAMS
ANNE BAILEY
MAUREEN BOYER
GILBERT CALDWELL
MARGARET CIUPA
JOAN COATES
GRACE DAVIS
DOROTHY FAROOQUE
GAYLE FLOOD
HENRY GRAHAM
LAURA KYRYLENKO
MARILYNNE KOLKING
KENNETH LEPIEZ
MELBA MacDONALD
DOROTHY MACKINNON

JUDITH MANNING
G CAMERON McNABB
FERN MORGAN
ROBERT PHILLIPS
ELIZABETH SHEILS
DEANNA SLUSAR
GERD STRZELBA
HELEN SZENDI
ORPHA TEASDALE
JEAN THOW
ELIZABETH TODD
STELLA WATSON
AUDREY WHITE
JOHN WOOLFREY



What's in a Name?

Recognition! The RTOERO Foundation is known in medical and geriatric circles as a charitable foundation that is in the forefront, funding specialized research in ageing. And the best part is it belongs to us.

“We don’t have to age the way our parents did. So let’s get on with it.”

This quote from a recent webinar through The Foundation rings so true. Science in recent years has told us so much more about ageing. Our generation has so many more strategies to address the negative effects of growing old. All past webinars can be viewed at <https://rtoero.ca/rtoero-Foundation/get-involved/webinar-series/>. Get informed.

The Foundation recognized the severe impact that social isolation has on health, years before the pandemic. October has been Social Isolation Awareness Month for the past four years with opportunities to learn more and connect with other members. Our organization was well ahead of the curve.

The newest innovation is The Women’s Age Lab at Women’s College Hospital. Dr. Paula Rochon, RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine, was key in the launch on October 1st, 2021. This is the first and only centre that focuses on older women. Addressing gendered ageism, reimagining ageing in place and congregate care, optimizing therapies and promoting social connectedness are the four pillars guiding the science and research. Check out www.womensagelab.ca to learn more.

Healthy ageing is in our hands. Let’s support The Foundation along with our corporate sponsors.

Janet Thacker
Foundation Champion

Book Corner Notes



Here are 3 disparate book suggestions all by Canadian authors in a Canadian setting.

A Town Called Solace by Mary Lawson (Author of *Crow Lake* (2002), *The Other side of the Bridge* (2006) *Road Ends* (2013)). This novel is highly recommended by several members. It marks the end of a 6 year hiatus between books and was well worth the wait. The action for this hauntingly beautiful novel is set in a northern Ontario town. A must read.

The Russian the sequel to *Tell me More* in the Blake Waiter Series by Brad Kelln. It is no accident that Blake Waiter, the protagonist in this crime thriller, is a clinical psychologist with a private practice just like the author Dr Brad Kelln who is himself a practising clinical and forensic psychologist in Nova Scotia. The events unfold in the Halifax area and involve international espionage. An easy read for the mystery fans.

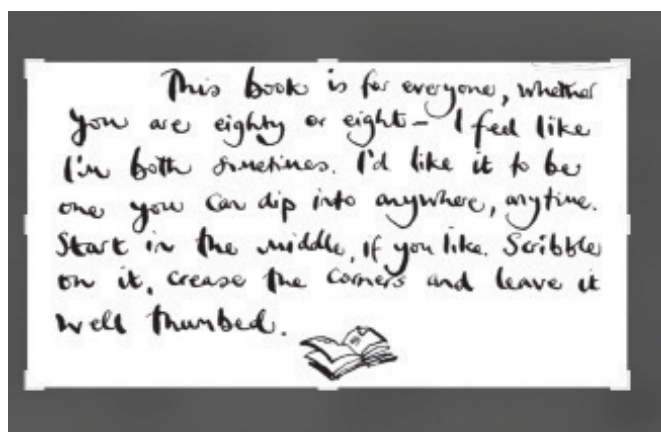
Swamplands: Tundra Beavers, Quaking Bogs and the Improbable World of Peat by Edward Struzik examines the ecologically important world of peatlands. This science and environment writer and fellow of Queen's University Institute for Energy & Environmental Policy exposes the lack of understanding of the importance of peatlands in the eco-system network, the damage done, some irreparable, and the possible lasting effect on climate change.

The content of the book is as interesting as the title and would be recommended for our D22 in our continuing support of Environmental Stewardship. Read it and discover the importance of the Group of Seven!

Sheila Tait - Recreation

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse from British illustrator, artist and author, Charlie Mackesy comes a journey for all ages that explores life's universal lessons, featuring 100 colour and black and white drawings.

From the author



Anne McIlroy – President

From the book



Political Advocacy

RTOERO District 22 is continuing with our ongoing emphasis and support of Environmental Stewardship. In previous newsletters we have discussed the importance of trees on our environment and our lives. There are many initiatives underway in the effort to highlight the roles trees play and the need to plant trees. The Southern Ontario Nature Coalition reports that 54 million trees need to be planted in Ontario's Greenbelt and the Greater Golden Horseshoe if we are to reach some of the climate goals.

With this in mind, RTOERO District 22 is proud to announce a donation was made, on behalf of our D22 members, to the Ontario Nature's Youth Program (ontarionature.org). This Nature Youth Program is comprised of high school-aged youth from across Ontario. They are given the opportunity to develop the knowledge, tools and networks to create lasting and positive change through conservation action. Our donation will help the next generation of environmental leaders enhance their knowledge and to take environmental action in their local communities.

What can we do as individuals? What about planting our own trees!!!

Special thanks to D22 member, and president of the Association of Canadian Education Resources (acer-acre.ca), Alice Casselman for her ongoing support of D22 and for providing the following activity. We encourage our members to give this a try.

Growing an Oak Tree

Oak trees are special because they live so long -some over 300 years! Indigenous peoples used a variety of practices to increase the yield of acorns as a food source. Scout trees on the cliffs over waterways were key to protect their villages.



STEPS - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc2qnk39_9s

1. Collect the acorns and identify the kind of oak tree they are from. Acorns from each species is different and may require a different plan to germinate them.
2. Collect and check acorns. Put in water and separate those that float to weed out the empty or infested ones.
3. Find a pail with drain holes , sand, top soil and water to prepare germination.

White Oaks - leaves have rounded lobes/ends - collect in fall

- ☐ choose those to germinate (see above)
- ☐ refrigerate in a bag until spring
- ☐ when root appears (white sprout out of acorn) then plant in ground
- ☐ water, especially when new leaves appear

Red /black oaks - leaves have pointy lobes/ends - collect in spring

- ☐ same process as white oaks except you collect in spring and over-winter in the refrigerator
- ☐ plant in soil in March

General Germination of Oak Acorns

- ☐ Add damp sand and begin layers in pail with drain holes
- ☐ Plant acorns on their side and in a circle
- ☐ Plant in layers of about 3 cm or one inch of sand and pat down each layer
- ☐ Add ¾ inch soil and gently pat down
- ☐ Continue to add layers then top with layer of soil
- ☐ Cover tightly
- ☐ Spray top layer with water weekly
- ☐ Store in cold cellar or attached garage

Have fun and send in your pictures!

If interested in more information...

Questions to explore

- ☐ Explorers used them too – Who?
- ☐ How many species of oaks can you find that live in Ontario ?
- ☐ What is the geographical range of each of these species?
- ☐ Find The Heritage Red Oak Toronto along the Humber River and its role as a scout tree!
- ☐ Discover how the city bought property to preserve this Heritage Red Oak

Books to read

- ☐ Douglas Tallamy: The Nature of Oaks The Rich Ecology of Our Essential Native Trees
- ☐ Suzanne Simard: Finding the Mother Tree
- ☐ Diana Beresford-Kroeger: To Speak for the Trees

Upcoming Provincial Election

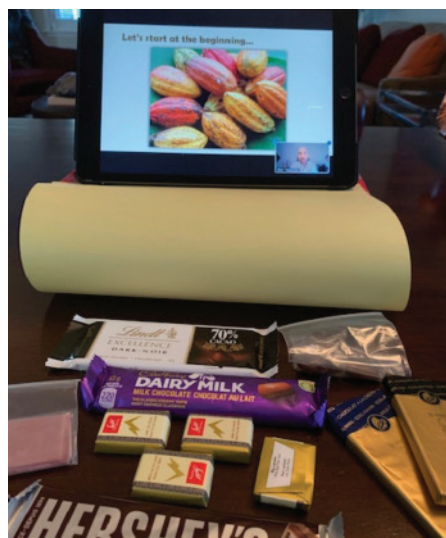
The RTOERO Political Advocacy Committee met November 8, 2021. The committee discussed the upcoming Ontario Provincial election, scheduled for June 2, 2022. In the new year, an election resource package will be prepared for districts, with information on meeting with candidates, organizing all-candidates' meetings, and how various parties' platforms mesh with RTOERO's advocacy issue. This information will be shared with our members when it becomes available.

Janis McCaskill - Political Advocacy

For the Love of Chocolate

48 members joined the zoom webinar one day at the end of October. This unique and engaging activity was offered by the entertaining storyteller and educator, Oliver Woodburn, **The Tasting Tutor**. He shared his love of chocolate and the history and stories behind this universally loved food. A chocolate tasting kit was sent to each member registered for the event. So enjoyable, informative and delicious! We also learned of a new kind of chocolate – rose chocolate! (It's sold at Loblaws.). (You can follow Oliver- the Tasting Tutor, on Instagram)

The tasting kit.



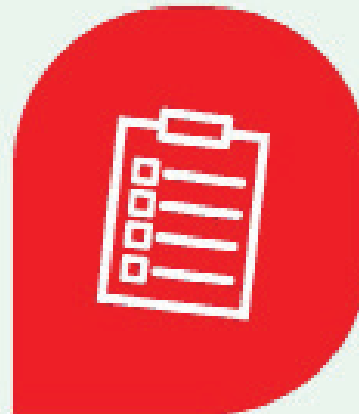
Ratio of ingredients in different chocolates – sugar, milk, cocoa butter, cocoa



Future planning

Our current reality won't last forever. Now is a good time to create materials and plans for your future outreach.

- 1 Build a list of new local organizations to connect with (e.g. childcare centres, post-secondary institutions, transportation consortiums, private schools, Indigenous schools). If your district covers a large geographic area, start with a manageable target.



- 2 Create a small outreach team and commit to making contact with a specific number of the new organizations within the year. Once you have a relationship, stay in touch. Record the contact's information in a shared file. Tell your contact about upcoming opportunities that may be of interest to them and their colleagues, including retirement planning workshops, RTOERO advocacy or thought leadership webinars, and any local events you're hosting.

- 3 Engage with organizations from your outreach list on social media.
 - On Facebook, [you can comment on and 'Like' posts on an organization's page as your District Facebook Page](#). Also be sure to ['Like' the Facebook Pages](#) of the organizations from your outreach list.
 - On Twitter, engage with organizations by retweeting with comment and replying to relevant posts.



Outreach to future members

One of our strategic goals is to broaden the membership base. This includes attracting actively employed members and those from the broader education community (individuals in non-teaching roles in schools and school boards, as well as anyone who works in early years, post-secondary and other education organizations).

The following approaches are some ways districts can support these efforts.

- Reach out by phone or email to friends and colleagues who work in education to ask if there's anything you can do to support them. You can let them know that the retirement planning workshops are available online and share the link to the website page where they can view the schedule and register - rtoero.ca/events/retirement-planning-workshops.
- Share one or more of the RTOERO marketing flyers with friends and colleagues who work in education.
- Hold a who-do-we-know brainstorm with your team. Consider who you already have relationships with at education organizations within your district. Make sure to think beyond schools - does anyone have a friend or connection at a local daycare centre, transportation consortium or in a non-teaching role within a school board or in a college or university?
- Ask your district membership to reach out to their friends who work in education and may be nearing retirement. Encourage your members to use the "Refer a Friend" page on our website to send a message.
- Provide your district membership with a list of new RTOERO blogs and webinars that they may be interested in sharing via social media. See the Resources page of the website for blogs and more.
- Host a "bring a friend" event - if you're running virtual events (or when you're back to running in-person events), ask existing members to invite a friend from within the education community.



What is iCloud and how does it work? (from Ask Pamela)

The purpose of iCloud is to **store data and important information securely on Apple's remote servers** as opposed to storing it on your iPhone or iPad. This way, all your information is backed up to a secure location and synchronized between all of your devices. Having your information backed up to the cloud has two benefits. If you ever lose your Apple device, your information ranging from contacts to photos will be saved to iCloud. You can then go to **iCloud.com** to retrieve this data or sign in with your Apple ID and password to automatically restore all this data to your new Apple device.



The second benefit is that iCloud syncs your apps between your iPhone, iPad, Mac and/or Windows 10. In order to sync the apps, you will need to set it up on your devices by tapping on “**Settings**” Select your **profile name** at the top of the list, and then scroll down to “**iCloud.**” For a **detailed tutorial** with screenshots visit: <https://computertutorinc.net/blog/> and **scroll down** the page and **click on ICLOUD (the detailed instructions will open.)**

What's the difference between device storage and iCloud storage?

When you buy your iPhone or iPad it comes with a set storage capacity which cannot be increased. The music you buy, the apps you download, the photos you take and all the other content that you enjoy on your device uses this storage. Depending on your device capacity and how much content you have, your device can fill up and run out of storage. Apple gives you 5 GB of iCloud Storage at no cost but you can buy more storage from Apple when you notice your space is limited. If you connect your iPad or iPhone to **power** and **WiFi** every night and set your “**iCloud backup**” to “**on**”, your device will upload your selected data to iCloud automatically.

What's the cloud alternative for Android users?

Google Drive is the official cloud-based storage service for Android users and there are alternative Apps available for download.

It is important to remember that a strong password is always the best protection for your security.

Send your questions to Sheila smtait@sympatico.ca and join our monthly “Ask Pamela” zoom meetings where the answers will be demonstrated and then uploaded to the website for easy access.

Pamela Tabak, Computer Tutor



Looking for volunteers

Our Travel portfolio requires at least one new volunteer to help organize trips etc. in association with a travel agent. If you are interested, please contact Anne McIlroy 416-427-0115 or president22@districts.rtoero.ca.

2021 Membership Survey Etobicoke and York District 22 Report

District level summary of 2021 Membership Feedback
(n = number of respondents)

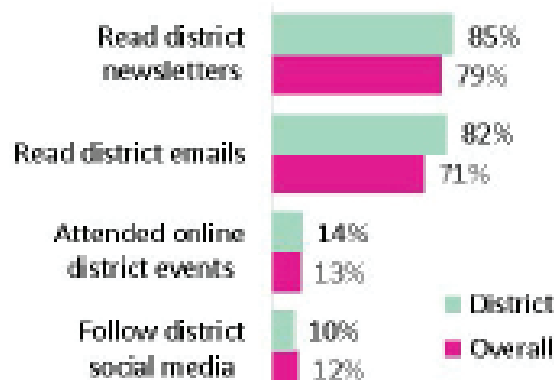


Number of Survey Respondents
Overall = 8728 District = 237

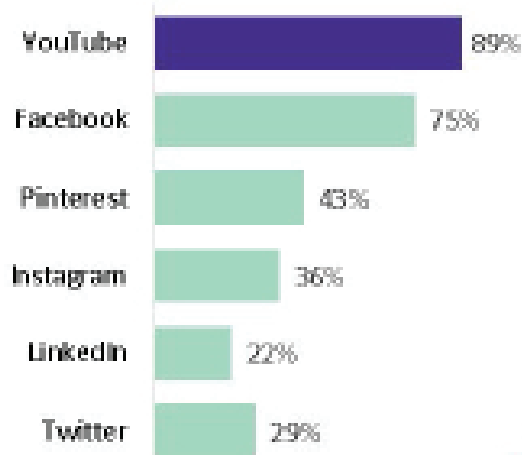
Length of Membership in Years

| | Overall | District |
|-------------|---------|----------|
| Less than 1 | 4% | 3% |
| 1-2 years | 7% | 8% |
| 3-5 years | 12% | 10% |
| 6-10 years | 15% | 18% |
| 11-15 years | 17% | 16% |
| 16-24 years | 29% | 31% |
| 25 or more | 15% | 15% |

Which district activities did you engage in?



Types of Social Media Used



Current Volunteers
Overall n = 540
District n = 15

Volunteers
enjoy the
social
aspect of
volunteering

District voices

Keep up all your good works. I am proud to belong to this organization.

Thank you for continuing to look after the needs of our RTO community. So much of what you do is not always seen, but I know you're there.

This survey a promising indicator that the organization aims to be dynamic and not static.

Your road to retirement

15-20 years before you retire

Connect with us online - rtoero.ca. It's never too early to start planning.

1

1-5 years before you retire

Join RTOERO to make friends and enjoy discounts and services to help you transition into retirement. Membership is free until you retire. rtoero.ca/free-membership

3

5-10 years before you retire

Make sure you're retirement ready. Attend one of our Retirement Planning Workshops rtoero.ca/rpw

2

6 months before you retire

Set up an appointment with your financial planner and look into your pension, if you have one. Consider your insurance needs: rtoero.ca/insurance

4

Up to 2 months before you retire

Send in your RTOERO membership and group insurance applications before your current benefit plans end. Notify your employer that you intend to retire.

5

Retirement

RTOERO is here for you now, and here for your future.

- Attend RTOERO events
- Travel
- Volunteer
- Enjoy your retirement.



1-800-361-9888 | 416-962-9463 | rtoero.ca

[Return to Topics for sharing summary](#)

Top reasons to join RTOERO

RTOERO welcomes members from the broader education community - including early years professionals, teachers and those working in schools, school boards and post-secondary.



Whether you are retiring this year or within the next 5-15 years, join **RTOERO** to cruise through retirement worry-free! From insurance plans to discounts, we've got everything you need to retire happy and make your awesome years healthy and fun.

Free

1. Free membership until you retire
2. Free retirement planning workshops

Insurance

3. Available to any member 50+
4. Largest non-profit health insurance in Canada for education retirees
5. Insurance plan is owned, designed and managed by members for members
6. Guaranteed acceptance within 60 days
7. Group plan = security for all members
8. No cost differences based on age
9. Comprehensive affordable coverage
10. Great coverage available across Canada
11. 93-day travel coverage included at no extra cost
12. In-depth, user-friendly insurance guide

Discounts and perks

13. 3,000+ MemberPerks® discounts
14. Preferred partner discounts on products for hearing and vision care
15. Exclusive travel discounts
16. Save up to 40% on home/car insurance

Member programs and services

17. Bilingual service and francophone districts
18. Events, clubs and activities in your community hosted by your peers
19. Exclusive group and solo travel, tours and discounts
20. Friendly walk-in service at RTOERO office
21. Fast response time
22. Retirement planning resources
23. Goodwill program
24. Support for healthy, active living

Political advocacy

25. Pension support and advocacy
26. Government advocacy on key seniors' issues
27. Vibrant Voices advocacy campaign

Community service/giving back

28. Volunteer and leadership opportunities
29. Annual community grant program
30. Scholarships for students sponsored by RTOERO members

Research

31. RTOERO Foundation funds research on healthy aging
32. Awareness campaign - social isolation

Publications

33. Renaissance - award-winning quarterly magazine
34. Monthly e-newsletters
35. Tax Tips - help for members during tax season
36. Pocket Planner calendar

Online community

37. Connect and engage with RTOERO and other members via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn
38. Blogs and vlogs
39. Comprehensive resources at rtoero.ca/resources



1-800-361-9888 | 416-962-9463 | rtoero.ca



Welcome to RTOERO

Enjoy the benefits we offer. RTOERO no longer has Full or Associate categories and therefore will not be listed as such moving forward.



GWENDOLYN ATKINSON
LISA BEISCHLAG
PAUL BEWSKI
NORMN BLACK
BRYAN BOYER
KIMBERLY BROLLEY
ELIZABETH CALDWELL
JOAN CAMPBELL
DAVID CHIAPELLI
LINDA CHINDEMI
ALICE CHONG
RICHARD CIUPA

GABRIELE COONEY
ALPIDIO COPETTI
AURELIA DAFINESCU
PETER de VRIES
MARY DODGE BOVAIRD
DARLA DONOVAN
BLAIR DUCKWORTH
JOHN DURRANT
KATHERINE FENWICK
SUSAN GUARINO
ANN M JENNIFER HALL
MARGARET HARRIS PARSONS

CHARLES HUMBER
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JULIE MAZZUCA-PETER
BERNARD McEVOY
LIGA MIKLASEVICS
SHARON NAGLE
GINA NATALIZIO
LEDA OSTAFICHUK
HEATHER OVERLAND
NINA PAGNOTTA

CLARA PERUT
ANITA PHILLIPS
JAMES PREZIO
LOIS RICHARDS
DONALD SCHRODER
PEARL SIMON
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OREST TEPLY
PATRICIA VANETTI
LAURA VIOLA
LAUREL WARR
DAVID WHICHER
SHEILA WILSON
SHANNON WOOLFREY
CONSTANCE YOUNG

If you are changing any information, address, phone contact or email address, it is imperative that you contact the provincial office by email: membership@rtoero.ca or tel: 416-962-9463 toll free: 1-800-361-9888 to make any changes.

The Twenty-Second Report is published three times per year - in January, April/May, August/September or as required.

Deadline for submissions is three weeks prior to the month of publication.

We reserve the right to edit and/or condense all contributions and submissions.

Please send your stories, jokes, anecdotes, columns, comments, criticism, letters and pictures to: William McIlroy

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