



District 28 - Region of Durham

# DUSTOFF

Durham Unit Superannuated Teachers of Ontario For Fellowship

Issue 1: 2023

Spring/Summer

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## SPRING BRINGS RENEWAL

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As you will see from reading this magazine, your executive has been very busy this past six months. While we are still being as cautious as we can, we have also tried to open up as many activities as possible. "Coffee-on-us" has been going well and has allowed us to catch-up through many small-group discussions. In addition, we enjoyed a wonderful pre-Christmas Luncheon with over 130 attendees, a new members Breakfast, and a Murder Mystery Dinner. At the same time, many on-line activities, such as Book Club, Poetry Corner, and other special presentations have continued. In February, we also had a successful in-person Retirement Planning Workshop. It is exciting to return to a more normal way of life! The Annual General Meeting will finish off the year in June. Please join us for a nice meal, camaraderie, and the opportunity to select next year's executive. The AGM will be held on Tuesday June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Port Perry Community Centre.

I have had a number of conversations with recently retired educators about life after work. Many have asked about how to keep involved at their own pace and in their own way. This is a key reason for joining and staying involved with a group such as

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Volunteering makes a difference!

Thank you to all of our Members who actively participate and enjoy being socially connected. A huge thank you goes out to our Board Members and Volunteers who plan, organize and implement the many varied events for us to enhance our community, support others', and keep us socially connected. Indeed, one of the greatest gifts you can give is your time to enhance the lives of others.

**PLEASE, consider volunteering with our District 28 RTO/ERO, you will be happy you did.**

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."*

Helen Keller

Please let us know you are interested in getting involved by contacting [District 28](http://district28.rtoero.ca) (district28.rtoero.ca)

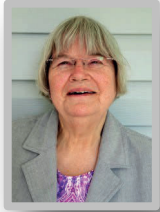
### Never Too Old To Hit the Slopes!

Again this year, a group of 24 retired Durham teachers and some spouses travelled to Mont Ste Anne for a ski holiday in February. The ski trip tradition was started by John Hinch in 2007, with annual trips to various ski destinations in North America for a group of newly retired teachers. In 2015, Mont Sainte Anne in Quebec was chosen as the destination and has now become the annual choice. Howard Boothby, with the help of John Hinch and Jim Nesbitt, continues to organize the trips which now involve planning breakfasts, lunches, happy hours, and dinners, as well as accommodations. The photo depicts one of our nightly dinners. Hopefully, the annual ski trip will continue for many more years until our legs give out.

Submitted by Jim Craigen



# Goodwill Committee Contacts



**Goodwill Chair - Janet Beaton**

905.728.5578

[janet.beaton@sympatico.ca](mailto:janet.beaton@sympatico.ca)

## Committee Members

- ⇒ **Pickering** Cathy Murrant 905-420-5157  
[cathym30@sympatico.ca](mailto:cathym30@sympatico.ca)
- ⇒ **Ajax** Diane Beettam 905-427-2043  
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Maureen O'Reilly 905-432-6290  
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- ⇒ **Greenbank & Northern Areas**  
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- ⇒ **Port Perry** Linda Caskey 905-723-6174  
[caskeylp@sympatico.ca](mailto:caskeylp@sympatico.ca)

Seniors in Retirement/Nursing Homes & Those 90+ Years Old  
Please contact any member of the *Goodwill Committee* listed above.  
When emailing: *Subject Line is RTOERO-Goodwill*



**D**o you know of a District 28 member who needs a cheery message through a card or visit? If so, please contact a member of the Goodwill Committee.



The Goodwill Committee is looking for any District 28 members, currently in **retirement or nursing homes**, who are not receiving the cards and plants gifted by District 28.

**Please forward names to a member of the Goodwill Committee.**



## Spreading Goodwill to our Members

Goodwill continues to play a significant role within our district. The many acts of caring, compassion and celebration are truly appreciated. The recipients are very happy to be remembered and acknowledged.

Each month, our committee prepares Birthday Cards for members 80 years and over. We are grateful to have additional volunteers who can share the responsibility for completing these cards. For the period from January to March, over 300 greetings were mailed to the general membership.

Milestone 90<sup>th</sup>. and 100<sup>th</sup>. birthdays have been celebrated for many years. We send flowers, a special card and certificate to commemorate this very special occasion. This year, we have 27 members who will be 90 years old. One member will be 100 years old and our oldest RTO member will celebrate 101 years. This is the highest number of birthday celebrants since inception. To date, four members have been honoured.

To usher in the holiday season, we sent Christmas arrangements to 82 members in Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Communities, and a few Private Homes. In addition to this initiative, 27 Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Communities received arrangements to be placed in common areas for the enjoyment of all residents. This was a tangible way to thank frontline workers for their dedication to the residents entrusted to them. Violet Blooms in Pickering created our colourful, seasonal arrangements.

Once again, Anna Huston prepared and mailed 140 Christmas Cards to District 28 members. Anna's commitment never wavers.

Members have conveyed their gratitude for our Goodwill outreach in a variety of ways. Thank you, for your cards, phone calls and email messages. All notes received have been stored in permanent archives.

Throughout the year, we have participated in Zoom meetings organized by Member Services. These meetings are very useful as we are able to learn about Goodwill endeavours in other GTA districts. The districts vary in size with District 28 being one of the largest areas. The exchange of ideas is invaluable and gives us additional paths to consider and possibly implement.

We participated in a Zoom meeting with Elizabeth Roy, Mayor of Whitby. In the last Dustoff, I provided information about Lakeridge Gardens in Ajax which is a Long-Term Care Home. It was built and occupied very quickly. All stakeholders had to prioritize this project. The modular design of the structure was also very beneficial. Mayor Roy indicated that Whitby is pursuing this same type of process and structure for their community.

Recently, I attended an Advocacy meeting. The guest speaker was Patricia Spindel , Co-

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## Durham D\_28 Hikers!



Each month, rain, snow, wind, or shine, a group of intrepid hikers from our group meets to explore parts of Durham. We try to explore a different wild or urban part of our region each time to expand our ecological and practical knowledge, develop friendships, and our own personal fitness. The walks are not overly strenuous and allow us to find places that we can all enjoy at other times. Please join us on the third Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. for an hour and a half walk. *Locations are listed each month in the e-blasts.*

### Communications and Membership Services

*District 28 is delighted to welcome the following new members:*

Nancy Le Gresley	Doris Long	Marilyn Wicks	Eileen Dempsey
Linda Rohrer	Janet Edmondson	Kathleen Pezzarello	
Karen Ball	Janet Dunkley	John Scott	

*We look forward to meeting all of you in person at one of our upcoming social events.*

**Member input and photos make DUSTOFF more interesting for all.**

- How do you stay active and engaged in retirement? Do you have an interesting hobby, or volunteer position? Please send in a paragraph or two, with photos if possible, and you might inspire other members looking for a new challenge when your article appears in an edition of DUSTOFF.
- Have you taken a unique trip recently and would like to share your experience and a couple of photos? Write a few paragraphs about the highlights of your trip and submit it to the District 28 mailbox.

Send to [district28.rtoero.ca](mailto:district28.rtoero.ca)

In the sad event that a member of District 28 dies, or loses a loved one, we can share the information and service details with our members through an IN-MEMORIAM mass e-mail. *This is only done at the request of, with permission of the family.*

Contact Sue Nieuwenburg [district28.rtoero.ca](mailto:district28.rtoero.ca)



# The President's Message...

## Don Farquharson

(Continued from page 1)

RTOERO. There are just so many ways to participate! Unlike other retired educators' insurance plans, RTOERO is soooo much more than a health care program. It is a community of retired people, who worked in education, sharing and developing as we age! Just take a look at the web site [www.rtoero.ca](http://www.rtoero.ca), and explore the menu for the huge variety of information, activities, and opportunities. Then visit District 28's website at <https://district28.rtoero.ca/> AND our Facebook page at [RTOERO District 28 Region of Durham](#). You will discover just how active we are, and how YOU can be part of this!

I have been your President for the past two years, and once before in 2010. As I leave this role, and move to Past President in June, I would like to thank you for all the support, encouragement, and best wishes over the years. It has been a privilege to lead this wonderful organization. I have rekindled old friendships, and made many, many new ones. I thank you all.

Please help us to continue to grow, rebuild, and serve all our members to the best of our ability.



## SCAM ALERT!

### Phone and Door-to-Door Scams are on the Rise

#### Seniors are often the target of scams because:

- They are usually home during the day
- They have the money and/or info the scammer and fraudsters are looking for
- Are generally more trusting of authority and information presented to them

#### Typical scams include:

- Scammer acts as a lawyer, police officer or government official and seek owed money.
- Scammers pretend to be helping a loved one and request money to bail them out of jail.
- Scammers attempt to contact those on dating sites and build a relationship then ask for a "loan."
- Scammers try to get your personal information such as account, PIN and credit card details or SIN information.
- Scammers try to convince you that you have won a lottery and must pay money to release your winnings.

**If it seems too good to be true or if you feel at all intimidated, call someone you trust.**

If you are a victim of a fraud, report it to police: 888-579-1520

Whenever you are in doubt **#PHONEAFRIEND**



## SCAM ALERT!

### Tips for Protecting Yourself From Scammers

- Never open the door or invite anyone into your home that you don't know or recognize. Use your peephole, chain lock or talk through a locked storm door if possible.
- End any conversation when you feel threatened or intimidated. Call someone you trust to discuss.
- Before you do or sign anything: Stop, think and then think some more. Call someone you trust to discuss if you feel at all unsure about what is going on.
- Police, bailiff or government officials will NEVER attend your home or call you to collect money; and they will never have you wire money, use gift cards or deposit directly into a bank account.
- Create a safety word with family so if you are called asking to help, the person calling can provide the safe word.
- Anyone telling you NOT to tell anyone is a red flag and probably a scam. Call someone you trust.
- If they tell you that you must act quickly, remember that "Speed is Greed."
- Don't call back the number the fraudster provides you. Always call someone you trust to discuss.

Whenever you are in doubt **#PHONEAFRIEND**

District 28 would like to sincerely thank Constable Darryl Rice for his excellent presentation on how to avoid frauds and scams. As the scammers get more prolific, it is important that we stay aware and protect ourselves and our assets from them. We appreciate the great job he does as a Crime Prevention Officer for D.R.P.S.!

RTOERO District 28 has amazing members with such interesting and diverse life stories. We are delighted to share some of these stories in this edition of DUSTOFF

## Heather Bradley

### Kawartha Lakes Author



Heather is very passionate about the significance of shared reading with young students and the necessity to create books that provide authentic and meaningful information. She hopes that exposure to books at an early age will result in life-long readers who will continue to enjoy and learn from their reading experiences in a variety of ways.

Throughout her professional career, Heather has interacted with students in a number of different settings. When she worked at the Ontario Science Centre, she welcomed large numbers of eager participants each day. Heather shared her love of nature with them. However, Heather regretted that she was never able to follow up or continue the dialogue with these students.

A different career path was now in store for Heather. She became a teacher and was employed by the Durham District School Board for a number of years. While teaching at Mary Street School, Heather wrote and submitted an essay about Children's Literature. As a result, she was awarded the William C. McMaster Award from Scholastic Canada. Heather retired from full-time teaching in 2006. She continues to share her love of reading throughout the region and beyond with her visits to schools, libraries, and community centres.

In 2006, Heather published a book entitled Don't Wait for Your Ship to Come In - Throw it a Line and Drag it to Shore. It is described as a practical guide to living within your means while saving for your future. The main concept is that people can control their own financial destiny. This certainly indicates Heather's ability to research and provide pertinent information for a different audience.

As a classroom teacher, Heather's favourite time of day was when she could read to

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her students. Many teachers can relate to this sentiment. When Covid-19 became a reality, the visits to schools and other venues came to an abrupt halt. Heather missed sharing and interacting with students.

Heather made the decision to continue her writing with the focus being non-fiction picture books. There are very few written in this category. Heather commented on the qualities of a good picture book. " A good picture book is not only ageless and timeless, but it gives young readers the opportunity to let their imaginations go while they're learning." It is also important to make the book appealing for parents as they may be re-reading the book on many occasions.

When We All Get Together was published in September 2021. Heather describes the book as an entertaining way for young readers to boost their literacy skills and learn a thing or two about their natural environment. The chosen setting in the maple tree forest, and the plot involving animals indigenous to Canada provide accurate information for children. The teaching of collective nouns in the plot introduces new vocabulary and concepts to enrich student interest and comprehension. Heather worked closely with the illustrator to ensure a proper depiction of the animals and their natural habitat.

This book has received many accolades. In 2022, Heather travelled to Traverse City, Michigan to attend the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards. There were more than 1,500 entries from 22 countries. Heather was the recipient of a Silver Medal. The awards are presented in recognition of exemplary children's books and their creators dedicated to supporting childhood literacy and lifelong reading. Recently, Heather's book was reviewed by Goodreads and as a result she has received the Goodreads Royal Dragonfly Certificate.

Heather's second non-fiction picture book entitled We Both Speak English But... is nearing publication. Heather says it's a new twist on bilingualism and a gift to a cousin who lives in Ireland. People share close connections and experiences, but use different vocabulary in referencing these events.

Heather appreciates the support of local bookstores and libraries. Her book is available at the Kent Bookstore Lindsay, The Book Lady Fenelon Falls, Books Galore Port Perry, Friesen Press, Indigo, Amazon, & Barnes and Noble. Most local libraries carry the book as well.

*Submitted by Janet Beaton*



## Gardening adds years to your life, and LIFE to your years!



Jill Snape in her peony garden

Despite the snow that remains on the ground, the longer hours of daylight have gardeners planning and dreaming of the bounty and the beauty that they can create. As an avid gardener and a member of the Board of the Oshawa Garden Club, I admire all gardening efforts, but when I saw the garden of a friend, fellow Oshawa Garden Club Board member, and fellow District 28 member, Jill Snape I was astounded! Jill's garden is the largest and most beautiful home garden I have ever seen, so I asked her to share a bit about her passion with our members.

A photograph of Jill at the age of 2, kneeling on a kneeling pad with a trowel in her hand hints at how early her love of gardening began. Growing up in England, Jill's parents were gardeners, part of the postwar Victory Garden movement, when growing food was considered to be more productive, but Jill preferred the beauty and colour of a flower garden. Her devotion to her garden really blossomed in adulthood, when time spent in the peace and solitude of the garden was calming, a way to regain mental balance, and to enjoy the pleasure of creating and watching things grow. Jill felt she "became lighter in the garden".

While Jill is self-taught, she credits a mentor named Jean who belonged to the Pickering Garden Club, with great advice that helped her hone her skills. When Jill moved to Oshawa in 2014, she chose a house that had a long back lot with a small stream running through it - good bones. There were some small existing garden beds, which were a starting point. In the nine years since then, she has created a veritable paradise with quiet places to sit and engage in what Jill calls "active staring". There are unique garden statues, a swing, paths that lead to enchanting fairy houses, a gazebo, water features and a spectacular peony bed that, in full bloom, would take your breath away!

Jill is a member of the Ontario Hosta Society, and loves the many varieties of Hosta, but peonies and dwarf evergreens rank among her favourites too. Evergreens give structure to a garden and provide four season interest, something to consider when planning a garden. She also recommends that before you start your garden, note how much sunshine each area gets, where existing trees and shrubs are, since their roots might prevent digging nearby, and decide what you will use the garden for (for example an entertainment area, private oasis, kids' playground etc.).

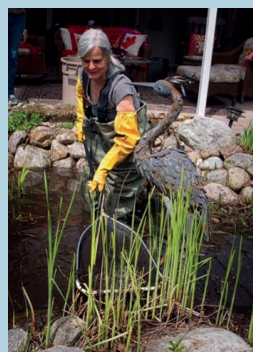
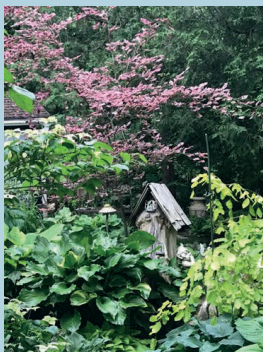
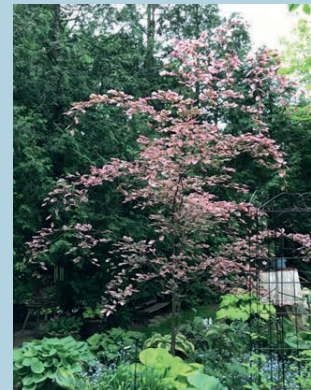
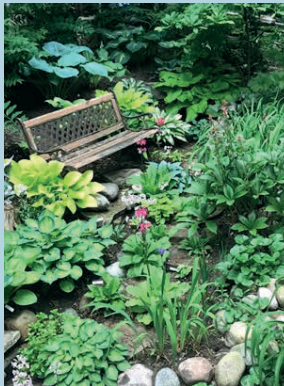
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These things will help you to determine how much to plant, what to plant and where.

Gardening might seem like a solitary hobby, but Jill has found that when she is out gardening, she chats with neighbours and people passing by who stop to talk gardening or to have a look at her plants. When she was new to Oshawa in 2014, she joined the Oshawa Garden Club and Probus to meet people and to feel she was getting involved and helping the community. She has made many friends, is on the OGC Board of Directors, leads the group that planted and maintains the beautiful gardens at Hearth Place, and helps in the gardens at Parkwood. Her garden has become well-known in Durham and is on every garden tour in the area, so for Jill, gardening has become a very social activity, rather than a solitary one.

While knee and hip problems have presented challenges, and the rabbits and squirrels can wreak havoc on the plants, Jill continues to find joy in the tranquility and creative expression that one gets from gardening. She says "Planting bulbs in the fall is faith in its greatest form!"

This is what Jill started with: The following photos show what Jill has created:  
*submitted by Sue Nieuwenburg*



# THE POETRY HUB

## The Young Irish Rebel

Huddled by bricks crumbled and worn  
He keeps as still as he can  
For on this day Ireland is born...  
No longer England's man

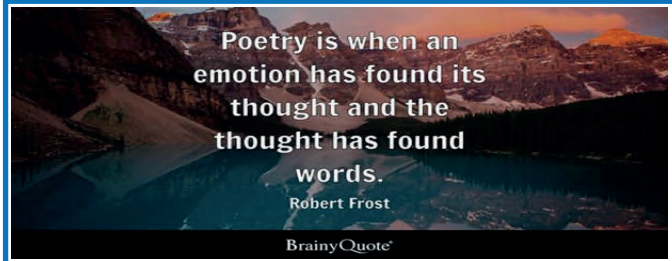
The Post Office is taken  
How long can they hold...  
As bullets tear into the walls  
He jumps up to fire! But then he is shot  
He stumbles sore stricken ...and falls

His life blood is oozing, his heart beating fast  
Yet he smiles at the prospect of death,  
For hasn't he fought both courageous and well  
And held out 'til his very last breath?

Crumpled on bricks now jagged and torn  
The young rebel thinks of his love  
A final smile graces his heroic young face  
As he watches the flight of a dove.

Yes, tales will be told and songs will be sung  
He thinks ... as his life slips away,  
For hasn't he helped dear Ireland be free  
On this wonderful and glorious day?

-  
by Jonathan O'Mara



## Solitude.

I yawned and stretched and looked about and said aloud, "what's it about." This poem whizzing in my brain, is it romantic, godly, plain?

For once it's quiet, still, no rain to splash with splatter on the pane.

The screen in place defaced again as friendly birds fly overhead and feel relief from what they gleaned on chimney tops or urban field.

People are walking across the street, dressed in black with hoods not neat tangled scarves and heavy feet.

The cars and trucks, a motley crew, are gliding by of different hue.

A gleam of headlight shines and then, it hurries by. It's gone again. No walkers now, it's cold and still, with winds that harbour no ill will

but state that snow will soon be back to chill us further; bring us back from balmy six above the freeze to make log fires lend their ease

to all who make the time to plan and dream their futures as they can,

recalling songs from long ago.

These Sunday afternoons I know.

L. Patricia Bayley.

Places One Has Lost.....

There are places one has lost  
Bright snippets in a gauzy haze of memory  
a white frame house  
on a gravel road opposite a vibrant woods  
alive with spring trilliums  
a blue bedroom, single bed  
once part of childhood bunk beds  
shared with a little sister  
a young mother reading nursery rhymes, fairy tales,  
later *The Bobbsey Twins and Black Beauty*  
a young father under sparkling stars, a midnight  
blue sky  
pointing out The Big Dipper  
feeding calves, milking cows for waiting barn cats

Hot summers cooling off at Amos' Pond  
stopping for penny candy, licorice, butterscotch  
suckers,  
black balls that turn your tongue black  
little girls in nylon dresses riding our pony in the  
backyard  
stopping at Crook's Service Station after church  
for ice cream -  
strawberry, cherry custard, maple walnut  
sitting in the car outside Stroud's Store  
the boundary between Pickering and Toronto  
munching Smarties and Krispy Crunch  
while Mom in the phone booth chats to Grandma  
long distance is expensive in the country

playing Monopoly on the tailgate of Carter Kids  
station wagon  
playing badminton in our field closest to the  
house  
saddling Buck, his velvet nose and warm horse  
scent  
snorting and shaking his bridle  
walking him to the house, ringing the bell  
so Dad can cinch his saddle tight

Idyllic times  
taken for granted in childhood  
as we lived it.

By Gail M. Murray

A New Day

the hurt

the pain

now the stones

that crush

now the stones

that build

flowering vines

decay

with time

dawn turns into dusk

darkness turns into light

despair

turns into hope

by Ted Glover

# What's Happening on the Social Front?

Your Social Committee Members: Penny Kutlik & Charmaine Huculak (Co-Chairpersons), Edith Hoekstra, Robin Helgeson.



## The Social Scene

District 28 is happy to present a varied selection of social events and activities at low or no cost to our members. These include both in-person events and Zoom presentations. Events take place in a variety of locations throughout the Durham Region, with in-person events in the Spring and Fall and Zoom presentations through the winter so we can all stay out of the snow and remain safe and snug! Zoom events are provided free of charge to members and are recorded so that they can be posted for access during the month following the presentation. The link and information is emailed to members, and technical help is always available if needed. Member costs for live events are usually subsidized by \$15 courtesy of RTO-ERO District 28. Guests are welcome to all activities, so members are encouraged to invite friends and family. At each event, we run a 50/50 draw to benefit a charity. The current recipient is Hearth Place, Oshawa, which provides support to individuals and families dealing with cancer.

We also run two monthly clubs.

Poetry Hub, a poetry sharing group, is hosted by Penny Kutlik at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday of each month.

District 28 Book Club is hosted by Charmaine Huculak on every second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

The year to date has been busy. We kicked off the year with our annual NO BELL LUNCHEON to celebrate the first day of school with other RTOERO members at the Mandarin in Pickering. Over 125 happy members and their guests this year celebrated new and milestone retirees. In October, another record number of members attended the WINE & CHEESE SOCIAL. Wine and light snacks were offered at this late afternoon get-together attended by nearly 150 retired teachers and guests this year. This included the presentation of RTOERO Anniversary Certificates. A delicious catered PRE-CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON was

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# What's Happening on the Social Front?

(Continued from page 13)

held at Scugog Arena in November, to kick off the holiday season with record attendance of over 125 members, despite inclement weather.

To accommodate the winter weather, the holidays and everyone's busy schedules we offered a number of free Zoom presentations which are recorded and made available for members to access at their convenience if they cannot attend the live on-line event. These included *How to Put Your Garden to Bed for the Winter*, by Matthew Dressing from Sheridan Garden Centres, in November, a *Virtual Visit to Antarctica*, with renowned Naturalist, Author, and Trek Guide, Geoff Carpentier in January, and Durham Master Gardeners presented *Planning A Successful Garden*, in early March. The pre-Valentine's Day Event *FOR THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE* was subsidized, but not free to members. However, considering it included a box of chocolates mailed to each participant's home and a presentation by Daniel Woodburn, a former Maître Chocolatier for Lindt, we could hardly complain. We closed out the season with a presentation at the end of March by Special Constable Darryl Rice of the DRPS designed especially for seniors, entitled *Frauds and Scams* with record high enrollment.

Returning to in-person events will kick off with a new initiative: a Complimentary Breakfast at Cora's on April 20th, to welcome all the new Members of 2022. We are hoping to make this a new annual event.

Our next event will be a MURDER MYSTERY and 3 COURSE DINNER at Kedron Dells on May 2. And there's still time to register before the April 18th cut off! You are invited to dress the part of a Gangster or "Moll" for 3 chances at a prize draw. You can make up tables of friends for more fun!! At \$69 for members and \$84 for non-member guests with no need to travel far to have a great theatre experience and a wonderful meal with friends, this is already a popular event.

The annual RTOERO DISTRICT 28 GOLF TOURNAMENT will once again be held at Sunnybrae Golf Course, in Port Perry. This year we will be a little

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Join us at Sunnybrae Golf Course for our annual  
**RTOERO District 28**  
**GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Make a foursome or come alone!  
**Monday, May 29th, 2023**  
Cost: RTOERO Members \$45 Non-Members \$60  
Continental Breakfast & 9 Holes of Golf  
Golf carts mandatory - No walking  
9:00 am Continental Breakfast & Registration  
10:00 am Shotgun Tee Off  
BBQ Lunch on the patio will be available after Play is finished .  
Cost \$20.00 All prices include HST  
PRIZES, PRIZES, AND MORE PRIZES  
50/50 draw to benefit Hearth Place (cancer support centre) will be held.  
Details on Registration to follow separately.  
SUNNYBRAE GOLF COURSE  
1430 KING ST. PORT PERRY  
www.sunnybraegolfclub.com

(Continued from page 14)

earlier, taking place on May 29th. A Continental Breakfast and nine holes of Golf will be the same price as last year with members paying \$45 and non-member guests at \$60. The same BBQ lunch will be offered @ \$20. A great time was had by all last year with prizes for everyone!

The AGM on June 6th is not strictly a social event, but since we are holding it at the Scugog Arena and offering a subsidized luncheon, once again catered by Basil Leaf Catering of Whitby, it is appropriate to just mention that date under this heading.



\*Be sure to see the advertisements and registration for our up-coming events in this issue of DUSTOFF. Hope to see you there!!

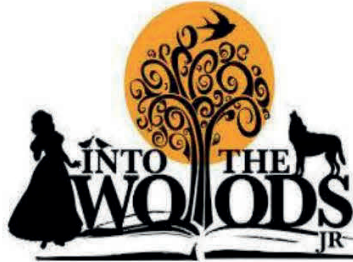
### *Giving Back To Our Own Community*

As mentioned there is a 50/50 draw held at in-person social events. Over the years the proceeds had been donated to our own RTOERO Foundation. In 2022 the charitable status of our Foundation was adjusted, and we were required to select a new beneficiary or cease holding the draw. Because our members have always enthusiastically supported and enjoyed the Draw, the Board decided to find a local registered charity for whom we could act as a third-party fundraiser. A number of suggestions were offered and among those was Hearth Place, Oshawa. When we approached their executive we were met with warmth and gratitude and it was decided that they would become, at least for the present, the charity which we supported. Following are some of the reasons we made this choice.

"Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre's Mission: We empower a community of compassionate support, knowledge, and hope for anyone impacted by cancer.

Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre is a support centre where cancer patients and their families, both young and old, can come and share their experiences, find resources, and discover new ways to care for themselves and each other. In the comfort of a home-like atmosphere, our services include both individual and group support, wellness programs, and seminars and workshops. We recognize the impact cancer has on the whole family, co-workers, and friends and, therefore, provide support to all impacted by a cancer diagnosis. We offer support at any point in the cancer journey including, return to work programming, children's support services, grief support, and support for families with a child with cancer. All programs and services at Hearth Place are provided free of charge.

# THANKS TO RTOERO DISTRICT 28



## Sunderland Lions Community Theatre

November 22, 2022

Retired Teachers of Ontario District 28  
c/o Jim Craigen  
712 Tulip Court  
Oshawa, Ontario, L1G 3C6

Dear Jim Craigen and the Executive of RTO District 28:

On behalf of the Sunderland Lions Community Theatre and the Sunderland Lions Club, please accept our appreciation for your sponsorship grant of \$500 for our young cast's presentation of "Into the Woods JR" at the Sunderland Town Hall. We were proud to project your RTO's logo before and after each of the six show presentations and display your sponsorship at the entrance and exit points of the Sunderland Town Hall. As well, and attached herein, please find a copy of our program that acknowledges the generous grant provided by RTO District 28. With over 900 patrons attending the presentations in total, we are assured your sponsorship was recognized and appreciated by our community.

As a result of extensive preparations, planning and rehearsals, the 33 fine, talented young actors from our local, northern Durham communities made "Into the Woods JR" a resounding success and are to be heartily congratulated on their singing, dancing, acting and genuine, positive and supportive social skills! The Sunderland Lions Community Theatre Production Team, parents, and our community are very proud of their significant achievements and the many memories the cast will enjoy for years to come from their involvement with "Into the Woods JR." Your sponsorship assisted us in making this possible, and for this we remain grateful.

Wishing you continued good fortune and good health and may 2023 be a peaceful, happy and successful year for you.

Sincerely,

Rick De Jong  
Producer  
Sunderland Lions Community Theatre



## 2022 Partnership Report to RTOERO – District 28, Durham



### THANK YOU, for Supporting STEM Workshops in Durham Region!

We appreciate the support of RTOERO - District 28, Durham in 2022. With your donation of \$500 we were able to:

Provide 2 complimentary virtual classroom workshops to one Whitby school in December 2022.

Transform 52 children into scientists, heightening their interest and confidence in STEM through 2 topics: Our World of Energy (Grade 1) and I Like to Move it (Grade 2); where the Grade 1 class investigated the impact energy has in our world, learned how to transform chemical energy into heat and made discoveries about heat conservation, while the Grade 2 class explored the science behind simple machines and investigated how pulleys, wheels and inclined planes can help to make work easier.

Provide 2 teachers with additional STEM resources that will benefit not only their current classes, but also those in years to come.

During these years of interrupted learning and change, our programs have been a catalyst for learning, an opportunity to connect with others through shared discovery, and a brief respite from routine. Donors like RTOERO - District 28, Durham helped us deliver more complimentary workshops than ever before.

We are truly grateful that you are working with us to ensure that children and youth have inclusive opportunities to develop science and math literacy, get excited about STEM, and see themselves as tomorrow's scientists and engineers. Representing all voices in our workforce, communities, research and scientific discoveries empowers the youth of Canada to help build strong and healthy communities.

*SPECIAL NOTE: The entire report is available online only. Just [click here](#) to view the report.*

*(Continued from page 4)*

founder of Seniors for Social Action Ontario. This is a volunteer organization of women and men who believe that there has to be a more progressive vision of aging. They are advocating for increased government funding to support In Home Assistance and enhancements to Community Care options. The organization states "Citizens must make their collective voices heard."

In closing, I must thank all volunteer committee members for their commitment and dedication in supporting Goodwill activities. We can always use additional help. Some tasks can be shared which eases the responsibility. Positions can be modified to accommodate a prospective member's schedule.

Janet Beaton, Goodwill Chair.

## RETIREMENT IS NOT THE END OF THE ROAD.

### IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE OPEN HIGHWAY.

I read with some amusement the submission by Bill Fox, entitled "Retired or Considering It?

This Might Help." in the last edition of *Dustoff*. Although I realize that Bill wrote this with his tongue at least partly in his cheek, I did want to submit my reply.

20 years ago I retired from teaching, but at age 55, I was much too young and much too full of energy to stop working. So I took on a full-time field maintenance job at Toronto Pearson Airport that lasted (to my total astonishment!) for 15 years.



After retiring from that second career at age 70, and still too young and too full of energy to stop working, I decided to drive a school bus. Driving a school bus directly addresses ten of the twelve considerations that Bill writes about.

Even today at age 75, and thanks to my bus students, I am still young and full of energy, with a reason to get up every morning, and a paycheque that goes into my bank account every two weeks. And I still have Christmas, Easter, and summer holidays, just as if I were a teacher.

I guess one of these days, I finally will retire. I'll write back when I do.

By *Marvin Sandomirsky*

## Travel Insurance Questions Answered

By John Logue

*Does my RTOERO Travel Plan cover COVID-19 medical emergencies?*

Yes. RTOERO members covered with Extended Health Care plan are covered for sudden and unexpected COVID-19 medical emergencies, even if there is an active travel advisory related to COVID-19 for the area in which you are travelling.

*Does my travel insurance cover COVID-19 related trip cancellation, interruption or delay expenses?*

As of May 1, 2022, coverage is available if you must cancel or interrupt your trip in the event that you or your travelling companion have a positive COVID-19 test or become ill with COVID-19 or die because of COVID-19.

*Why have premiums increased in 2023?*

In 2021, RTOERO announced a 3% premium reduction, and there was no premium increase in 2022. The surplus from 2020 and 2021 is now being invested back into the plan to manage premium increases, despite rising costs and increased use of the plan.

The Benefits Committee, chaired by Gayle Manley, recommends premium rates to RTOERO's elected board of directors. RTOERO uses all premiums exclusively to provide the most comprehensive and affordable benefits possible for members. With the long-term stability of plans in mind, rates are reviewed annually.

*Do members still have a year to submit claims?*

No. Starting January 1, 2023, the RTOERO policy requires you to submit your claims within six months from the date the expense was incurred. Expenses incurred on or before December 31, 2022 must be received by June 30, 2023. Rule of thumb: submit claims as soon as possible, lest you forget.

*What is CloudMD?*

Starting January 1, 2023, CloudMD replaced Teledoc as RTOERO's medical second-opinion service for Extended Health Care Plan participants. (Teledoc had

*(Continued on page 20)*

(Continued from page 19)

earlier replaced Best Doctors.) CloudMD is a Canadian-based health solutions company.

For more information, please see your hard copy of Communique, RTOERO 2023 Health Benefits Update, or visit <https://rtoero.ca/resources/communique-insurance-plan-updates/>.

## FUNDING AVAILABLE TO RTOERO MEMBERS

Each year funds are made available for a variety of education-related and/or community projects providing a means by which RTOERO members can participate in education, social and/or community projects and raise the profile of RTOERO and its members. Last year a total of \$3500 in local funding was granted for seven projects involving RTOERO Durham 28 members. The deadline for applying for local funding is May 15. For information contact Jim Craigen ([jcraigen@idirect.com](mailto:jcraigen@idirect.com)).

Below is a note from a Durham teacher whose class benefited from the funding granted to the Scientists in the Schools organization by Durham 28.

*"I wanted to thank you so much for the providing the funding that allowed my class to receive a free presentation from Scientists in the School.*

*I teach grade 2 at West Lynde P.S. and my students were fortunate enough to be able to participate in a workshop in December about Simple Machines. The presentation was fantastic and was almost 90 minutes of hands-on activities where the students were building ramps, pulleys and wheels and axles. The absolutely loved the presentation and learned so much.*

*Unfortunately, West Lynde is not able to secure extra funds from fundraising like some other schools do, and our students often are not exposed to different life experiences. Programs like Scientist in the School are so beneficial in adding to their experiences and in enhancing their learning.*

*The generous donation from your program is so valuable and so very much appreciated. Please let your members know how much fun we had and how much we learned. Thank you!!"*

# RTOERO FOUNDATION NEWS

## *RTOERO DISTRICT 28 Chair: Maria Provencher*

The RTOERO Foundation continues its good work to invest in research ideas, and actions to build a better and healthier future for all of us as we age. It is one of the only charitable foundations in Canada focussed on the health and well-being of older adults. The focus is on building and supporting creative, result based initiatives to improve seniors' health care and promote social engagement.

*Your RTOERO Durham District 28 executive also understands the necessity for more information and resources regarding the issues facing our ageing population. We support our RTOERO Foundation in all their endeavours to improve health care, end social isolation and combat ageism.*

### Facts about RTOERO FOUNDATION:

- a registered Canadian charity, established in 2011.
- inspired by RTOERO members' desire to improve the quality of life for ageing adults.
- mission: to invest in programs, research and training to support healthy, active ageing for all Canadians.
- activities aim to improve the lives of our Canadian seniors.

### How is the RTOERO Foundation able to accomplish this? :

- relies on voluntary donations from members and financial support from corporate partners and others who care about improving the quality of life for aging adults.
- gives tax receipts for every donation of \$20 or more.
- Donors have the option to allocate their donation to one or more of these focus areas:
  1. Geriatrics/Gerontology research and training
  2. Social Isolation initiatives/projects

### QUESTIONS from our members:

1. How can I learn more about mandates and projects?-Contact [RTOERO Foundation - RTOERO](#) or call 1 800 361 9888
2. I heard Betty-Anne Howard's Webinar on Social purpose and philanthropy was still available for viewing, how do I access it? -To watch previous webinars visit RTOERO on line or email <http://www.rtoerofoundation.ca> for more

*(Continued on page 22)*

information.

3. I would like to know more about "chime in", what is it and how can I join? -"an hour long chat every Wednesday, which you join on Zoom or by telephone." The chat takes place in French from 10 to 11 in the morning or in English from 1-2 in the afternoon. To register for the English session: [rtoerofoundation.ca/chimein](http://rtoerofoundation.ca/chimein) and French session: [rtoerofoundation.ca/onjase](http://rtoerofoundation.ca/onjase) -once you've registered a reminder will be sent to you with a zoom link and/or telephone number.
4. Is it permitted to invite my friend? -Yes, friends, neighbours or family who might enjoy meeting new friends and chatting together are all welcome

All questions, comments and concerns are welcome as well, these are but a few. Contact RTOERO Foundation, participate and get informed if you wish to get involved by donating, participating in activities and webinars, or if you just want to be informed of the "giving back" ideas such as what award-winning project grants are awarded and how much research support is given to the RTOERO chair in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto. The Foundation raises awareness and funds that go towards the ideas and actions to build a better future for all of us as we age.

Contact information: RTOERO Foundation

Feel free to contact RTOERO Foundation representatives for further information regarding our FOUNDATION'S important work.

Mike Prentice-Executive Director

Deanna Brytus- Manager Donor Relations

Tammy Gonsalves- Manager of Philanthropy

TED WHITELAND- Board Chair

Phone 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888

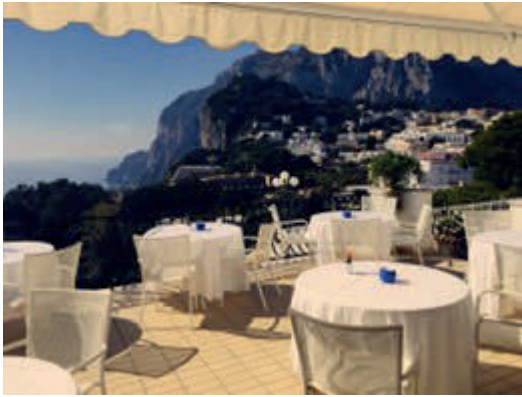
Email: [foundation@rtoero.ca](mailto:foundation@rtoero.ca)

Web: [rtoerofoundation.ca](http://rtoerofoundation.ca)

Address: 18 Spadina Rd. Toronto On M5R 2S7

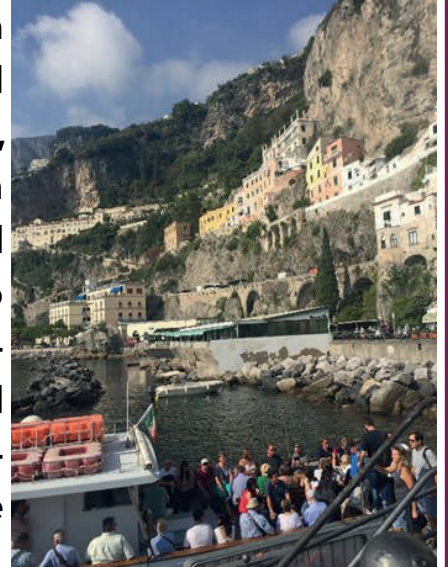
Caring about the future of the RTOERO Foundation and its mission to enhance the quality of life for ageing adults is important to all of us. I am proud to be a member of RTOERO and to know that our caring Foundation team is not only keeping our members informed about our Foundation's great work but envisions "A Canada where seniors get the care and support they need, where, when and how they need it."

## L'Italia è bellissima!



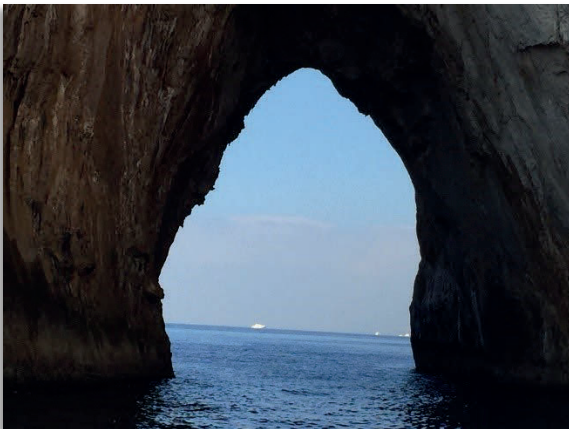
In 2017 the Marconi Club in Sault Ste Marie was planning a trip to southern Italy. Since only full busloads could go, and they had one and a half filled, Connie White's sister contacted her to see if some of the RTOERO members wanted to join in. Connie put the word out, and sure enough, the response was enough to fill the two buses. Given that they were two disparate groups, Connie wondered if they would gel, but that was not a problem! The two groups bonded, partied, danced and got along famously. So successful

was this trip that a second and third trip came out of it.



The following are a few of the photos from the first trip which was to southern Italy including Rome, the Amalfi Coast, Capri, Pompeii, and Sicily.

From all reports, the trip was **AMAZING!**



# "Coffee On Us" is back...



## Coffee On Us:

Come on out and let us buy you a coffee and enjoy some great conversation with fellow District 28 members. We meet at a Tim Horton's at 10:00 a.m. on the last Wednesday or Thursday of the month depending on the location.

### The meeting locations are:

**Ajax** - WEDNESDAYS (245 Salem Road S.)

**Bowmanville** - WEDNESDAYS (350 Bowmanville Ave.)

**Oshawa** - WEDNESDAYS (1361 Harmony Rd N.)

**Port Perry** - WEDNESDAYS (15930 Old Simcoe Road)

**Uxbridge / Beaverton** - WEDNESDAYS (325 Toronto St. S. Uxbridge)

**Pickering** - THURSDAYS (742 Kingston Rd)

**Whitby** - THURSDAYS (Brock St. S. at the 401)

## Attention Vincent Massey Retirees!

### Informal Reunion for Vincent Massey Staff from 1990-2000.

We are meeting at Lakeview Park in Oshawa on *Monday, June 12 at 1:00 pm* at the Gazebo. *Rain date-July 19.* Bring a lunch or snack for yourself. If you are interested, please email [cordsnchords@gmail.com](mailto:cordsnchords@gmail.com)



DUSTOFF is printed **twice** a year and members of RTOERO District 28 receive a copy Winter/Spring and Summer/ Fall. If you know of someone who is not receiving their issue please contact a member of the executive.

### RTOERO District 28- Region of Durham

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