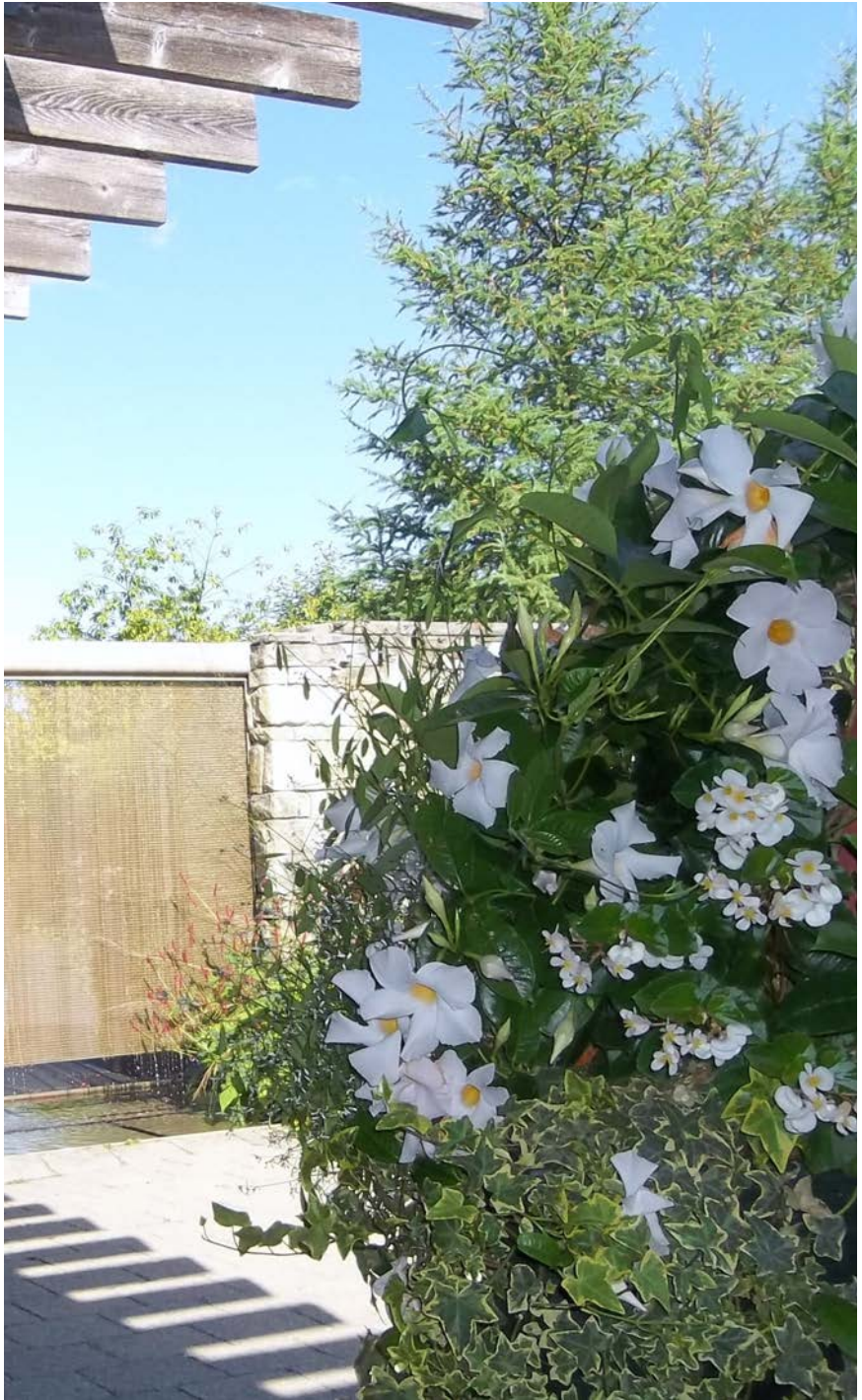




**RTO
ERO** District 23
North York



2023 Annual Meeting
Agenda & Reports
Thursday, May 11, 2023



Secret Garden water curtain, TBG | Gail M. Murray

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Celebrate with us ALL Spring and Fall with many events!

RTOERO District 23 OUR GOLDEN YEAR

March: *Cookie Decorating Party*

April: *TSO-Frank & Ella Concert*
One Voice webinar
e-Devices 🌀

May: *50th Annual Meeting & Spring Luncheon*
Book Club 🌀

June: *Georgian Bay Cruise*
Strollers, Toronto Island 🌀

September: *Champagne Breakfast*
Ottawa Tour
Bridge Club 🌀

October: *Celebration of the 50th Luncheon*
Pole Walking 🌀

November: *Holiday Season Luncheon*
Needlework and Crafts 🌀

December: *Have-a-Java* 🌀

🌀: *Featured Event of the Month*

RTOERO District 23 Celebrating 50 years of serving our members 1973 - 2023



AGENDA



Annual Meeting Agenda
RTOERO District 23, North York
Thursday, May 11, 2023, 10:00 AM
Thornhill Golf and Country Club
7994 Yonge Street, Thornhill, ON L4J 1W3

Welcome and Introduction of Executive	Maureen Capotosto
Introduction of Guests	
Land Acknowledgement	
Call to Order	
Reading of the AM Minutes, 2022	George Meek
Acceptance of Minutes	
Business arising from the Minutes	
In Memoriam	John Giannone
President's Report	Maureen Capotosto
Presentation of the File of Reports	
Treasurer's Report	Vernon Paige
Treasurer's Motion	
Report of the Nomination Committee	Mary Valtellini
Election of the Executive 2023-2024	George Meek
Installation of the New Executive	
Incoming President's Remarks	Sara Di Nallo
Celebrate Our Members	
Questions from the Members	Individual Conveners
Announcements	Mildred Frank
Adjournment motion	George Meek

IN MEMORIAM

John Giannone

With great sadness, we inform you of the passing of the following members of District 23. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to their families and friends.

The following information was taken from RTOERO Office's monthly membership updates from April 1, 2022, to February 28, 2023.



Farouk Aboobake
Murchison Amoroso
Edith Arnold
Brian Balsdon
Florence Barik
Jean Bell
Jeremiah Blair
Ruth Bradshaw
Elizabeth Bromstein
Sylvia Brooks
Sheila Brueggeman
Joanne Callande
Bruce Chapman
Norma Cleeton
Marilyn Corbeil
Robert Curran
William Donald
Olwen Dunets
Eleanor Engelbert
Frederick Ewart
Glenna Fair
Margaret Fiddes
Eileen Foy
Ruth Gillett
John Graham
Arthur Gynn
John Helston

Melvin Herman
Marion Hunter
Bhagwandai Janack
David Kelly
Nina King
Cheryl Kramer
Thomas Logan
John Low
Alana MacNeill
Margaret Mann
Violet Marin
Margot McElligott
Sheila McGivney
Sheila McIlraith
Karen McMahan
Olga Mergler
Harry Mills
Margaret Mitchell
John Sean Mohan
Betty Mollet
Rosemary Moro
David Moscoe
Robert Ogilvie
Marlane Parris
Elizabeth Paterson
Tibor Peisz
Christine Pletch

Eugene Porter
Penelope Potter
Catherine Rayner
John Ricker
Bruce Rouse
Margaret Russell
Elena San-Marina
Gisela Schmidt
David Sindholt
Elizabeth Smith
Patricia Sullivan
Douglas Tallon
Ruth Taylor
Betty Thompson
Harry Thornton
George Twine
Jeannette Valeriotte
Irene Vaughan
Margarita Vlcek
Ruth Weiss
Mary Wentz
James Williams
Karen Wilton
Werner Winter
Robert Young.

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF
DISTRICT 23, NORTH YORK
WED., JUNE 8, 2022, 10:00 A.M. VIA ZOOM**
Olga McKenzie

10.00 a.m. Meeting Convened

Welcome, Remarks and Introduction of Executive Officers:

M. Valtellini, President

M. Valtellini gave an overview of the past year and introduced the table officers.

In Memoriam: J. Giannone, Membership Convener

A moment was taken to remember and honour the members who passed away from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. The names are listed in “In Memoriam” on page 4.

Treasurer’s Report (p. 8-9), V. Paige

- Financial Statement for the Period January 1-December 31, 2021 and Budget Overview for the period January-December 2022
- The Executive has already approved the Financial Statement and the Budget Overview
- Have received more specific guidance for reducing reserves from the Office
- Call for questions – none

Motion: V. Paige/V. Sterling moved to receive the Financial Statement for RTOERO District 23 North York for the year January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, as approved by the District Executive on January 12, 2022, and then submitted to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer of RTOERO. **Carried.**

Motion: V/Paige/V. Sterling moved to accept the Budget for RTOERO District 23 North York for the year beginning January 1, 2022, and ending December 31, 2022, as was approved by the District Executive on March 9, 2022. **Carried.**

Election Report and Introduction of Executive Members:

G. Scriven

Executive for 2022/2023

Past President Mary Valtellini
President Maureen Capotosto
1st Vice President Dara Di Nallo
2nd Vice President Sylvia Skippen
Treasurer Vernon Paige
Associate Treasurer Kathy Shorney
Secretary Olga McKenzie
Archivist Mary Mundle
Book Club Sylvia Skippen
Bridge Alan Ward
Communications Karen Quinn
Community Service Cheryl Paige
Cycling Nadia Generoso
e-Devices Vern Paige
Foundation Sara Di Nallo
Goodwill Gwen Bumbury
Governance George Meek
Have-A-Java Elizabeth Clarke
Health Services Gwen Scriven
Member-at-Large Daniele Ingster
Member-at-Large Mary Ellen Lawless
Membership John Giannone
Needlework/Crafts Margaret Schuman
Associate Editor Maureen Capotosto
Associate Editor Valerie Sterling
Newsletter Distributor Gerard MacNeil
Newsletter Editor Merv Mascarenhas
Photographer Vernon Paige
Pole Walking Kathy Shorney
Political Advocacy Kathy Shorney
Recruitment Anne Marum
Social Mildred Frank
Strollers Joanne Famiglietti
Trips Mary Valtellini
Webmaster Merv Mascarenhas

Celebrate our Members:

Mildred Frank celebrated Mary Cairo and her valuable service over the years. A donation to Foundation has been made on Mary's behalf.

Karen celebrated Maureen Capotosto who received the Distinguished District 23 Member Award for her dedicated service to District 23 in a variety of roles over the past 16 years.

Maureen Capotosto celebrated the following members for their service on the executive.

- Mary Cairo-10 years on the executive
- Gwen Scriven-10 years on the executive

The following received pins from the Ontario Volunteer Service Award in recognition of their long service to District 23: Mildred Frank (28 years), Mary Ellen Lawless (27 years), George Meek (26 years), Margaret Schuman (18 years), Maureen Capotosto (16 years), Mary Valtellini (12 years).

Incoming President's Remarks: M. Capotosto

Thanked everyone for vote of confidence. Looking forward to working with everyone in the year ahead.

Questions from the members: **Conveners:** none

Adjournment

Announcement: Immediately following the Annual Meeting there will be an executive meeting. Everyone is invited to stay for this meeting to learn more about what is happening in District 23. Conveners of the various activities will give reports. Join us and see if you would like to become involved!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Vernon Paige



Treasurer's Report - Vernon Paige

RTOERO District 23 North York Financial Statement for the Period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
<u>Assets at January 1</u>		
Bank	\$ 12,645.62	\$ 36,480.26
Other Assets - GIC	41,228.87	11,143.80
Total Assets	\$ 53,874.49	\$ 47,624.06

Revenue

Grants		
Annual	\$ 44,984.82	\$ 44,603.51
Community	4,000.00	2,500.00
Trips	1,450.00	0.00
Social events	2,900.00	0.00
Fundraising, donations	585.00	18.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	1,564.20
Interest on Bank Balance and Investments	512.93	85.07
Total Revenue	\$ 54,432.75	\$ 48,770.78

Expenses

District executive - meetings and office	\$ 1,977.21	\$ 469.64
Community project	6,870.00	4,000.00
Recruitment	0.00	29.74
Newsletter (printing, mailing, postage)	29,076.85	29,714.44
Website, Facebook, Email	226.77	1,136.13
Goodwill	1,721.03	1,586.02
Activities (Book Club, Have-a-Java, Needlework, e-Devices, Bridge)	2,341.22	739.88
Social events	9,944.79	0.00
Trips	3,774.68	0.00
Office Expenses (bank charges, postage, etc.)	14.25	1.50
Donations	1,200.00	4,843.00
Total Expenses	\$ 57,146.80	\$ 42,520.35

Assets + Revenue - Expenses

	\$ 51,160.44	\$ 53,874.49
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Assets at December 31

Bank	\$ 5,093.95	\$ 12,645.62
Other Assets - GIC	46,066.49	41,228.87
Total Assets	\$ 51,160.44	\$ 53,874.49

Approved by District 23 Executive 2023 January 11

RTOERO District 23 North York 2023 Expenses Budget With Comparisons

Expenses	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
500 District Executive				
501 Meetings - Executive		450.00	1,580.87	700.00
502 Meetings - Annual Mtgs/Forum		4,000.00	278.52	4,000.00
503 DE office expenses	469.64	750.00	117.82	750.00
504 Transportation		400.00		400.00
Total 500 District Executive	\$ 469.64	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 1,977.21	\$ 5,850.00
550 Communications/Social Media	1,136.13			
551 Newsletter	29,714.44	32,700.00	29,076.85	32,100.00
552 Website/Facebook/email		1,094.00	226.77	319.00
Total 550 Communications/Social Media	\$ 30,850.57	\$ 33,794.00	\$ 29,303.62	\$ 32,419.00
600 Member Services				
601 Goodwill	1,586.02	4,100.00	1,721.03	5,000.00
602 Member Engagement	24.00	48.00		48.00
602-1 Book Club		100.00	95.14	300.00
602-2 Have-a-Java		600.00	123.00	1,125.00
602-3 Needlework and Crafts	192.73	300.00	18.65	400.00
602-4 Speaker Series	500.00	2,500.00		500.00
602-5 Strollers, Pole Walking, Cycling		300.00		300.00
602-6 Mobile Devices	23.15	650.00	443.08	650.00
602-7 Bridge		250.00	1,661.35	3,300.00
Total 602 Member Engagement	\$ 739.88	\$ 4,748.00	\$ 2,341.22	\$ 6,623.00
603 Recruitment	29.74	300.00		200.00
605 Social Events		5,000.00		32,500.00
605-1 Champagne Breakfast			4,060.93	
605-2 Holiday Season Luncheon - expenses			5,883.86	
Total 605 Social Events	\$ 0.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 9,944.79	\$ 32,500.00
606 Trips			100.00	500.00
606-1 Mirvish - "Joseph"			1,650.00	
606-2 Afternoon Tea			1,584.08	
606-3 TSO			440.60	
Total 606 Trips	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,774.68	\$ 500.00
Total 600 Member Services	\$ 2,355.64	\$ 14,148.00	\$ 17,781.72	\$ 44,823.00
700 Community Grants Expense	4,000.00	2,500.00	6,655.00	-
800 Office expenses				
801 Stationery and Printing		100.00		100.00
804 Bank Fees	1.50	50.00	14.25	240.00
Total 800 Office expenses	\$ 1.50	\$ 150.00	\$ 14.25	\$ 340.00
860 Donations	4,843.00	5,000.00	1,200.00	5,000.00
Total Expenses	\$ 42,520.35	\$ 61,192.00	\$ 56,931.80	\$ 88,432.00

2023 Budget approved by the District 23 Executive 2023 February 8

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE FOR 2023/2024

-----	Position	Nominees	-----
	Past President	Maureen Capotosto	
	President	Sara Di Nallo	
	1 st Vice President	Sylvia Skippen	
	2nd Vice President	vacancy	
	Treasurer	Vernon Paige	
	Associate Treasurer	Kathy Shorney	
	***Secretary	Sandra Filicetti	
	-----	Conveners	Nominees
		***Archivist	Elisa Arciero
		Book Club	Sylvia Skippen
		Bridge	Alan Ward
		Communications	Karen Quinn
	Community Grants and Scholarships	Cheryl Paige	
	Cycling	vacancy	
	Foundation	Sara Di Nallo	
	***Goodwill	Maria Fernandes	
	Governance	George Meek	
	Have-A-Java	Liz Clarke	
	Health Services	Gwen Scriven	
	Member at Large	Mary Ellen Lawless	
	Member at Large	vacancy	
	Membership	vacancy	
	Needlework and Crafts	Olga McKenzie	
	Newsletter Editor - Design and Layout	vacancy	
	Newsletter Associate Editor	Maureen Capotosto	
	Newsletter Associate Editor	Valerie Sterling	
	Newsletter Distribution	Gerard MacNeil	
	Photographer	Vernon Paige	
	Pole Walking	Kathy Shorney	
	Political Advocacy	Kathy Shorney	
	Recruitment	vacancy	
	Social Committee	Mildred Frank	
	Strollers	Joanne Famiglietti	
	Technology	Vern Paige	
	Trips	Mary Valtellini	
	Webmaster	Mervyn Mascarenhas	

*** indicates vacancy with new nominee

Slate submitted by: Mary Valtellini

GEORGE MEEK

RTOERO

Distinguished District Member Award Winner 2023



District 23, North York, was pleased to nominate George Meek for the 2023 District Distinguished Member Award.

George has enjoyed approximately 26 years on District 23, North York Executive in various roles. He has made a difference in the quality of service to the members and assisted in bringing the District's infrastructure into the future. George brings a depth of knowledge to decision-making and is most helpful about the proper procedures to follow as the Executive undertakes its work. Executive members find George very welcoming to new members and supportive of their efforts.

George Meek retired in 1995 and immediately joined STO/ERO and the Health Plans. In 1996 George was elected Sec-

ond Vice President at the Fall District 23 Annual General Meeting and went through the Table Officer positions, including Past President. At the time, RTOERO was dealing with large lump sum payments from the OTPP. George assisted in developing a plan that achieved a significant reduction in the CPP Offset, using some of the pension surpluses.

George participated in the Senate from 1996 until 2005, assuming various roles, including District Table Officer, Senator, Health Services and Insurance Committee Chair, Constitution Committee member, and Deputy Speaker. He was appointed to the STO/ERO Health Services and Insurance Committee in the Fall of 1996 and served as a Committee Member and Chair

for the next six years. We went through 2 double-digit increases in premiums during his time there, which placed the health plans on a firm financial foundation for the future.

George retired from RTOERO service in 2005 due to the health situation of his wife, Joy. President Ron Poste recognized his substantial contributions to STO/RTOERO in the Fall of 2007 with the presentation of the Founding Member Award.

After completing the Table Officer roles at the District Level (4 years), George became Convener of the STONY Bridges Newsletter Distribution. This involved the management of well over 1500 newsletters delivered to each District member three times per year. He worked with the printer, the distribution service (which we changed), and the membership staff person at RTOERO.

After a few years in this role, he was appointed the District Health Services Convener in about 2006. He was a natural for the position due to his six-year experience on the RTOERO Committee, a role he continued for nearly 15 years. He assisted many RTOERO members with more complex claims and questions during this time. He attended, along with a district observer, the annual RTOERO District Health Representative (DHR) Seminar and was an active participant and contributing District Representative. He made a positive difference, ensuring North York's concerns were always heard.

George's experience in parliamentary procedure and conducting Annual Meetings led him to be requested to manage several District Annual Meetings. He was also a resource to the President in operating Executive meetings.

While performing the Health Services role, he was appointed to a newly created Convener - Constitution. RTOERO requires District Constitutions to be updated and current with the RTOERO Model Constitution about every five years according to a schedule. RTOERO had embarked on developing a governance document to replace its present Constitution. At this time, his role as Governance Convener became more critical. Before becoming the Convener, he led the reviews, as required, on many occasions. During the last two years, he has coordinated the development of a new Governance Document that required RTOERO approval and the approval of our Annual Meeting.

When North York District 23 reviewed our Policy, the Executive quickly approved it in 2022. We also have a document attached to our Governance Document entitled 'Job Descriptions'. There is a job description for each Convener and member of our Executive, which totals over twenty-five individuals. We have amended the title to read: 'Role Descriptions'. With George's guidance, our Review Committee has completed the review and is now obtaining Executive approval.

George has dedicated years of service to RTOERO and District 23. He continues to be a valued member of the District 23 Executive today. George has always been willing to contribute where needed, as demonstrated by his many roles on the District 23 Executive and RTOERO. We celebrate George's many contributions and congratulate him on his well deserved recognition as Distinguished District Member of 2023.

PRESIDENT

Maureen Capotosto

As President of District 23, I am very aware of the strength of our executive. As a district, we continue to offer various options for our members. The Conveners consistently manage events and opportunities, participate in the business of District 23, and volunteer to assist in any venture undertaken by the District. We are so fortunate to have this fantastic team.

It is exciting to be part of the 50th Anniversary Committee, chaired by Sara Di Nallo, and I look forward to all our celebrations. It is such a joy to work with Mildred Frank, our Social Convener in planning so many wonderful and successful events.

I enjoy the quality of the presentations and discussions at the monthly Book Club meetings led by Sylvia Skippen. I follow the activities with the Needlework & Crafts Group led by Olga McKenzie with great interest as they constantly explore new ventures.

The Strollers, led by Joanne Famiglietti, are always walking in areas of Toronto, intending to find exciting things along the way. Convened by Alan Ward, Bridge meets weekly with a steady group who welcome newcomers.

Drop into the e-Devices group with Vernon Paige whenever you can. There is always something new to learn. Follow the discussions on WhatsApp for more tips and topics of interest. Our monthly Have-a-Ja-

va runs smoothly with the oversight of Elizabeth Clarke. Kathy Shorney leads a group of pole walkers on wonderful walks with much local commentary. Kathy keeps us aware of ways to be involved in advocating for seniors' issues and environmental sustainability.

John Giannone welcomes new members and maintains our membership lists. Reaching out to our more senior members has been the focus of Gwen Bumbury as Goodwill Convener. The calls and cards are a great success and have involved various members in accomplishing this.

Mervyn Mascarenhas brings his expertise to STONY Bridges, the Website and Twitter messages. He has worked with perseverance in developing our new website and in preparing STONY Bridges for publication.

George Meek keeps our meeting procedures on track and has worked on updating the Governance document, including the Role Descriptions.

Mary Valtellini chairs our Nominations Committee and provides sound counsel on matters. Mary is also a Corporate voting Member at the RTOERO meetings.

Danielle Ingster and Mary Ellen Lawless support the District's endeavours with a particular focus on recruitment. Anne Marum has

overseen the work on Retirement planning and attended the RPWs held in the GTA.

Elisa Arciero manages our archives and is working with our 50th Anniversary Committee.

Gwen Scriven is our Benefits Convener, informing us of insurance and health-related issues. Gwen also stepped up and acted as Secretary beginning in January, which I greatly appreciate.

Our communications, including the monthly e-blasts, are managed by Karen Quinn. Karen always finds the right image and is willing to work endless hours to ensure these newsletters come out on time.

A gratifying part of my work has been in the publication of STONY Bridges. This is such a success because of the work of Mervyn Mascarenhas, Valerie Sterling, and Gerard MacNeil. Valerie has an eagle eye for proofreading, and Mervyn has such skill in design and layout work. Gerard keeps us on track in getting the magazine out to members. The quality of our publication has continued to improve because of their efforts.

Working with Cheryl Paige and Eva Karpati on the One Voice

project has been an excellent experience. The One Voice project's advocacy and support work is so needed. Community Grants are essential to me. I have been appointed to the RTOERO Community Grants and Scholarship Committee for a three-year term.

In my 4th term as President, I attended many Workshops offered by RTOERO, including the President's Workshop, Communications, Fall Forum, Benefits, Annual Meeting & Spring Forum. I also participated in monthly Presidents' Zoom calls. I was also responsible for chairing the Toronto Districts' Committee; the 4 Toronto Districts meet regularly to coordinate our efforts for events like Retirement Planning Workshops.

Being recognized at the RTOERO Fall Forum with the Distinguished Member Award was a highlight of this past term. I am very grateful to the District Executive for this nomination.

My involvement with District 23 is very fulfilling. I have made firm friendships and participated in many successful endeavours. I highly recommend being involved - we have a spot for you.



PAST PRESIDENT & TRIPS

Mary Valtellini

What an exciting year! We were finally able to meet in person, attend meetings and participate in our District trip outings. We had quite a few members participate in our trip to Stratford to enjoy an excellent presentation of the musical "**Chicago**". We had **High Tea at the Old Mill** and saw an oldie but goody, "**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Coat**".

By the time this is published, we will also have gone to the TSO to attend a musical honouring the music of Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald. New upcoming trips are a **Georgian Bay Cruise** on June 1, 2023; a three-day trip to **Ottawa** on September 25 – 27, 2023 and a trip to Cambridge to see the musical "**Fiddler on the Roof**" in December. Suggestions are always welcome!! I hope you can join us.

As your past President, I have also been busy representing our District at the local and national levels. I've fulfilled all expectations and chaired the Nominations Committee, encouraging members to join our District. We have positions open in our executive and will actively continue to encourage members to come and join this vibrant group.

Nationally, I have been reappointed to a four-year term on the RTOERO Health Benefits Committee. I have been given the added responsibility of chairing the District Health Representative Subcommittee for the June 2023 national meeting.

I look forward to continuing to serve all our members.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Sara Di Nallo

This year we have been able to plan activities for our members, which they can attend in person. After two years of lockdowns and COVID restrictions, it is really good to see each other.

Our Champagne Breakfast to welcome newly retired members was a great success in September and provided our first opportunity to meet in person. Our Holiday Luncheon in November was also a great success, and again

welcomed many to a face-to-face event. All who attended both events were happy to see friends and colleagues.

Our executive has been busy planning events as in previous years, as well as, new events. Many members were welcomed back, as well as welcoming new ones. It has been a busy year, especially trying to get back to doing things in person.

It has been a very busy year because there is a lot of planning going on for our “Golden Year” celebration. The Committee members have been very busy making plans. Check regularly for information about our 50th Year celebrations which will be posted on the website and going out via STONY Bridges or E-Blasts.

District 23 - Annual 50th Anniversary Committee 2023

The 50th Anniversary Committee has been meeting regularly since October 2022 to plan our “GOLD-EN YEAR”. We will be having a

Luncheon Gala to celebrate this important year in the history of District 23. The GALA is planned for: Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at Parkview Manor. More Information will follow.

The Committee will continue to meet. Many other activities and events are planned. More Information will follow through our e-blasts, STONY and on our website. We encourage you to attend and help make our 50th year a memorable one. Thank you to the Committee who are giving extra time to make this happen.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT & BOOK CLUB

Sylvia Skippen

As Second Vice President, I initially in the Fall attended the President’s workshop by Zoom and found it interesting listening to how other districts are working and what initiatives they are implementing.

At the end of April, I attended the Service Workshop, where they provided support in member engagement and volunteer recruitment; this led to the development and implementation of successful succession planning.

I am looking forward to our Annual Meeting and Spring Luncheon on May 11th. I have also attended the Toronto Districts Council meeting as an alternate. I regularly attend District 23 Executive meetings. Attendance at these events has made me more aware of the

functioning of our District and other areas and how we might work together more effectively. I continue to regularly contribute to STONY, updating members of my role and meetings that I attend.

As Second Vice President this year, I planned and coordinated the Cookie Decorating Party for our members. We had 22 members attend, and members seemed to enjoy getting together and creating edible art. Cassandra Peri, owner of Sweets by Design, taught members how to flood a cookie, icing consistencies, and pressure piping and shared her expertise for two hours.

As Book Club Convener, I regularly attend Executive meetings. I have been responsible for coordinating dates, locations, times, and the

organization of monthly meetings. I also send out emails asking members to inform me whether they will meet in person or need the Zoom link to attend virtually. For the past couple of years, we have been meeting by Zoom due to COVID, but we decided to try a hybrid meeting model this year.

We met virtually in September, November, January and February. We used a hybrid model supported by meeting Owl Pro technology in October, March, April, and May. Feedback was positive from those attending the meeting in person and those who preferred to join digitally using Zoom.

Every Spring, I request from our Book Club members, suggestions of Books to read the following year, and we then vote on the books we prefer. I also get a facilitator each month as it is helpful for the discussion. They provide some background information on the book, the author's biography and questions to be discussed.

We have been fortunate this year to have a very engaged group of people and lively discussions. I also provide the book titles and descriptions on time for publication in STONY Bridges and the e-Newsletter.

ARCHIVIST

Elisa Arciero

Beginning in 2022/2023, members of District 23 met and participated in activities virtually. The activities were held virtually and in person as the year wore on. Hard copies, when available, and PDF files containing minutes of Executive meetings, newsletters, fact sheets, copies of our magazine - STONY Bridges, and photographs continue to be stored in the District 23 storage cupboard at Willowdale United Church. Stored photos include those taken by RTO's District 23 photographer and those submitted by individual conveners and/or members that are sent to me are also being stored.

In November 2022, I was elected as the new Archivist for District 23 for the year 2022/23. The Archivist provides photographs of members participating in the many activities offered by District 23 and historical photographs taken from the Archives to be used in publications of STONY Bridges magazine. From November 2022 to December 2022, I continued the work of Mary Cairo, the former Archivist, by saving Word/PDF files of the Executive agendas/minutes of meetings and the Conveners' monthly reports.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Valerie Sterling

It was my pleasure this year to join Maureen Capotosto and Merv Mascarenhas to produce the three editions of STONY Bridges. Maureen received the contributions, and we edited articles and proofread the content many times before publishing. Merv, STONY Editor, designed and organized the newsletter layout for these edited submissions. Many hours and days were devoted to these publications with a fantastic team. I thank them for their skill and friendship throughout the process.

I also had the fun opportunity of working with Mildred Frank, Social Convener, assisting with the Spring Luncheon, the Champagne Breakfast and the Holiday Luncheon (producing name tags, purchasing/decorating table centres, welcoming new members and saying grace). Mildred has these events so well organized, ensuring

grand events.

In addition, as a member of the 50th Anniversary Committee, I attended meetings to plan various activities for District 23 members to celebrate this milestone anniversary in 2023.

At the Executive Committee meetings chaired by our President, Maureen Capotosto, I observed all the work, time, skill, and energy she and each member contribute to District 23 – a fantastic group of volunteers planning and implementing a variety of events. As well as keeping us informed, advocating, and representing our voices at RTOERO. These Executive Members are a wonderful group of professionals who care about our members and work together to achieve goals.

BOOK CLUB

Sylvia Skippen

See “Second Vice President's Report” on page 15.



Wild Roses, TBG | Gail M. Murray

BRIDGE

Alan Ward

The Bridge Club met on Tuesday, September 13th, 2022, for the first time since March 2020, and we continue to meet every week other than during the Christmas and summer breaks. We gather for a 1:00 p.m. start at Willowdale Emmanuel United Church, 379 Kenneth Avenue, just north of Church St (south of Finch, 2 blocks east of Yonge Street). About a dozen new members have augmented our numbers in the past six months. We are a social group of about 40 RTO members and friends, of whom 20-28 meet each Tuesday. We offer friendly company in pleasant surroundings with the opportunity for newbies to get into the game. It is unnecessary to come with a partner or commit to appearing every week. RTO members may bring a friend who is not an RTO member.

While the worst of the COVID pandemic appears to be over, we continue wearing masks during play until the warmer weather permits windows to be opened for a free flow of air. Until that time, we have also opted to dispense with providing coffee and cookies. However, attendees may bring refreshments and consume them in the kitchen or hallway adjacent to the playing area.

As convener since 2004, I am no more immune to the passing of time than any other member and shall be delighted to welcome another RTO member who would like to assume the role. It is not arduous but does involve a regular commitment. Bridge expertise is useful but not essential. We are not short of experienced players.

COMMUNICATIONS

Karen Quinn

Monthly District 23 e-Newsletters (September 2022 – May 2023) -

District 23 gradually moved away from the pandemic model this past year for our activities, events and monthly gatherings. Events such as Needlework & Crafts, Bridge, Have-a-Java and Pole Walking returned to their traditional format. Executive meetings and Book Club featured a new Hybrid model for people to gather at the meeting

location or from home. Our monthly E-Newsletter continued to be an important link with our members.

This year, we used RTOERO Communications to post our e-Newsletters for four months. These mis-sives allowed members to receive updates, monthly reminders, and important information notices. In February, we went back to the format we have used for the past 11 years with MailChimp, which will allow us to update information as it

occurs, especially in this, our 50th Anniversary year. Our E-Newsletters, Facebook and Twitter pages reflect the new colours, brand, and graphics that RTOERO uses nationwide.

Throughout the past year, I have attended two in-services for Communications with our RTOERO Liaison and the Communications and Marketing Director. I have also participated in a Cyber security Webinar and Workshop.

Database Maintenance

The RTOERO monthly change lists continue to update our database, providing us with the contact information for each of our new members and key changes to email addresses, home addresses and phone numbers of current members. Members must notify the RTOERO Office of all changes to their personal contact information (phone, home address, email addresses) - we cannot make these updates at our local level. This will ensure you get STONY Bridges, Renaissance, Communiqué and other RTOERO communications.

Contact Membership at: membership@rtoero.ca. Information to register for our online communications is also available through our District 23 website: <https://district23.rtoero.ca>. All of our members' email addresses are kept private. When emails are sent to the District 23 North York members, they only see their email addresses. Only the convener has access to the complete list. Email address-

es will not be shared with other members without your permission. Our domain provider is from the RTOERO Central office: rtoero.org and our distribution list, as well as, e-Newsletter template are provided through MailChimp services. On average, members receive one or two emails monthly from District 23 via this service. When members raise questions or seek answers, they are redirected to RTOERO service members or their website for clarification. I look forward to continuing to improve our services over the coming year.

Facebook

District 23 created a Facebook page for our members running for about five years now. This is designed to be an interactive site to encourage communication with our members. The site highlights webinars and registration for activities, E-newsletters, and RTOERO information from Central and local districts. Currently, we have over 121 Followers registered.

Over this year, I have attended four workshops on Facebook Communications and completed an online course. The information provided has been most useful, and good contacts have been made with other district Facebook editors.

Please check us out at: <https://www.facebook.com/rtoero-district23/>

We hope members choose to FOLLOW us, LIKE us and engage in dialogue with us.

COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT

Cheryl Paige

District 23, North York was awarded a Community Service grant of \$ 4,000 in 2022/23. We partnered with the One Voice group of multifaith women working to end violence against women. They are supported by the National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto. Our grant money along with donations raised by the Needlework & Craft group was used to support their website development.

One Voice leaders shared information with our members through a series of 3 webinars titled “Out of the Shadows” - Empowering Awareness of Domestic Violence; How to Recognize Abuse When It Does Not Bleed; and, Community Response: How to Validate Victims. These have been recorded and are available on our website.

FOUNDATION

Sara Di Nallo

Canada’s population is aging, and with it comes new challenges. The RTOERO Foundation fundraising is ongoing and continues to support research for seniors to enhance their quality of life as we age. The research also helps improve health care and social connections for older adults in Canada.

Hearing Life matched all donations from our members, up to \$5000, including new monthly gifts until the end of December 2022.

RTOERO Foundation kicked off Social Isolation Awareness Month in October 2022 with a new online program. In partnership with The University Health Network Hos-

pitals, a webinar was presented: “Moving from isolation to inclusion”. It addressed: “Practical ways to address the growing epidemic of loneliness and isolation in older adults”. It helped participants understand the difference between loneliness and isolation and provided practical strategies for addressing personal challenges. The Foundation works towards a society which funds research that helps to foster respect, self-determination, better health care and social connection for older adults in Canada. It held a 50/50 draw in October 2022 to raise funds.

I thank all of you who support this very important cause.

GOODWILL

Gwen Bumbury

Goodwill Committee Members: Xenia Cooper, Maria Fernandes and Kathy Shorney continue communicating with District 23 members through Stony Bridges, e-Newsletter, telephone calls and cards for various occasions. We have had many positive responses to our calls and cards.

One major initiative over the past three years was to recruit volunteers and organize a telephone campaign to contact all members who are 80 years of age and above. Most of the members were contacted more than once during the three years. In the Fall of 2022 and into 2023, the telephone campaign continues. For those who we were unable to contact by phone are mailed a "Thinking of You" card. We are grateful to all our volunteer callers for their continued support and commitment, without whom this service would not be possible.

Birthday cards are sent to 80, 85, 90, 95 and over members. Approximately 450 cards are sent to District 23 members in this category every year. In addition to Birthday cards, the Committee sends cards to the sick (hospitalized or not) and to the bereaved families of deceased members.

Birthday Celebration - Every year, the Goodwill Committee, on behalf of District 23, extends a personal invitation to members who are 90

years of age, along with a guest, to attend the Annual Meeting/Spring Luncheon.

Donations - The budgeted money in the Goodwill budget includes funds available to donate yearly to charities District 23 North York supports.

- We make an in-Memoriam donation of \$600.00 to the RTO Foundation in memory of our members who have passed away during the year.
- Under the Recognition Policy, a donation of \$300.00 to each of the following: The Angel Foundation for Learning (TCDSB) and to the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TDSB) Breakfast Programs. These donations are in honour of our members who have reached a significant milestone.

In addition, as the Convener,

- I am responsible for promoting and providing the resources and services available to those members seeking assistance or information in areas such as community services.
- With the RTOERO Membership Change lists, I update District 23 members' lists and keep the lists current.
- Monthly, the District Executive is updated on Goodwill's ac-

tivities, issues and concerns.

- I encourage District 23 members through STONY Bridges to contact the Executive or Goodwill Committee if they become aware of anyone who is ill or would welcome a friendly phone call. Members are also reminded to provide any change of address/telephone number directly to the Provincial Office to ensure the accuracy of contact information.

I have appreciated the opportunity to work with the Executive members who have assisted and supported me in my role over the many years. It has been a great experience and an excellent opportunity to get to know more members of District 23. I will continue to support the next Convener as she takes on the role.

I want to thank the other members of the Committee, who are very committed to the tasks.

GOVERNANCE

George Meek

The topic of an organization's governance may be esoteric to many. Governance is the structure put in place to allow an organization to operate with stability from year to year.

Due to changes at RTOERO, we were required to develop a new Governance Document within the guidelines provided. It replaces our Constitution.

The Governance Committee of 4, composed of Gwen Scriven, Olga McKenzie, Maureen Capotosto, and George Meek (Governance Convener), developed the new document, which was recommended by the Executive to and approved by the 2021 District 23 Annual Meeting (AM). The Governance Document can only be amended at an AM. A copy of our Governance Document can be found on our website in our Web Archives at:

<https://district23.rtoero.ca>

Then, the Committee moved forward with a review of our Policy. Policy guides the Executive in the daily operation of the District and is approved and amended by the Executive. That review has been completed, and a revised Policy document was approved at the April 2022 Executive meeting.

The next big task the Committee took on was a review of our District's 'Job Descriptions'. Job descriptions are set out for each of our Executive that assist them in performing their various roles effectively and provide continuity in the role from year to year. These are approved and amended by the Executive. The Committee is completing this extensive task for consideration by the Executive.

The work performed quietly by the Governance Committee is necessary to ensure the stability of our District in its decision-making.

HAVE-A-JAVA

Elizabeth Clarke

Have-a-Java has finally resumed after two years of virtual get-togethers, and the turnout and enthusiasm have been wonderful. Participants meet on the third Wednesday of the month from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Bayview Village

and receive \$5.00 towards the cost of coffee and a treat. Updates can be found in STONY Bridges, the District 23 E-Newsletters, or the District website. Thanks also to fellow executive members who assist in supporting this activity

HEALTH SERVICES

Gwen Scriven

The Group Insurance Plans offered by RTOERO continue to be an important benefit to you as a member. Nearly eighty (80) percent of our members participate in the Group Insurance Plans. The available benefits include Hospital and Convalescent Care, Extended Health Care (includes Travel Plan), Dental, Supplemental Travel Plan, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Life Insurance (Term and Guaranteed Issue), and Home and Car Insurance. The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan data shows that of the total pensioners with benefit deductions (71,160), 72.2% are with the RTOERO plan as of November 30, 2022. Note also that many new retirees pay benefit premiums from their bank accounts. RTOERO continues to focus on providing comprehensive coverage at an affordable cost. Plans are reviewed annually, and suggestions for improvements from members are carefully considered.

Your copy of Communique Health Benefits Update for 2023 is your

source of information regarding key plan changes. You can find Your Insurance Plans Booklet and Communiqué online at rtoero.ca/resources/insurance-plan-updates. All changes took place as of January 1, 2023. Updates include:

- All plan premiums have increased for 2023. This results from the removal of the temporary premium reduction from 2021 and increased costs of goods and services in all areas. We continue to use our reserves to offset deficits and mitigate premium increases. Premiums do not cover the full cost of claims and expenditures. The number of member claims has returned to pre-pandemic levels and more.
- There are a few minor changes to the travel plan to align our Insurance with more standard industry practices.
- Teledoc has been replaced with CloudMd as it is Canadi-

an-based and has lower costs to RTOERO.

- Dental Plan Reimbursement will be updated to the 2023 fee guide.
- Express Scripts service continues to be available; however, the dispensing fee has increased from \$6.99 to \$8.99, effective January 19, 2023.
- Finally, another reminder that your claims must be submitted within six months, effective January 2023.

As Benefits Convener (DHR Rep), I have provided updates to you and our members through reports in each STONY Bridges magazine and occasionally in the e-Newsletter. In these reports, I have provided information about the plans as well as articles to provoke thought about how you can have a healthy, active retirement. It has also been a pleasure to assist individual members with questions and concerns. I was fortunate to be able to attend the DHR Workshop on

October 11-12, 2022, in person to obtain all of the latest information for you. We also participated in a Zoom call in November to obtain information about the plan changes for the 2023 year.

The Johnson Scholarship Program is available to eligible students. Annually, the program makes available 50 scholarships valued at \$1000 each to Canadian students with outstanding academic achievement and community/extra-curricular involvement. Visit <https://www.johnson.ca/scholarship> for further information.

If you require assistance registering for the My Insurance or navigating the claims portal, contact Johnson at digitalsupport@johnson.ca or [1-833-749-1324](tel:1-833-749-1324).

It is a pleasure to serve as your Benefits Convener. If you have questions, I can be contacted through our website or by emailing president23@districts.rtoero.ca.

Stay healthy, stay safe and enjoy your retirement!

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Danielle Ingster

As I have been able to return to school, I reached out to teachers I know who are considering retirement in the next few years.

I was able to chat and offer them a copy of our District 23's STONY Bridges magazine and encourage

them to attend the workshops provided by RTOERO.

I plan to attend the next workshop and support the recruitment of new members.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Mary Ellen Lawless

The position “Member-at-Large” is self-explanatory. Two Members-at-Large are on the Executive of District 23, North York.

Duties vary depending on the given needs and activities. These duties might include being available to assist where and when needed: Filling in on any of the other committees if that convener is unavailable; acting as one of the editors of STONY Bridges before it goes to the printer; requesting a number of copies of the STONY Bridges and have them available to give out to non-members who may be attending one of our activities or to pass on to someone

who is considering retirement; to be prepared to introduce or thank speakers; to telephone members when deemed necessary; to attend the Retirement Planning Workshops when they are being presented in person in District 23, and to be prepared to help in any way as requested by any other member of the Executive.

The position requires one to be flexible and knowledgeable about the business of District 23 RTOERO and attend the regular monthly meetings to be familiar with the activities and other events sponsored by District 23 RTOERO.

MEMBERSHIP

John Giannone

In my role as Membership Convener, and as a member of the RTOERO D23 Executive, one of my main responsibilities is to keep the District’s Membership List as current as possible. Once I receive new information from the RTOERO Provincial Office, I forward the reports to other members of the Executive, allowing them to update their files, as required, for their convener activities. This report also notifies the District of any changes in the current membership information. As well, I prepare a summarized update—which is shared with the Executive at our monthly meetings. The updated information lists the changes in membership over the last month (new members, members who have moved to/from another district,

members who have cancelled their membership or who have, unfortunately, passed away).

Every effort is made to welcome our new members, either by phone or email, in order to provide them with information about our District.

Our current membership, as of February 28, 2023 is 2,730 Retired Members and 43 Actively-Employed Members.

As this is the last Membership report I will be preparing for District 23, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support over the last 10 years. I’d also like to wish the current and newly elected Executive continued success. It has been a true pleasure working with D23 and the RTOERO.

NEEDLEWORK AND CRAFTS

Olga McKenzie

The Needlework and Craft Group continued to meet on the third Thursday of the month. 2022 was particularly memorable as we began to meet face-to-face. Everyone was so pleased to see one another again and share our passions and interests. Preemie hats and blankets continued to be created for Humber River Hospital, and we have also been contributing to other deserving requests. Some members have found stashes of yarn and other items in drawers and cupboards. Some interesting and very creative projects have been produced. New patterns, colours and techniques have been explored and shared at our meet-

ings. Planning has begun for our contribution to our 50th Anniversary. We look forward to sharing our results at the 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Members have made many unique creations, and we look forward to making raffle items again for our luncheons. The proceeds of which will go to the RTOERO Foundation and the charity we support for the year. Our group is unique in that we can raise money for charity through the efforts of our multi-talented group.

Of course, we always look forward to new members and appreciate our current members.

NEWSLETTER & DISTRIBUTION

Mervyn Mascarenhas, Editor

Maureen Capotosto & Valerie Sterling, Associate Editors

Gerard MacNeil, Newsletter Distribution Convener

We are fortunate to have Valerie Sterling join Team STONY as our second Associate Editor. She took over the role filled informally by Karen Quinn, Communications Convener, for several years.

STONY Bridges, RTOERO District 23, North York's glossy, full-colour magazine, was published three times this past year: August 2022, November 2022, and March 2023.

In recent years, STONY has transformed into a full-feature magazine that includes evocative poems,

travelogues, book reports, human-interest stories, and submissions from District 23 Conveners. It has grown from 32 to 40 pages packed with information of interest to our members. An electronic version is emailed to all retired and actively employed members through the RTOERO eBlast service. A printed copy is sent to retired members who choose to receive it two weeks later after it has been published and mailed.

Since RTOERO has placed a se-

curity perimeter around its server infrastructure, nothing on its servers can be viewed outside North America. This includes electronic versions of STONY Bridges. Since we have a few members who reside in Europe and anxiously await their electronic copy of STONY, we have begun sending them a pdf version of the magazine as an email attachment.

President Maureen Capotosto, a recipient of the RTOERO 2022 Distinguished District Member Award, graced the cover of our August 2022 STONY Bridges. The Ismaili Centre at the Aga Khan Park in North York was featured on the cover of the November 2022 magazine. The March 2023 edition heralded our 50th Anniversary Celebrations with a photo montage of members past and present who have shaped our District over the years.

One Voice, our 2022-2023 Community Grants recipient, was a recurring theme as we explored the sad state of Domestic Violence in our communities through a series of three webinars that were recorded and available for viewing on the website. The grant will help fund access to a toolkit for all faith leaders in the GTA.

The North York Strollers virtual tours of Toronto led by Joanne Famiglietti have provided insights into little-known gems in our fair City – Self-Guided Tour of Toronto Islands, Walk through Forest Hills and Walk through Yorkville. With COVID at bay, Joanne has re-

sumed in-person tours this year.

Our inimitable Gail M. Murray, travel writer, book reviewer and poet, bookended her story on Toronto Botanical Garden with poems titled Garden for all Seasons and Secret Garden in the March edition.

The Toronto Star March 21, 2023, headlines blazed out *“Climate report paints grim picture – Action required now to pull back from brink, UN says.”* It continues that *“There’s a girl sitting in a Grade 5 class today. By the time she graduates from high school (2030), in just seven years, the decisions the world makes around carbon emissions will determine the environment she grows up in.”* Last year Dr. Suzuki spoke to us about “Creating a lasting legacy through environmental stewardship.” If you wish to revisit his terrifying images, visit our webpage <https://tinyurl.com/RTO23Suzuki>, where we offer a distillation of his Call to Action and a transcript of his presentation and Q&A.

Please note that RTOERO eBlasts are only sent to members with valid email addresses in the RTOERO database. Please ensure that the District Newsletter check boxes correctly reflect your preferences. If you need clarification on your communication settings, the bottom of all emails from RTOERO contains a link to your Marketing Preferences.

While STONY Bridges includes the most current information near publication, changes may be in flight. Check the monthly E-Newsletter, website, Twitter, and Facebook for important updates.

We are grateful to those who elect to dispense with the printed versions of STONY Bridges and Renaissance. This gesture is environmentally friendly and saves us printing and shipping costs. You can make this election through the RTOERO Marketing Preferences link at the bottom of all RTOERO communications.

We are grateful to all conveners providing programs for common interest groups. Despite cancelling in-person meetings, many groups have thrived in the World of Zoom. Participation in the Book Club and e-Devices has grown in the virtual world because it is more convenient than fighting traffic and the elements to get to Edithvale. We suspect hybrid meetings will become the new normal even after COVID becomes a distant memory. These virtual/hybrid meetings also allow members in far-off places to join in, share in our camaraderie, and help reduce our carbon footprint.

We encourage you to become one of our contributors by submitting poems, pictures, and stories – page 2 of STONY usually indicates the submission deadline for the following issue.

Maureen Capotosto, Associate Editor, receives all submissions and works with Valerie Sterling, Associate Editor, and a team of volunteers to proofread articles and other content for STONY Bridges. Conveners and table officers of District 23 also generate content for our newsletters as we continue

to offer and share programs and activities of interest to members. Mervyn Mascarenhas, Newsletter Editor, designs and lays out the newsletter from these edited submissions.

A two-column layout improves the readability of STONY, especially on smartphones – in recent STONY Bridges, we have also experimented with three-column pages. To avoid participants having to cut up their precious copies of STONY to complete and mail in event registration forms, online registration forms for each activity are published on the website. Except where noted, payment may be made via a cheque, Interac e-Transfer or Credit/Debit Card.

With twelve STONY Bridges magazines under his belt, Mervyn has decided to pass on the torch and not run for re-election in May. We thank Mervyn for contributing so much time, ideas and many skills devoted to the productions of the many editions of STONY. Maureen and Valerie have appreciated working with Mervyn. We also know that he can be reached for assistance in the future.

Gerard MacNeil, our Newsletter Distribution Convener, works with our printer and distribution service to ensure that retired members wishing paper copies of the newsletter receive them promptly at the correct address – even if it is overseas. Actively employed members receive the online version. We also provide a copy of the Spring edition for school staff informa-

tion in about 250 Public/Catholic and private schools in the former City of North York. The remaining

documents are used for member recruitment purposes and public relations at District 23 events.

NORDIC POLE WALKING

Kathy Shorney

Our group celebrated the ninth year of meetings in 2022-23. We meet in local parks to participate in this fitness and social activity on the third Tuesday of each month except for January and February.

The June event offers a refreshment break as a celebration. Our group averages in size from 3 and 12 members and friends. New members are always welcome.

We usually walk for about an hour and a half on paved paths or roadways in central North York parks. We use York Cemetery during bad weather months. A focus is always on safety. Some members prefer

to walk. As Nordic Poling offers a healthy full-body workout, reduced stress on knees and hips, stability and upper body exercise, we encourage using Nordic Poles.

This activity is geared at all fitness and mobility levels as we walk at our own pace. As Convener, I put a list of events in STONY Bridges magazine and the monthly email communication, and I have developed an email reminder list.

I choose locations with free parking and, if possible, access to washrooms.

Events are a go, rain or shine.

NORTH YORK STROLLERS

Joanne Famiglietti

This year the North York Strollers had a very interesting year. After a very long hiatus, in-person walks resumed again in November 2022. Our walks included:

- The Epitaphs and Bell Tower at U of T
- The Holiday Walk along Queen Street
- The Path
- The Annex
- The Brickworks from Chorley Park Path
- The Toronto Islands

Self-guided walks were also published in STONY Bridges for those who preferred to enjoy these neighbourhoods independently.

These included:

- Forest Hill
- Yorkville

Many longtime members and new members joined for the in-person walks. Later we joined together for a delicious lunch at a local restaurant. Much camaraderie was had as we strolled and learned many interesting historical facts. All had a fun time.

POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Kathy Shorney

As your Political Advocacy Convener, it is my responsibility to make our members aware of the initiatives of our Central Political Advocacy Committee (PAC) regarding the Vibrant Voices Advocacy White Papers.

The focus continues to be an ongoing campaign to support healthy, financially secure aging within a sustainable environment. These initiatives are focused on making the Municipal, Provincial and Federal levels of government across Canada aware of the needs of our senior population.

I receive information through GTA-wide virtual meetings and information-sharing sessions. In the future, we will return to in-person conferences and email information from the Central PAC meetings.

In the past year, I have sent letters to the newly elected politicians in our Toronto ridings to inform them of the RTOERO PAC advocacy policies. To educate our members, I forward information through STONY Bridges, monthly e-blasts, make phone calls to our most

senior members and at our in-person events with a display board. Because District 23 members live in many ridings within Toronto and the GTA region, it is difficult to hold all-candidate meetings around election times. Instead, I encourage members to attend riding meetings, get to know your candidates and their policies use your voice to ask questions and, most importantly, vote to make your voice heard.

I liaise with all members who contact me about the PAC campaigns and support their concerns.

My current activity is focused on the Toronto mayoral election. With the wide range of candidates, it is important to make an informed decision. Most community support services are controlled and often funded by the city. We, as older adults, are the fastest-growing age group in Canada.

We must advocate for critical policy improvements to address urgent needs and create a more secure and compassionate future for everyone.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Vernon Paige

Photos are taken at events and used in STONY Bridges, on our website and in our e-Newsletter.

RECRUITMENT

Anne Marum

Good News! In-person Retirement Planning Workshops hosted by RTOERO are back! The first workshop took place on March 4 in downtown Toronto. Due to the overnight snowstorm, attendance was greatly reduced. Nonetheless, thanks to Stephen Wong, all those registrants unable to attend had an opportunity to view a recording of the workshop in real-time. In addition, registrants were also given the opportunity to enroll in other upcoming RTOERO workshops seamlessly.

Three other In-Person Planning Workshops, hosted by RTOERO, were held on March 29, 2023, in Scarborough, at the Kennedy Convention Centre and on April 1, at the Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel & Conference Centre. The fourth Retirement Planning Workshop for District 23 will be held on Thursday, May 23, 2023, at Parkview Convention Centre.

Over the last few months, working with the RTOERO Retirement

Planning Workshop Committee has been a pleasure, chaired by Lone Smith and Shelia Tait. Our Zoom meetings were informative and productive, with rich exchanges from members in the various GTA districts. Many thanks to our D23 President, Maureen Capotosto, for participating in the most recent Zoom meeting. Her insights, experience and attention to detail were much appreciated by all.

The RTOERO Retirement Planning Committee members recognize that ongoing recruitment is crucial and the key ingredient for the healthy growth of our organization. Indeed, as mentioned in this year's editions of *Stony Bridges*, all members of the RTOERO community are encouraged to promote and share the many advantages of being a member of RTOERO with their family, friends and acquaintances working in the broader education community. All are welcome!



Edwards Gardens-Willows and Wilket Creek | Gail M. Murray

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Mildred Frank

2022 was a time of again experiencing the benefits of being a member of RTOERO District 23. We were again able to participate in person-to-person events.

The first for the Social Committee was the Champagne Breakfast in September to welcome new members. A great experience it was. The energy in the room was palpable. We drank a toast to the newly retired who were present and then enjoyed the great breakfast provided. The District 23 President gave the welcome and introduced the executive who then spoke about the opportunities of-

ferred by each area for information and enjoyment.

Our next gathering was November 24. This was the Holiday Season Luncheon. Many members feel that this is the opening for them of the season festivities. And it was a most enjoyable event. Again Parkview Manor delighted us with a delicious lunch. Vendors were present, offering various items for sale. The highlight - the music provided by David Patt and a few songs by Owen.

Many of the guests got up and danced - amazing.

TECHNOLOGY/E-DEVICES

Vernon Paige

The e-Devices group meets every two weeks via Zoom. The discussion begins around a topic that the Convener has prepared but ranges across many technology issues. Members attending have a wide range of skill and comfort

with technology so everyone is welcome to join in. Many participants find the information informative and helpful. We learn from each other and share items via WhatsApp between meetings.

TRIPS

Mary Valtellini

See "Past President's & Trips Report" on page 14

TWITTER

Mervyn Mascarenhas

Twitter has withstood the upheaval and churns it experienced after Elon Musk's buyout of Twitter in 2022. While many users threatened to leave the platform, most have stayed with it. Following our cue from RTOERO Office, we continue to use it as it is an effective medium for District 23 communications.

We provide members with a curated feed of articles from RTOERO and other authoritative sources on senior issues, the environment, healthcare and education.

As of March 2023, we have 115 followers and follow 231, including many thought leaders. All members are encouraged to follow District 23's Twitter account - [@RTO23_NorthYork](#), launched on December 13, 2018. We urge you to **Like** our tweets and **Retweet** them.

If you are not on Twitter, do sign up for it. Twitter is FREE and can be accessed from your smart phone, tablet, PC or Mac. You can choose initially to be a lurker, i.e., a user of an internet message board or chat room who does not participate. Once you get comfortable with it, start retweeting and then begin tweeting.

Follow friends and your thought leaders.

I follow @DanRather, @JimAwesomeYears, @rto_ero, @jonstewart, @HeatherMallick, @TheoMoudakis, @drandrewb, @AmitAryaMD, @MaryLTrump, @NaheedD, @mynamesnotgordy, @FurnessColin, @nilikm, @althiaraj, @SusanDelacourt, @jrpsaki, @AliVelshi, @ShreeParadkar, @ProjectLincoln, @Mac_AgingNews, @merry123459, @GPUUpdates, @WaytowichNeil.

And if you wish to follow me, my Twitter handle is @mervmasc. Don't forget to follow @RTO23_NorthYork.

Our Twitter account keeps you informed by:

- Tweeting Breaking News of interest to you and the latest content on our website
- Retweeting curated news related to seniors' matters, education and health issues from around the world
- Providing notifications about Events, News, Articles, STONY Bridges, and E-Newsletter
- Attracting, informing, and engaging members.

In short, improving communications with our members.

Tweet, Tweet!

WEBMASTER (DISTRICT23.RTOERO.CA)

Mervyn Mascarenhas

This has been a banner year for our District website. The long-awaited migration from our aging Drupal 7 technology to the state-of-the-art WordPress platform occurred on August 1, 2022. Despite only a month for the transition and the trepidation that came with it, we pulled it off with flying colours.

And colourful it certainly is, with the seven colours of the RTOERO apple coursing through its pages. The look and feel of the website matches that of the parent RTOERO website and all other 50+ districts' websites. Much of WordPress functionality has been curtailed to make website administration easy for the lowest common denominator in district webmaster skill sets. However, where there is a will, there is always a way.

For technical reasons, the URL for the new website had to be changed to district23.rtoero.ca but you will automatically be redirected to it if you type in the old URL.

So, what earth-shattering things does the new website offer?

1. Online Event Registration and Payment.

Since our membership spans 50 years, we need to cater to members' needs ranging from those not exposed to computers during their working life to those who have embraced eLearning, online report cards, IEPS, etc. I am trying to

remember when I wrote a cheque and others distrust online payments.

To address your needs and provide CHOICES, we have implemented a solution that allows you to register for an event online and pay for it with a cheque, Interac e-Transfer or a secure Credit/Debit card payment. You receive an immediate confirmation email, and so do the Convener and Treasurer. For insurance purposes, some events require a cheque made out to the tour operator; except for these, all other events permit online payments.

2. Honour Roll

Our Executive work very hard to provide District 23 members with a rich menu of social activities – Bridge to Poling, Benefits to Book Clubs, Strolling to Cycling. This is what differentiates RTOERO from any other Health Insurance company.

To recognize and remember these individuals, we have created an Honour Roll (<https://tinyurl.com/RTO23HonourRoll>), an alphabetical list of all District 23 Executive Members since 1973. If you notice your name or that of a friend missing, please complete the form on the page so that we can update the list.

3. Web Archives

Since the top menu is constrained,

we built a **Web Archives** page to store and access information that would otherwise get lost.

While the old website contained editions of STONY Bridges dating back to 2003, our District Executive decided that only issues from 2019 onwards would be migrated forward because earlier ones contained contact information of contributors that they were uncomfortable sharing. Please note that our Archivist has all back issues of STONY Bridges on file and can provide them upon request.

As in the past, we strive to make our website the GOTO place for information on all things RTOERO District 23, North York, by publishing the following:

- Articles on all major District 23 events, including photographs.

- FLICKR photo albums of District events (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rto23/>) surfaced in activity reports and under the Web Archives.
- Resources such as the District 23 Governance Document (previously known as Constitution).
- Our most recent Tweet at the bottom of our homepage - [@RTO23_NorthYork](#). If you are on Twitter, please follow it; else, do get yourself a FREE Twitter account to allow you to do so.
- Twitter Content: The size restriction of Twitter messages is overcome by linking Twitter content to detailed pages on our website. The same is done for Facebook posts.



Ornamental grasses | Gail M. Murray



Garden Web sculpture, TBG | Gail M. Murray

FOUNDING MEMBERS OF RTOERO DISTRICT 23, NORTH YORK

Bruce Dawson*	Helen Lang*
Joan Featherstone*	Dick Webster*
Viva Heaton*	Dorothy Young*

PRESIDENTS OF RTOERO DISTRICT 23, NORTH YORK

1973 - 1974 Bruce Dawson*	1999 - 2000 Marion Taylor
1974 - 1975 Dr. John McIntosh*	2000 - 2001 Rob Fraser
1975 - 1976 Gertrude Paterson*	2001 - 2002 Beverley Wood*
1976 - 1977 Dr. David Tough*	2002 - 2003 Andrée Nottage
1977 - 1978 George Hosie*	2003 - 2004 David Fleming
1978 - 1979 Fraser Bradshaw*	2004 - 2005 Frank Saliani
1979 - 1980 Margaret Bates*	2005 - 2006 Helen Wiber
1980 - 1981 Eileen Carter*	2006 - 2007 Mary Ellen Lawless
1981 - 1982 Ruth Bick*	2007 - 2008 Margaret Schuman
1982 - 1983 Ken McKee*	2008 - 2009 Michael Sheffe
1983 - 1984 Jack Foote*	2009 - 2010 Luci Soncin
1984 - 1985 Ruth Robson*	2010 - 2011 Jan Siegel* /
1985 - 1986 John Allen*	Luci Soncin
1986 - 1987 Joe Bilson*	2011 - 2012 Maureen Capotosto
1987 - 1988 Elaine Wyles	2012 - 2013 Mary Valtellini
1988 - 1989 Mary Scanlon*	2013 - 2014 Margaret Lato
1989 - 1990 Don Hazell*	2014 - 2015 Courtney Doldron
1990 - 1991 Geoff Arnold*	2015 - 2016 Maureen Capotosto
1991 - 1992 John Wilson	2016 - 2017 Jan Siegel*
1992 - 1993 Aileen Thomas	2017 - 2018 Marisa Agostini
1993 - 1994 Betty Nagle*	2018 - 2019 Sara Di Nallo
1994 - 1995 Gord Claus	2019 - 2020 Maureen Capotosto
1995 - 1996 Mildred Frank	2020 - 2021 Gwen Scriven
1996 - 1997 Claire Piché	2021 - 2022 Mary Valtellini
1997 - 1998 Nancy Walsh*	2022 - 2023 Maureen Capotosto
1998 - 1999 George Meek	

* deceased



Toronto Botanical Gardens Fountain | Gail. M. Murray

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