

# STONY Bridges

March 2024 | Issue 140

## healing

**Community Service Grant Projects**

**Sojourn to Sorrento - Part Two**

**NEW! Speaker Series**

**District 23's Website**

**Activities Galore**



**RTO  
ERO**

District 23  
North York

# Indigenous Healing: My Journey

Written for RTOERO by Shaneeka Forrester, Cree artist, mother and advocate from Brunswick House First Nation, planting roots in Simcoe County, Ontario.

Indigenous healing has been a recurring theme for me in the past few months. I have noticed healing from generational trauma can sometimes present itself in unique or unexpected ways.

Recently, I had the opportunity to have my children participate in an activity that paid tribute to residential school survivors. I felt weary leading up to it – I worried the event may be triggering to me or other participants.

Initially, when I saw my children come out dressed in clothing that residential school children would have worn, I felt a pit in my stomach. However, as the day progressed and we watched the children play, and the families connect, I felt at peace. I felt connected to the space and event. I felt as though it had become a unique opportunity to connect with my ancestors' stories and strength.

After the event, I began reflecting on what generational healing is and what it can look like. I reflected on the many therapists, counsellors, healing circles, elders and other trained professionals I had seen throughout my life. I tried to quantify their time with my progress and vice versa. If I were to be given a report card on healing from intergenerational trauma, would I receive a passing grade?

Then I thought about the event some more. I thought about how opportunities for healing can sometimes come at the most unexpected times in the most unexpected places. I do not want to dismiss or discredit the work done by the professionals I have seen on this journey. Their efforts have influenced the process as a whole, but I think we often forget how impactful simple acts can be as well.

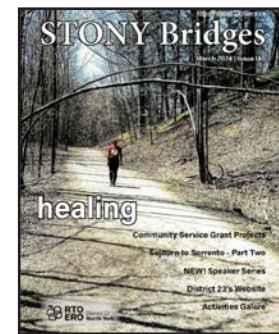
As I continue on this healing journey, I want to continue to embrace the little moments. We never know what type of growth can happen unless we make space for it.



The painting above is by Biljana Banchotova and is titled *Life's Prayer*. It is currently on display at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto. On Biljana's website, called *Whirling Wisdom Creations* [biljanaart.com](http://biljanaart.com), she presents "artwork that inspire vision, find collective light and planetary healing." Reproduced with permission of the artist.

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## Sharing

The theme for the August issue will be *Sharing* and we invite you to write a maximum of 100 words in response to:

**Share your secret to a fulfilling retirement.**

### Submissions Guidelines

STONY Bridges is published for and by its members in March, August, and November by RTOERO District 23, North York.

We welcome submissions from members for inclusion in your magazine. Do you have a passion you'd like to share with our readers? Your voice matters, and we're here to amplify it. Consider submitting your work for publication.

Contributions may range from less than 100 to a maximum of 500 words in length. If you would like to include digital images, we need to have permission from the copyright holder before we can publish them. For images showing people, we need a release from each individual. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject submissions. See the full guidelines: [tinyurl.com/RTO23guidelines](http://tinyurl.com/RTO23guidelines)

Please send submissions to: Maureen Capotosto at [mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca](mailto:mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca). The due date for material is Monday, June 17, 2024.



STONY Bridges is your magazine from RTOERO District 23, North York. In March, the spring edition goes out to all members as well as to all schools in the former North York area, anticipating new retirees.

Our members have the best insurance plan for retired educators (see page 7), and this magazine provides insight into the benefits and activities available to members who join our district. You will find lots of information and opportunities included in the following pages. Feel free to share your copy of STONY with others or direct them to our website.

Anne Marum, recruitment convener, reminds us that RTOERO is open to anyone who has worked for at least five years in the education community in Canada. Membership is free until you retire; visit our membership webpage for more information at [rtoero.ca/membership/](http://rtoero.ca/membership/)

At RTOERO District 23, we embrace the diversity of experiences and perspectives of our members. By celebrating our differences and learning from one another, we enrich our collective understanding of resilience and strength. Together, we cultivate environments that nurture and empower individuals to overcome challenges.

Learn about all our activities on pages 12-18 and page 27. Try out an activity and see if it suits you.

## Pass This On!

Anne Marum, Recruitment Convener

Please share this valuable information with family, friends and colleagues in the education community.

RTOERO Retirement Planning Workshops are for everyone in the education community. Whether you are retiring this year or looking ahead to your retirement, RTOERO is here for you!

Throughout the year, RTOERO offers Retirement Planning Webinars online as well as in-person workshops.

To attend a session, visit the RTOERO website [rtoero.ca/retirement-planning-workshops/](http://rtoero.ca/retirement-planning-workshops/) and register for your free Retirement Planning Webinar or Workshop.

**Thinking about retirement?**  
Retirement planning workshop

**For anyone who**

- Works in schools and school boards, early years, post-secondary
- Wishes to learn about retirement planning
- Wants a workshop tailored to the education community

**Learn about**

- Financial planning
- Health benefits in retirement
- Retirement and lifestyle planning

**Attendees receive**

- Retirement planning booklet
- Chance to win exciting prizes
- Free RTOERO membership until retirement

**REGISTER**  
[rtoero.ca/rpw](http://rtoero.ca/rpw)

**QUESTIONS**  
1-800-361-8888

**PRESENTED BY**  
RTOERO

**WHEN**  
Wednesday, March 21, 2024  
Refreshments: 4:00pm  
Workshop: 4:30 - 6:00pm

**WHERE**  
Casis Banquet Halls  
3474 Kingston Rd  
Scarborough, ON M1M 1R5

## Coming Up

Join us for our Annual Meeting on June 6, 2024. Read the details on page 26. At the meeting, you will hear from executive members about their efforts to meet the needs of our members. You will meet the executive and have a chance to ask questions.



The Annual Meeting will be followed by a social mingling time and a lovely lunch. Members born in 1954 can register and dine for free. The registration form for the luncheon is on page 26 and at [tinyurl.com/RTO23AM2024](http://tinyurl.com/RTO23AM2024).

## Join Us

If you are curious about our work, you are welcome to sit in on one of our executive meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. Contact Sara Di Nallo, [president23@districts.rtoero.ca](mailto:president23@districts.rtoero.ca) and she will share the details of the meeting with you.

Involvement in the District 23 executive is an opportunity to work with colleagues, continue to use your skills, learn new ones and form friendships. We work as a team, supporting one another to accomplish much that benefits our members.

By the way, is there an activity you think we should offer to members? Would you be interested in organizing it?

Would you like to join our executive? The current vacancies for 2024/25 include second vice president, recruitment convener and cycling convener.

The nomination form is available from Maureen Capotosto, [mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca](mailto:mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca)

## Healing

In the winter issue, we asked you, “What does *healing* mean to you?” You can read some of the responses that we received on pages 20 and 21. The collection shows us that while each person experiences healing differently, wherever we find support, understanding and a sense of belonging, we can begin to heal.

Many of us discover a nurturing environment in service to others, so this issue features a celebration of our past and current community service projects.

## Giving Back

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

Anne Frank

Community Service Grants are designed to encourage all RTOERO districts to partner with and support local organizations to promote projects that help our organization meet our strategic goals of improving the lives of members and seniors, being the trusted voice for the broader education communities and broadening our membership base. Since the inception of this grant 24 years ago, RTOERO has donated \$1.95 million for 598 projects.

District 23, North York has a long history of supporting community organizations and involving our district members in the projects. Read about our current projects and some from the past on pages 8-10 and on page 28.

### Do You Have a Suggestion?

The District 23 executive wants to hear your recommendations for potential Community Service Grant Projects for 2024/25.

Learn more about what is involved at [rtoero.ca/giving-back/grants/](http://rtoero.ca/giving-back/grants/)

If you would like to suggest an organization for our next project, contact Maureen Capotosto at [mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca](mailto:mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca) by March 31, 2024.

## New Members

John Giannone, Membership Convener

At the end of 2023, RTOERO D23 had 2713 members and 59 actively employed members.

The executive welcomes the new members listed to the right who joined RTOERO District 23, North York between October 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

### October:

Linda Harti  
Mary Hynes  
Parvathy Kanthasamy  
Antonio P. Letra  
Stephen Polevoy  
Dorothy Walker  
R. Marilyn Wilson

### November:

Monica Camacho  
Maureen Cassidy  
Anna Di Costanzo  
Joy Kurtz  
Jane Margles  
Bonnie Moore  
Smita Sengupta  
Wendy Sinclair

### December:

Leila Dato  
James Johnston  
Marlene Kaner  
Heather Rosen  
Natalie Vine

# Keep Educating Yourself

Mervyn Mascarenhas,  
Webmaster & X (formerly Twitter) Admin

Visit the District 23 Website

[district23.rtoero.ca/](http://district23.rtoero.ca/)

Our website is your one-stop shop for all District 23 information, including our calendar of events, current and past issues of STONY Bridges and e-Newsletters, slide decks, photographs or videos. If anything is missing, please inform the webmaster.

The District 23 web archives are always worth exploring at [district23.rtoero.ca/web-archives-district-23-north-york/](http://district23.rtoero.ca/web-archives-district-23-north-york/).

## Website Enhancements

The events page now presents the calendar in grid and list views. It highlights both district (in violet) and RTOERO (in fuchsia) events, and lets you filter between them. Whereas in the past only feature events were displayed, now *all* the District 23 events are listed every month. When you click on an event in the calendar, all the details are displayed including links to fillable forms for event registration when required, e.g., [district23.rtoero.ca/my-fair-lady/](http://district23.rtoero.ca/my-fair-lady/).

The roles of executive members are now bilingual on the About page and are followed by a list of all our event coordinators. You can contact any executive member through email.



## e-Newsletter

e-Newsletters are emailed to our registered members before the beginning of each month between September and June. If you are a member in District 23, but are not currently registered for monthly e-Newsletters, you can contact the convener, Karen Quinn at [kquinn56@gmail.com](mailto:kquinn56@gmail.com)

## Digital Literacy

Technology is evolving at breakneck speed. We need to be constantly learning to stay afloat. Here are some of my favourite places for staying abreast of what's new.

## e-Devices Group

Led by our multi-talented Vernon Paige, this special interest group meets virtually every two weeks during the year. Vernon's presentation is bookended by a hangout where regulars and newcomers chat, ask questions and share topical information.

## Tech Coaches

Tech Coaches ([techcoaches.ca/](http://techcoaches.ca/)) focuses on Teaching Older Adults Technology. Subscribe to its free mailing list and check out its blog. Chris Bint does a monthly webinar through the Burlington Public Library ([bpl.on.ca/](http://bpl.on.ca/)). Of late, he sprinkles in his recent findings on the practical use of generative AI, ChatGPT in particular.

## OSSCO:

### Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations

OSSCO© is a provincial organization and a registered charity established in 1987 to bring together seniors, keep them educated and informed as well as engaged on current issues. It focuses on making aging easier for everyone through education, research and public policy. Participation is free for seniors.

Digital Literacy 101 was an excellent free five-week course delivered virtually by Professor Caroline Grammer of Seneca College.

Learning technology in a group setting isn't easy and sometimes we need one-on-one personal tutoring. Professor Grammer has offered to pair seniors with her Seneca students for free personalized digital training delivered virtually. To access this service, send an email to [caroline.grammer@senecacollege.ca](mailto:caroline.grammer@senecacollege.ca). Preface the subject line with OSSCO so that it bubbles to the top.

# Insurance Plan Updates for 2024

Gwen Scriven, Benefits Convener



Here's good news. Membership fees for 2024 have been waived for anyone participating in the RTOERO Health Plans. Our competitors do not have an annual fee and now neither do we.

Everyone should have received the Communiqué for 2024

via email and in hard copy with the Winter 2024 Renaissance magazine. Entente is the new name for the insurance plan; however, this will not require a new wallet card. The information is the same and the plans and services remain unchanged.

The complete Communiqué deserves reading; however, here are some key pieces of information:

- The six-month claims-submission deadline is essential to remember.
- Premiums in 2024 remain the same for Hospital and Convalescent Care, and Extended Health Care Plans. Dental Plan premiums have been raised by 8.5% as this program has been running a deficit which is not sustainable.
- Convalescent Care benefits have been increased. You can now access the three-day convalescent care coverage following elective as well as non-elective surgery in a hospital.

## How and Why RTOERO Revises the Health and Insurance Plans

Changes to our health and insurance plans follow a year-long process. The committee must receive suggestions for new plan changes by March (there were 40 viable suggestions for this year). The committee reviews the suggestions using the lens of getting the most benefit for as many members as possible at the



- If you are having cataract surgery, review page 12 to be clear about your benefits.
- Did you know that RSV vaccines are often recommended for seniors? They can be quite expensive, but the good news is that your drug plan covers the RSV vaccine.
- You can now purchase supplemental trip cancellation and trip interruption insurance for a specific trip up to \$12000 per person instead of the standard \$6000 in your present policy. The same terms and conditions apply. See [rtoero.ca/insurance/supplemental-travel/](http://rtoero.ca/insurance/supplemental-travel/) for premiums and the application form.
- If you travel for more than 93 days, you can purchase a Supplemental travel plan for the additional days.
- Find income tax tips on page 9 and learn about CloudMD's Kii Medical Second Opinion services on pages 10 and 11.
- If you want additional information on anything in Communiqué, refer to [rtoero.ca/resources/communique-insurance-plan-updates](http://rtoero.ca/resources/communique-insurance-plan-updates). You will find a digital copy of Communiqué and an updated version of the Entente Insurance Plans Booklet there.

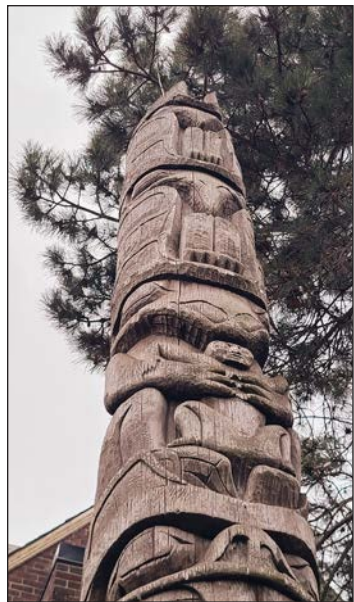
best possible cost. Selection criteria are available on the website. Decisions by the committee on plan changes for the upcoming year are made in October and presented for Board approval. All changes come into effect on January 1 of the following year.

# Let's Celebrate Our Legacy

Maureen Capotosto and Valerie Sterling

Supporting community organizations is a priority of our District 23 work. We have a legacy of community projects that focus on supporting our community with grant money, member involvement and contributions. Projects have continued to receive support beyond the focus year, with members packing backpacks for the Teresa Group, who support families living with HIV and Aids and the work of the Room for a Child.

Projects support the goals of RTOERO. Our strategic plan focuses on being the trusted voice for the broader education community, improving the lives of members and seniors and broadening the membership base. Projects align with the values of diversity, equity & inclusion, community connection, accountability, environmental sustainability, wellbeing, service, and commitment to healthy, active living.



## 2012/13: Soaring Heights

The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto project extended resources and opportunities for the children of their Thursday evening programs with art supplies, books and TTC tickets.

## 2019/20: Period Purse

The Period Purse project creates menstrual equity through access, education and advocacy. Our grant supported the high school program, Menstruation Nation, and members generously donated products and purses to support their outreach work to a marginalized community.



## 2020/21: Strong Minds Strong Kids

In the midst of all the challenges teachers and students were facing during the pandemic, District 23 was able to provide excellent resources developed by Strong Minds Strong Kids, Psychology Canada to 210 teachers that focus on managing stress with information and lessons that were helpful for both students and teachers. Materials were provided at appropriate grade levels (kindergarten to grade 12) as requested by teachers.

As this project was about delivering psychology and evidence-based programs guides (*Kids Have Stress Too!* and *Stress Lessons*) to teachers in the classroom, it demonstrated how RTOERO members support prevention and early intervention strategies and that it

is important to give educators the tools to support their students. This project demonstrates to the schools and the general public that RTOERO retired members have an understanding of the focus on the mental well-being of children and that they support building stronger partnerships between sectors to support children and create healthy communities.

The benefits of this Project have been many.

- *The Kids Have Stress Too!* and *Stress Lessons* programs guides provided educators with strategies to help create an emotionally healthy environment in their classroom by promoting self regulation and effective stress-management skills and strategies with their students.

- Students shared their knowledge of stress and stress management strategies with their family and friends giving a greater reach and the benefits of community wide mental health promotion.
- Teachers observed that students became more engaged in the classroom when their stress was managed. "Thank you for allowing me to bring the 'Stronger Minds Make for Stronger Kids' program into my classroom. I truly appreciate the opportunity. My students are much more engaged," said one TCDSB teacher.
- The educators also learned from the program benefitting from the strategies to manage their own stress. "The guide is user friendly so that I can read it fairly quickly and easily implement these valuable activities. I also very much appreciate the section at the end that includes tips for teachers to take care of themselves, too. I look forward to sharing some of the ideas and strategies within the guide with my teaching partners." TDSB teacher.
- "This program reconfirmed my belief that a child in distress cannot learn 'school stuff' in that moment. As a teacher, I need to be able to help model and coach children who are resilient and

have the skills to solve social conflict," said an elementary school educator after participating in The Kids Have Stress Too!

- As District 23 promoted mental health and the building blocks to a stronger foundation of mental health for children and youth, society benefitted in the long term mitigating the need for treatment for mental health issues.



This year, Strong Minds Strong Kids, Psychology Canada is celebrating 50 years of providing evidence-based psychology-oriented programs and resources which nurture resiliency in children and youth. It has now added a new online program, *Make the Connection*, for parents and caregivers. It is a national organization serving over 250 000 families annually.

## 2021/22: Urban Wildlife

Fostering peaceful coexistence between people and urban wildlife was the goal of this partnership with the Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC). The grant was used to create information sessions for seniors and school-age children to educate people about humane approaches to manage and coexist with wildlife.

Three outstanding webinars are available for viewing at [district23.rtoero.ca/urban-wildlife-grant-project/](https://district23.rtoero.ca/urban-wildlife-grant-project/)



- Birds in the City: Threats They Face & YOU Can Help!
- Co-existing with Our Wildlife Neighbours!
- Backyard Biodiversity and Wildlife Babies

## 2022/23: One Voice

We are excited to tell you that the *One Voice Interfaith Project to End Violence Against Women* is finally ready and will be printed soon. The dissemination of this knowledge will take place soon. The date, place and time of the event to launch it are to be determined.



[youtube.com/watch?v=6qjrbapGeDY](https://youtube.com/watch?v=6qjrbapGeDY)

"We are so grateful to RTOERO District 23 for your support of this project. Your grant helped to enable us to complete it. Thank you once again!"



## 2023/24: 2Choirs! Seniors and Music

I see our community as a fascinating, colourful work of art, speaking a symphony of languages. It gives my soul joy when I get the chance to learn about people from cultures everywhere. Programming music that includes under-represented composers and music from various cultures not only offers a sense of inclusiveness and diversity but is so much more interesting to sing and to hear. The singers in the McConaghy Seniors Choir appreciate the effort since many of them reflect a variety of places and heritages that make up the cultural mixing pot of our community. Our audience is even more diverse.

In the past, it was difficult to find published music from various cultures for choir, and what existed usually fell into the “tokenism” pile of what I thought was a waste of paper and ink. It takes time and effort to suss out a quality repertoire that has integrity. Still, it is easier these days, and I have been fortunate to have some funds to dedicate toward interesting music that

shares the wonder of music we don’t often hear with the musicians and audience in our sphere. In our past December program, we included music for Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa, with most of the repertoire simply about winter and themes that bring people together. A gentleman who attended our concert told a choir member that he was very happy and touched to hear his language, Swahili, at our concert and that we shared the meaning of Kwanzaa with a room full of people.

Music not only brings people together but also bridges our differences toward a place where we can all learn, enjoy, and evolve together. If we don’t offer people a chance to bring what they have to share, then we are doing nothing for the universe. We need to strengthen our communities in any way possible. My only real offering is music and I do my best to add to the fabric and help fortify my community through inclusiveness and diversity.

Dr. Jessica V. Kun, conductor

*The singers in the McConaghy Seniors Choir ... reflect a variety of places and heritages that make up the cultural mixing pot of our community.*



The Choralairs performed beautifully at our Holiday Season Luncheon. They are one of the choirs in our Community Service Grant project, 2Choirs: Music and Seniors. One performer identified herself as a District 23 member and invited others to come and join the choir.



## Our Voices Have Been Heard

Kathy Shorney, Political Advocacy Convener

With 84,000 members in 51 districts across Canada, we have a strong voice to advocate for seniors and our quality of life. We believe in a better future together! RTOERO has been very active since the summer.

Board and Committee members participated in RTOERO’s 6th annual Queen’s Park event in October, which included virtual one-on-one meetings and an in-person networking breakfast with 35 MPPs and staff at Queen’s Park in the Ontario Legislative Assembly Building in Toronto.

We continue to advocate for the priorities outlined in Vibrant Voices and our voices have been heard. There will be an event with federal MPs and staff in the spring of 2024.

The Political Advocacy Committee’s recommendations in November to the RTOERO Board included:

- To investigate the resources needed to support districts’ Vibrant Voices advocacy initiatives;
- To support the districts in developing and implementing a campaign related to federal, provincial, and municipal elections;
- To monitor and inform the Board of Directors of proposed changes to federal or provincial legislation that threaten defined benefit pensions;
- To monitor pension plans. (Committee members monitor each of the pension plans that our members are part of, as well as CPP.)

RTOERO has sent an official response to the Ontario government regarding the consultation on the Convenient Care at Home Act, 2023 (Bill 135). Our central Political Advocacy Committee continues to work hard on our behalf as seniors.

As your PAC representative, I will attend the April 2024 PAC workshop and the scheduled regional Zoom meetings where we share concerns and initiatives with PAC reps in the GTA region.

## RTOERO’s Future of Aging Summit

RTOERO will host its first Future of Aging Summit from May 15 to 17, 2024, in Toronto, Canada. The international conference will bring together experts and thinkers from various sectors, all with a common focus: improving later life. The goal is to continue to foster an interconnected network of people across sectors who, like us, believe in a better future together and want to help create it. The summit is designed to focus on supporting healthy aging, ending ageism and building age-friendly societies.

### Help Promote the Summit

Do you have contacts in your network who may be interested in attending the summit? For example, members of a municipal age-friendly committee, city planners, or staff at local non-profits that support older adults? Find sample text you can share on the summit site at [agingsummit.rtoero.ca/promotion-kit/](https://agingsummit.rtoero.ca/promotion-kit/)



Registration is now open at [agingsummit.rtoero.ca](https://agingsummit.rtoero.ca)

All RTOERO members will be provided with a code to access the virtual keynotes at no cost. Resources are available on the RTOERO website.

# Pay It Forward

Sharon Gusz, RTOERO Member and Milk Bags Unlimited Volunteer

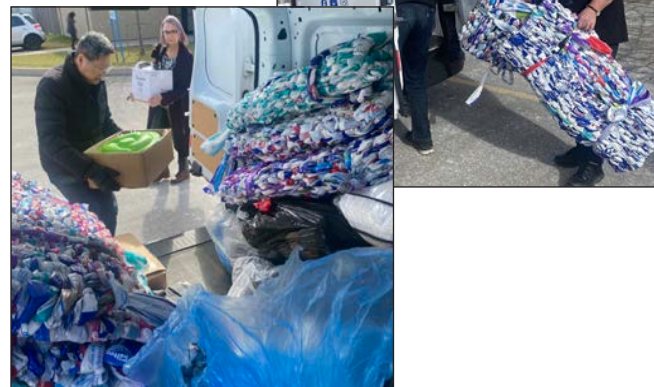
Imagine creating sleeping mats from recycled milk bags! In 2013, crocheters from across Canada completed 700 mats. The finished products were insect, mildew and bacteria-resistant, and served as an excellent insulator, but they were also thin and rough and took an experienced crocheter 40 hours to complete.



The weaving of milk bags was introduced in 2014. Completed mats are now five times thicker, much more comfortable and completed in a fraction of the time. Weaving also allows individuals of all ages and abilities to get involved.

Since the beginning of 2016, over 60,000 mats have been delivered to either Dr. Simone's warehouse, Canadian Food for Children at [canadianfoodforchildren.net/](http://canadianfoodforchildren.net/) where they are shipped overseas or to outreach organizations such as City Street Outreach at [citystreetoutreach.org](http://citystreetoutreach.org) that serve people without housing closer to home.

Over 40 million non-biodegradable bags have been kept out of landfills!



Over the past several years, retired teachers and friends have met at St. Gabriel's Parish in North York and Our Lady Queen of the World Church in Richmond Hill to make these sleeping mats. We average 20 - 30 volunteers at each event. The atmosphere is fun, light and yet, very productive. Numerous valuable friendships have grown out of the monthly gatherings.



Several times a year, we are invited to train students in schools or coordinate a "Pay it Forward" day or a retreat. The trained students may be members of an eco- or social-justice club that meets weekly or they may be from a specific class that wants to host a school-wide event. Picture kindergarten students stuffing pillowcases, grade 1 and 2 students flattening bags, grade 3 and 4 students cutting, and grade 5 and 6 looping, while grade 7 and 8 students weave, all in one location.

When you get like-minded, giving people together, great things happen. Our enthusiastic volunteers contribute throughout the year by driving mats to the warehouse, sewing pillows and soap cases, and donating to numerous other drives. Some members also connect monthly to make meals and baked goods for City Street Outreach.



# Love in Every Stitch

Olga McKenzie, Needlework & Crafts Convener

*"Healing helps to restore balance, harmony and well-being to an individual or a community."*

Victoria Maxwell, Crazy for Life

This 2023/24 year had a very successful start.

Between the proceeds of the Champagne Breakfast (\$345), the 50th Anniversary Gala (\$355) and the Holiday Luncheon (\$485), we have raised \$1185.00, to donate to our community service project of the year, on our behalf. Thanks to the Needlework & Craft group for contributing their time and skills to make it happen so successfully. Well done to everyone who supported us in many different ways.

Approximately 150 hats, scarves and mitts were distributed to families across six school communities.

We collect gently used towels to line the milk bag mats; Halloween candy for Canadian Food for Children; clothing, books, toys, household goods and linens for City Street Outreach; pillowcases for pillowcase dresses; greeting cards for isolated seniors; eyeglasses, pop-can pull-tabs, plastic milk and bread tags, and stamps for leprosy medication.



We meet the third Wednesday of the month at St. Gabriel Parish, 670 Sheppard Avenue East, North York M2K 1B7. Enter the parking lot from Elkhorn Drive; it's easy access with no stairs.

If you want to be included in future notices of weaving sessions, contact Sharon Gusz at [sharongusz@gmail.com](mailto:sharongusz@gmail.com).

For this project to continue with success, Sharon would appreciate a partner in case she cannot attend a meeting in the future. Can you help?

To learn more about the program visit Milk Bags Unlimited at [milkbagsunlimited.ca](http://milkbagsunlimited.ca).



At our latest meeting, we had a great presentation by Dawn Gillespie of Room for a Child (email [Dawn@RoomforaChild.ca](mailto:Dawn@RoomforaChild.ca)), an organization that many of us support in various ways. This non-profit charity is serviced completely by volunteers. They creatively refurbish furniture donations which improve children's environments. For more information, visit their website at [RoomforaChild.ca](http://RoomforaChild.ca)

We still lovingly produce preemie hats and blankets for donation to Humber River Hospital.

Thank you to all of you who have contributed through raffles, skill, yarn, time, etc., etc., etc.

The Needlework & Craft Group strives to promote healing of self and others. Well done everyone!!

# DISTRICT 23

# ACTIVITIES

## • Nordic Pole Walking •

Convener: Kathy Shorney  
[k\\_shorney@yahoo.com](mailto:k_shorney@yahoo.com)  
Date & Time: Third Tuesday of the month (except January & February)  
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.  
Location: Check STONY Bridges or monthly e-Newsletter for locations.

**Tuesday, March 19 – York Cemetery**  
Senlac north of Sheppard Avenue W.  
Park near the gate on the west side of Senlac and meet us there by 10:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, April 16 – York Mills Arena**  
York Mills east of Bayview Avenue  
Park near the stands and meet us there by 10:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, May 21 – Bestview Trail**  
Steeles east of Bayview Avenue  
Turn south on Laureleaf Road South. Park in the plaza or on the street and meet us at the trailhead south of the plaza at 10:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, June 18 – Downsview Park**  
Sheppard east of Keele Street  
Enter on John Drury Road and follow signs to the Discovery Centre on Canuck Avenue. Park and meet us at the Centre by 10:00 a.m. Treats will be served.

*Walk with us using poles if you have them. You may bring a friend. Email Kathy if interested in participating and to keep informed.*

## • Bridge Club •

Convener: Alan Ward  
905-889-3687  
Date & Time: Every Tuesday  
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Willowdale Emmanuel United Church, 379 Kenneth Ave.,  
2 blocks east of Yonge St. and north of Church Ave.

We offer friendly company in pleasant surroundings with the opportunity for newbies to get into the games. Basic instruction can be provided on request for members. RTOERO members may bring a friend. Wearing a mask is optional.

## Executive Meetings •

Contact: Sylvia Skippen  
[sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com](mailto:sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com)  
Date & Time: Second Wednesday of the month  
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Location: (Sept.- Dec.; April - June)  
Edithvale Community Centre,  
131 Finch Avenue West  
(Jan. Feb. & March) on Zoom

Join us. Meet the dedicated volunteers who keep District 23 humming. Attend an executive meeting and learn what happens behind the scenes.

## Have-a-Java

Convener: Elizabeth Clarke  
[clarkemeneguzzi@gmail.com](mailto:clarkemeneguzzi@gmail.com)  
Date & Time: Third Wednesday of the month  
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Location: Bayview Village Plaza, in front of LCBO

Join us! Each member who signs in receives \$5.00 towards the cost of a coffee & treat. Please check the monthly e-Newsletter for updates on date and time.

## Any New Ideas??

Does anyone have suggestions for new activities that our members will enjoy?

Check your calendar, plan your week ...

## HEY, STROLLERS!

June's stroll will happen on Wednesday, June 5 because the Annual Meeting and Spring Luncheon will be held on Thursday, June 6.

## Milk Bag Weaving •

Contact: Sharon Gusz  
[sharongusz@gmail.com](mailto:sharongusz@gmail.com)  
Date & Time: Third Wednesday of the month  
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.  
Location: St Gabriel's Parish,  
670 Sheppard Ave. East

Participants weave recycled milk bags into sleeping mats for donation internationally or to outreach organizations serving people without housing closer to home. Contact Sharon for dates and times for Our Lady Queen of the World, Richmond Hill.

## Book Club

Convener: Sylvia Skippen  
[sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com](mailto:sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com)  
Date & Time: Last Wednesday of the month (except December & June)  
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Edithvale Community Centre,  
131 Finch Avenue West or  
virtually by Zoom.  
During the winter months of January and February, meetings are exclusively virtual.

Books are listed in STONY Bridges and our monthly e-Newsletter. A presenter provides information and questions to lead the discussion. Email Sylvia for information about upcoming sessions.

## North York Strollers •

Convener: Joanne Famiglietti  
[jcfam12@gmail.com](mailto:jcfam12@gmail.com)  
Date & Time: First Thursday of the month (except September & January)  
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
- with optional lunch after  
Check District 23's monthly e-Newsletter for locations and meet at the designated subway station.

Dress according to the weather as the walk takes place rain or shine. Email Joanne for monthly locations and further information.

## • Needlework & Crafts •

Convener: Olga McKenzie  
[omckenzie@sympatico.ca](mailto:omckenzie@sympatico.ca)  
Date & Time: Third Thursday of each month  
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Location: Edithvale Community Centre,  
131 Finch Avenue West

Learn new skills, revisit skills, and work on individual or group projects. Members share their work and identify projects to work on. Yarn is provided. This is an opportunity to make friends or reconnect with them. Lovely items are created to raffle at our events, raising money for charity and the RTOERO Foundation.

## Technology (e-Devices)

Convener: Vernon Paige  
[photoguy.2019@gmail.com](mailto:photoguy.2019@gmail.com)  
Date & Time: Alternate Fridays  
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Location: On Zoom

A wide range of topics are discussed. Contact Vernon for dates, links to meetings and additional information.



# Your Spring Reading List

Sylvia Skippen, Book Club Convener

**Wan** by Dawn Promislow  
Wednesday, March 24, 2024

**Facilitator: Sharron Holesh**  
Wan is the story of Jacqueline, a privileged artist in 1970s South Africa, whose life unravels after an anti-apartheid activist hides in her garden house. It is an exquisite debut novel that grapples with questions of complicity and guilt, privilege, and the immeasurable value of art and life.



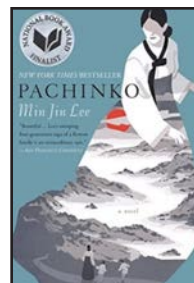
**Borges and Me: An Encounter**  
by Jay Parini  
Wednesday, April 24, 2024

**Facilitator: Sally Plumb**  
The author recalls a one-week road trip as a 22-year-old aspiring poet and writer, and the 72-year-old Borges on their 1971 road trip around literary and historical sites of Scotland in a clapped-out Morris Minor. Borges, a distinguished Argentinian writer, was now blind and wanted Parini to tell him everything he saw on their road trip.



**PACHINKO** by Min Jin Lee  
Wednesday, May 29, 2024

**Facilitator: Marilyn Fletcher**  
Pachinko follows one poor but proud Korean family in early 1900s Korea with Sunja, their prized daughter, whose unplanned pregnancy threatens to shame them all. Deserted by her lover, she is saved when a young tubercular minister offers to marry and bring her to Japan. This is a story of a family in exile from its homeland and their desperate struggles encountering racism, discrimination and stereotyping of 20th-century Japan.



# Lively Chats

Elizabeth Clarke, Have-a-Java Convener



**H**ave-a-Java is a very successful RTOERO District 23, North York activity with two hundred and sixty-five members attending this monthly get-together at Bayview Village during the ten months of 2023. Freezing temperatures do not deter retirees from braving the elements to engage in lively conversation and establish connections.

The group continues to grow monthly. It has made it necessary for us to gather more tables to accommodate the District 23 members attending. Friendships have been rekindled, and new ones forged. I think of Angela and Monica, who connected at one of our gatherings and discovered they share Ukrainian heritage. In another conversation, Mary and Helen advised Carol (school volunteer) on the best practice to teach reading to a non-reading student. These are just examples. The chat is always lively, and many members plan their calendars around this interest group, which meets on the third Wednesday of the month.



# Exploring the City

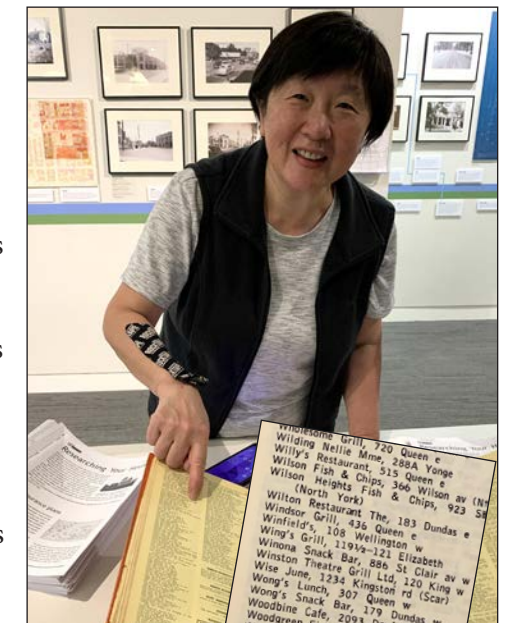
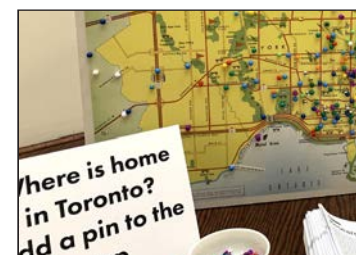
Joanne Famiglietti, North York Strollers Convener



**O**n February 1<sup>st</sup>, nine members met at the renovated Dupont Subway Station – an amazing use of mosaic tiles, skylights and artwork enhance this space.

We proceeded to the Toronto Archives at 255 Spadina Road. There, we had a snapshot of Toronto's history in various displays. One example was the photos of 577 University Avenue. In the 1930s and 40s, due to a housing shortage, this vacant lot became a trailer park and in 1951, the site became the current location of The Hospital for Sick Children.

Another collection included directories of yellow and white pages from years ago. One member was thrilled to find the listing of her grandfather's restaurant that had been demolished decades ago.



Windsome Grill, 720 Queen e  
Willy's Belle Mine, 288A Yonge  
Wilson Restaurant, 515 Queen e  
Wilson Fish & Chips, 306 Wilson av (N York)  
Wilson Heights Fish & Chips, 923 St  
Wilton Restaurant, The, 183 Dundas e  
Windsor Grill, 436 Queen e  
Winfield's, 108 Wellington w  
Wing's Grill, 1194-121 Elizabeth  
Winston Snack Bar, 886 St Clair av w  
Winston Theatre Grill Ltd, 120 King w  
Wise June, 1234 Kingston rd (Scar)  
Wong's Lunch, 307 King w  
Wong's Snack Bar, 279 Dundas w  
Woodbine Cafe, 2093 Danforth av  
Woodgreen Restaurant, 806 Queen e  
Yee's Restaurant, 2244 Bloor w  
Yonge Coffee Shop, 2512 Yonge



Our walk ended at George Brown College where we ate lunch and a lively discussion ensued.

All enjoyed the camaraderie and fun. Watch District 23's e-Newsletter for details of our upcoming strolling destinations on Thursday April 4, Thursday May 2 and Wednesday June 5.



# Our Amazing Volunteers

*Maria Ferandes, Goodwill Convener*

We are so fortunate to belong to the social network of RTOERO, District 23, North York. In addition to all the local activities and social events we are invited to attend, the Goodwill team has 21 amazing volunteers making phone calls to our oldest members - the oldest being 104 years old. Some volunteer callers keep in touch with members who are interested in continuing the conversation.

Since last September, we called two hundred and forty-six District 23 members. We would love to have you on our team! If you can make a few five-minute phone calls, please get in touch with me at [mariachristinefernandes@gmail.com](mailto:mariachristinefernandes@gmail.com) I will send you a script to use as needed. There is a need for connection, and, as so many of our volunteers express to me, the *healing power of human connection* works both ways.



Sayeh will give each attendee a pack of stratified native seeds, ready to be planted. Different people can grow different varieties and then trade and share the seedlings and add multiple native plants to their gardens or community plantings. On her website, [sayehsunstudio.com/blog](http://sayehsunstudio.com/blog), you can learn about the Underhill Seed-sitters group she leads on behalf of [Project Swallowtail](#).

Every person, in their own way, can do their part to help the bees and the ecosystem, whether on large properties or small balconies and terraces.

Please register online no later than Friday, April 5 at [district23.rtoero.ca/speaker-series-the-pollinators/](http://district23.rtoero.ca/speaker-series-the-pollinators/)



In addition, if you wish to learn about the work of the District 23 North York executive, you are welcome to attend the executive meeting from 9:30 - 10:15 on April 10, prior to the speaker's presentation. Contact Sara Di Nallo, [president23@districts.rtoero.ca](mailto:president23@districts.rtoero.ca) and she will arrange a seat for you.

# Speaker Series: Protect and Promote Pollinators

*Sylvia Skippen, First Vice President*

You are invited to attend this interesting presentation:

Wednesday, April 10  
from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
at Edithvale Community Centre, Dempsey Room  
131 Finch Ave W, North York, ON M2N 2H8.

Spring is in the air, and it is time to consider your garden. Pollinator gardens are becoming increasingly popular, attracting bees and other pollinators that are vital to a healthy planet. However, habitat loss, invasive species, disease, pesticides, climate change and extreme weather threaten bees and other pollinators with extinction. Insufficient pollinators result in loss of fruit, vegetable and nut production which, in turn, contributes to human health problems, such as cancer, stroke and diabetes, due to a shortage of healthy foods.

On Wednesday, April 10th, 2024, you are invited to meet Sayeh Beheshti to discuss the protection and promotion of pollinators and their ecosystems through conservation, education and research. Sayeh is a member of the Garden Club of Toronto and a "Certified Pollinator Steward." She is pursuing a PhD in environmental studies at York University and is passionate about the power of bees.

# On His Library, Gazing

*Bruce Jacobs Davidovitch, District 23 Member*

To the bleak basement relegated  
From Abagnale to Zevin  
By author alpha ordered  
Stored in Ikea-shelved heaven

Stalwart accomplices and companions  
Attest to decades-long friendships  
Some dust-jacketed some spine-broken  
Memories crouch at poised fingertips

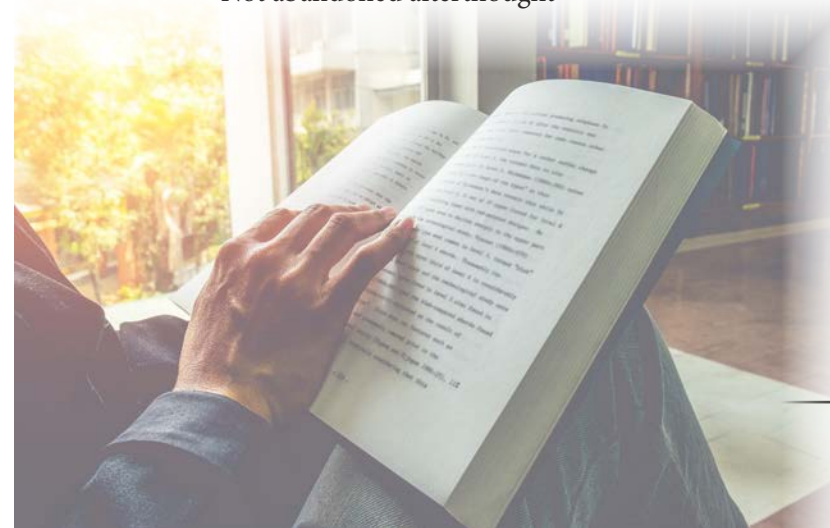
Forged in research and imagining  
These Gutenberg creations  
Paper, ink, thread and glue  
The collected conscience of nations

Standing shoulder to shoulder  
Do they live? Breathe? Consider?  
Quietly die standing up  
After their message is delivered

Or revive on observation  
Waiting in their hush-ed queues  
Start-and-stop upon demand  
Their intentions thus renewed

"Take them to the curb"  
Boxed up to be carted away  
"Donate them to some altruistic cause"  
The printed word's had its heyday

Yet each esteemed edition  
Whether memorable or not  
Quietly beckons august cognition  
Not abandoned afterthought



# In Memoriam

*John Giannone, Membership Convener*



With great sadness, we inform you of the passing of the following members of District 23, North York, from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to their families and friends.

- Sheila Beart
- Kathleen Brown
- Nancy Bruno
- Sivanesa Chanthirasekaram
- Hugh Cook
- Andrew Gaydos
- Neil Johnston
- Joanne Jones-Smith
- Allan Lett
- Noel Potts
- James Purcell
- George Rampersad
- Sandra Shennan
- Ian Sinclair
- Irene Tatrallyay
- Ernest Walker
- Ronald Wilson
- Raymond Wilson

# What Does Healing Mean to You?

Forgiveness is a priceless healing gift! It bestows harmony and improves the quality of life for the giver and the receiver. Remember to forgive yourself too.

Anne Marum

What healing means is that people carry all the woes of life and its interactions in luggage, often on their backs, weighing them down. To heal, you need to empty the load and look forward to new adventures and positive interactions.

Kathy Shorney

My heart is uplifted when I return to youthful delights, taking pleasure in the scenery, the lilt of the language, tropical scents, and unique sensations re-awakened.

Happiness is the healing balm in the weeks spent in Trinidad, the land of the hummingbird, known for inventing the steel band and calypso. An incongruous balance of my 20 years here and my 60 years away from this tropical paradise, it is where I find healing of heart, body and spirit every time I return.

Polly Clarke

To me, healing is a process by which we overcome or mend an undesirable illness, condition, or relationship. Healing affords us the necessary time to improve or repair physical, emotional, mental, or social damages and achieve a state of personal health and well-being.

Anna Arciero

Vivek H Murthy, MD, former U.S. Surgeon General, has written a wonderful book, *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World*. It's about the importance of human connection, the hidden impact of loneliness on our health, and the social power of community.

Maria Fernandes

## Sharing My Healing Process

Dealing with the loss of a loved one is an incredibly challenging and personal journey. When my husband died, I was told by many that healing was a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses physical, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being. While the grieving process is unique to each individual, in discussion with others, I found that there are common steps that many people go through as they navigate the healing process. A range of emotions are felt including sadness, anger, guilt, and confusion.

It took me time to acknowledge the reality of my loss and accept the emotions that came with it — although I was told that it was important to understand that grief is a natural response to loss and that it takes time to process.

In time, what I realized was that I needed emotional healing and mental healing the most.

I needed to resolve my distress and come to terms with the difficult emotions and find coping mechanisms for my emotional well-being.

I found that by surrounding myself with a support system of caring individuals who uplifted and encouraged me, who shared my journey and who understood the power of empathy and kindness, it helped me to know that I was not alone with my struggles.

I also needed mental healing to help me overcome the challenges of stress, anxiety and depression. Fortunately, I was guided to self-reflect and develop some coping strategies.

I knew that I had to adapt to a new normal without the presence of my life partner. So my journey to healing began:

- I volunteered and engaged in many activities. This brought me comfort and friendship.
- I joined a number of organizations, participated in their many activities and became president of two.
- I was invited, by two additional organizations who had the same values and visions as I did, to join their boards of directors – so I agreed.
- I joined a lawn bowling club, learned the art of lawn bowling and coordinated the ladies league.
- I mentored York University students with research projects.
- I realized that being a member of RTOERO, I was also a member of District 23 and, after managing the Community Service Project of Strong Minds Strong Kids, Psychology Canada, I was invited to be a member of the executive.

Engaging in activities or projects that aligned with my values, passions and needs, helped me to explore ways to find meaning and purpose in my life after my loss.

I learned that healing is often about embracing the present moment, appreciating the steps forward, and learning from the setbacks. Healing is a profound and transformative process, one that unfolds gradually, much like the gentle unfurling of a flower. It is a journey that invites us to delve into the depths of our being, confront our wounds, and emerge with newfound strength and resilience.

Valerie Sterling

# Sojourn to Sorrento - Part Two

Gail M Murray, District 23 Member

*Serene Sorrento, land of the sirens who attempted to lure the wily Ulysses, is a friendly, walkable city with a dramatic coastline and belle epoque hotels perched on cliffs one hundred feet above the sea.*

*Our local guide Roberta (Essence of Italy), who met us enthusiastically at the Naples airport, charmed us with her genuine warmth on the drive to Sorrento as she guided us through her city on a two-hour orientation. We boarded a ferry to Capri, secured a minibus to Anacapri amid a myriad of tourists and enjoyed a picturesque boat tour around the fabled isle. Roberta's knowledge and passion brought ancient Pompeii to life.*

*Last issue's travelogue continues ...*

On one of my free days, I discover two palatial villa hotels from the Belle Epoque: Hotel Bellevue Syrene and Hotel Excelsior Vittoria, perched on the rugged cliffs with stunning views of the Bay of Naples.



Hotel Syrene, an exclusive boutique hotel, is near Villa Comunale Park, the city park near the cloisters. The imposing entrance and long walk past luxurious palms take me to the otherworldly La Pergola balcony restaurant with white wrought iron tables and a blue azure sky against the brilliant blue of the bay. After a quiet coffee, I wander into the main lobby, an open-air patio protected on all sides from the wind. People are sunning, reading, and chatting. There are several living rooms off this, and I sit in a quiet space in a red velvet chair in the shape of an open rose beside a baby grand

piano and read a large coffee table book about Capri. A little beige cat wanders by. "Her name's Ariel, like the mermaid?" says the receptionist. "With a hotel named for the Sirens, we had to find an appropriate name." Later I'm out in the gardens admiring the majolica tiled benches - works of art.



Hotel Excelsior Vittoria, near the main square, holds pride of place. You enter under an imposing arch and must get by the doorman. I tell him I'm here for lunch. It's a long-paved driveway with tall umbrella pines, silver olive trees and luxurious gardens on either side. Classical Roman statues come into view. You enter the hotel through another long path with ivy cascading down brick walls and hedges of hibiscus. Inside lounges are brocades and dark antiques. It's named for a queen of Sweden with a wall dedicated to famous visitors out of history, including native son Caruso who has a suite in his name, much like Hemingway's room in Cuba's El Mundo. Its large circular patio seems busier than Hotel Syrene.

I love how modern travellers can have a moment of decadence and inside view of these grand old villas, once private residences, now hotels or cultural venues such as Villa Fiorentino donated to the city and the seat of Fondazione Sorrento, an institution engaged in promoting cultural awareness and hosting high profile art exhibitions. I am fortunate to attend an Impressionist exhibit here, engaging with Italian university students perfecting their English by studying French Impressionist art and acting as tour guides as part of their assignment. There is also an extensive photographic display dedicated to actress Sophia Loren, a native of Naples.

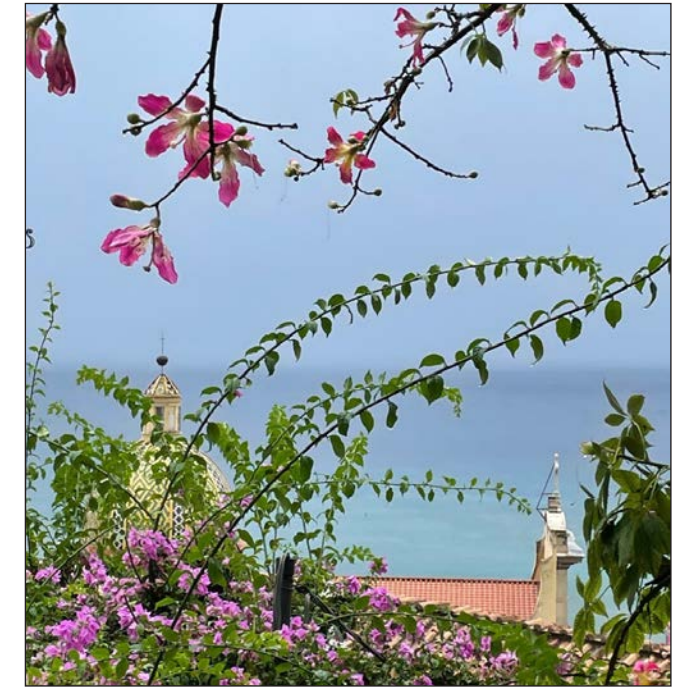
Pompeii, Europe's most compelling archaeological site, locked in ash for centuries, offers a tangible encounter with the ancients. Luckily, Roberta guides us through the forum, coliseum, shops, private homes, and brothels making history come alive. To understand these sprawling, haunting ruins, take a guided tour. After two hours immersed in ancient Pompeii, we stop at Sorrentino Vesuvia, an enchanting family-run vineyard in Vesuvius National Park. Delicate roses mark the rows of vines in volcanic soil, which produces the legendary wine - Lacryma Christi.

Gardens along the Amalfi Coast began as farms, terraced with macere (containment walls). Lemons were first brought west by Alexander the Great's armies from Hesperia and cultivated by Moorish conquerors. Citriculture takes pride of place, as the famed limoncello liqueur attests.



Don't leave Sorrento without a visit to a lemon grove. Agruminato Garden is off the main street, Corso Italia, a lovely city park filled with lemon trees and lots of benches to relax on. It was closed on our visit due to rain on the earthen paths. Still, luckily Giardini di Cataldo was open, a small family-owned lemon grove in the center of town, offering divine tastings of

limoncello. Lemons are yellow gold here. The trick is to use the freshest lemon peel and serve this liqueur at room temperature. Chill it, and the sweetness increases, as does the alcohol content. The most fun at David's gelato class is eating this creamy treat and it is time for dessert. At La Sorgente farm just outside the town, Maria shows us how to make mozzarella, which is scrumptious with our antipasto lunch plate.



For our final day, our tour host rents a van and driver for the hour's drive to experience Positano in the sunshine. John Steinbeck put this alluring seaside town on the map in 1953 with his fabled article in Harper's Bazaar. "Positano bites deep. It is a dream place that isn't quite real when you are there and becomes beckoningly real after you have gone." Some of the gals tipped their toes in the sea. I was fine photographing them, then meandering through the narrow streets, among the shops, art galleries and pastel houses climbing to the heights. I must admit to feeling nostalgic and made a stop at Buco de Baco where I had previously stayed, walking through the turquoise rooms to the balcony overlooking the sea where I'd shared some lovely brunches. Next was Hotel Palazzo Murat for a cappuccino in its flower-filled courtyard behind ancient walls - a respite from the busy streets.

Everywhere on this adventure, I'd been aware of the luscious plant life, breathtaking landscapes, old-world architecture, fabulous food, and friendly people. That's my Italy.

## Waiver, Acknowledgment & Release

When completing the registration form and checking the box, participants in RTOERO District 23 activities acknowledge and agree to the following terms and release RTOERO and District 23.

All participants in RTOERO District 23 events, bus trips or excursions acknowledge and agree that RTOERO, including District 23, North York, will not be responsible for any loss, injury or damage of any nature, including death, howsoever arising in connection with such trip/excursion/ event. Participants are, therefore, hereby advised to carry their own insurance in connection therewith.

In consideration of the participant's attendance on such trip/ excursion or at this event, the participant hereby releases and forever discharges RTOERO, District 23, North York, and their respective directors, officers, members, agents, employees and volunteers (collectively, the "Releasees") from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, and demands (collectively, the "Claims") from any loss, injury or damage of any nature, including death which has arisen or may arise from the participant's attendance on such trip/excursion or at such event, unless such loss, injury or damage has arisen as a result of the sole negligence of one or more of the Releasees.

Any Claims arising out of the participant's attendance on such trip/excursion or at such event will be governed by the laws of the province/territory in Canada in which the participants reside, and the participants consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts in the appropriate province/territory in Canada in any such action.

## Payment Practices

All trips and events advertised in STONY Bridges and requiring a cheque and registration form have a cut-off date. The date is set to enable us to comply with our commitment to pay for the event. All cheques must be postdated to the cut-off date. Make cheques payable as directed on the event advertisement.

### Registration

When completing your registration forms, follow the guidelines listed below:

- A separate cheque is required for each event/ activity.
- Each person's name, email and phone number must be included on each form for each event/ activity.
- When applicable, an RTOERO member may bring ONE guest who pays the advertised cost. If the event is subsidized, additional guests will pay the total fee.

### Cheques

Cheques will be deposited into the bank after the cut-off date. If your cheque has yet to be cashed more than ten days after the cut-off date, please contact Vernon Paige, treasurer, at [vernon.paige@gmail.com](mailto:vernon.paige@gmail.com).

If payment is received before the cut-off date but after the quota for a trip/event has been filled, you will be contacted and asked if you wish to be put on a waiting list. If your ticket request cannot be filled, if you cancel before the cut-off or if payment is received after the cut-off date, your cheque will be shredded.

### Tickets

Tickets, if required, are given out on the day of the performance. If you arrive late, please go to the box office to pick up your tickets(s).

Please note that all our seats are in the theatre's orchestra section. Tickets are assigned in the order in which the requests are received. The earlier you send in your request, the better your seats will be.

Once a ticket has been allocated for you, there will be no refund. Ticket holders are welcome to sell, give or transfer their ticket(s) privately. Any booking can be cancelled before the cut-off date by contacting the organizing convener. Your cheque will be shredded if you cancel an event before the cut-off date.

Cancellations after the cut-off date will be accepted only if we can sell your ticket(s) to someone waitlisted.

Photos and videos taken at any RTOERO District 23, North York event may appear in STONY Bridges, on the website, on social media or at later events.

NAME:	<input type="text"/>	GUEST'S NAME:	<input type="text"/>
EMAIL:	<input type="text"/>	MEMBER:	<input type="checkbox"/> MEMBER: <input type="checkbox"/> NON-MEMBER: <input type="checkbox"/>
PHONE:	<input type="text"/>	# TICKETS:	<input type="text"/> @ \$199.00 EACH   TOTAL: <input type="text"/>
MEMBER:	<input type="checkbox"/> NON-MEMBER: <input type="checkbox"/>		

I have read and agree to the Waiver, Acknowledgment & Release for RTOERO on page 24.

Make cheques payable to **Mary Morton Tours** and mail with registration form no later than Friday, April 5 to **Mary Valtellini**  
762 Clarence St. Woodbridge, Ont. L4L 8V2

## MY FAIR LADY & WINE TOUR in Niagara-on-the-Lake – Thursday, May 23, 2024

Cut off date: Friday, April 5, 2024

### Itinerary

8:30 a.m. Depart from Blessed Trinity Church – 3220 Bayview Ave, Toronto

10:30 a.m. Enjoy three wine tastings at Joseph's Estate Wines. Joseph's is a family-owned winery in the renowned Niagara-on-the-Lake wine district. With an emphasis on quality over quantity, this delightful winery has won numerous national and international awards. Known as the "Best Kept Secret in the Niagara Region" its superlative wines are created on the traditional winemaking principles of knowledge, craftsmanship, and passion.

11:30 a.m. Lunch is included at the Prince of Wales Hotel

2:00 p.m. It's showtime at the Shaw Festival Theatre for My Fair Lady. "This timeless classic has been dazzling audiences since its debut on Broadway in 1956. Based on the play Pygmalion by Bernard Shaw, it's the story of Eliza Doolittle, a cockney flower girl caught in the middle of a bet between Henry Higgins, a professor of phonetics and Colonel Pickering, a fellow linguist. With unforgettable songs such as *On the Street Where You Live*, *I Could Have Danced All Night* and *Wouldn't It Be Lovely?* My Fair Lady is one of the most beloved musicals of all time – and now it's returning to the Shaw!"

7:15 p.m. Approximate return time home.

Rate of \$199.00 includes:

- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Three wine tastings at Joseph's Estate Wines
- Lunch at the Prince of Wales Hotel
- Orchestra seat ticket at the Shaw Festival Theatre for My Fair Lady
- HST & all gratuities

For concerns, contact Mary Valtellini at [mary.valtellini@rogers.com](mailto:mary.valtellini@rogers.com)

Event details, updates, and fillable event registration forms are available on the website at [tinyurl.com/RTO23myFL](http://tinyurl.com/RTO23myFL)



# Annual Meeting and Spring Luncheon

Thursday, June 6, 2024

**The Thornhill Club**  
7994 Yonge Street, Thornhill, ON L4J 1W3  
Free Parking

## 2024 Annual Meeting (AM)

10:00 a.m. – Registration and coffee  
10:30 a.m. – Annual Meeting

All District 23 members are welcome at the Annual Meeting at The Thornhill Club on Thursday, June 6.

The Needlework & Crafts group will hold draws for their handcrafted articles after the luncheon.

Event details and printable registration forms are available on the website at [tinyurl.com/RTO23AM2024](http://tinyurl.com/RTO23AM2024)

## Spring Luncheon

11:30 a.m. – Mingling, credit/debit bar available  
12:00 noon – Lunch served  
(Times are approximate based on the duration of AM)

## Luncheon Cost

\$55.00 per member – \$55.00 per guest  
Those members born in 1954 dine FREE.

Cut-off date: Thursday, May 30, 2024 – registration forms and cheques must be received by this date.

## MENU

Kale & Arugula Salad, with mixed berries, chickpeas, avocado and cashews in a poppy seed dressing

Freshly baked bread & whipped butter

### Choice of Entrée

Pan-fried Chicken Supreme with polenta, seasonal vegetables, tarragon & thyme jus

or

Chicken Cordon Bleu with Swiss cheese, Black Forest ham, herb panko crust, mushroom essence, sweet potatoes and seasonal vegetables

or

Grilled Atlantic Salmon Filet served in a basil-lime cream with herb-roasted fingerling potatoes and seasonal vegetables

or

Vegetable Wellington, roasted Tuscan vegetables wrapped in phyllo pastry and tomato coulis

### Dessert

House-made vanilla ice cream served in a chocolate tulip cup with fresh berries

Coffee or Tea

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

- Book** Book Club – 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- Bridge** Bridge Club – 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- EXEC** Executive Meetings – 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- Java** Have-a-Java – 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- MBW** Milk Bag Weaving – 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
- N&C** Needlework & Crafts – 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- Pole** Nordic Pole Walking – 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
- Stroll** North York Strollers – 10:00 a.m. - noon +
- Tech** Technology (e-devices) – 10:30 a.m. - noon

Cut off dates ✂

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- High Tea – Wed. April 3, 1:30 p.m.  
Register by Fri. March 1; details e-Newsletter
- Pollinators Talk – Wed. April 10, 10:30 a.m.  
Register by Fri. April 5; details page 18
- My Fair Lady – Thurs. May 23, depart 8:30 a.m.  
Register by Fri. April 5; details page 25
- Annual Meeting – Thurs. June 6, 10:30 a.m.;  
details pages 5, 26
- Spring Luncheon – Thurs. June 6, 11:45 a.m.  
Register by Thurs. May 30; details page 26

NAME

EMAIL

PHONE

I WAS BORN IN 1954

GUEST'S NAME

<p>MEMBER ENTRÉE PLEASE CIRCLE:</p> <p>Chicken Supreme Chicken Cordon Bleu Atlantic Salmon Vegetable Wellington</p>	<p>GUEST ENTRÉE PLEASE CIRCLE:</p> <p>Chicken Supreme Chicken Cordon Bleu Atlantic Salmon Vegetable Wellington</p>
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DIETARY NEEDS:

For concerns, contact Mildred Frank at 416-221-5328 or [speakingfrankly@rogers.com](mailto:speakingfrankly@rogers.com).

I have read and agree to the *Waiver, Acknowledgment & Release for RTOERO* on page 24.

# TICKETS:  @ \$55.00 EACH | TOTAL:

Make cheque payable to **RTOERO North York** and mail registration form and cheque no later than Thursday, May 30 to  
Mildred Frank,  
Suite 705, 505 Cummer Avenue,  
Toronto, ON M2K 2L8

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 ✂	2
3	4	5 Bridge	6	7 Stroll	8	9
10	11	12 Bridge	13 EXEC	14	15 Tech	16
17	18	19 Bridge	20 Tech	21 Tech	22 Tech	23
24	25	26 Bridge	27 Tech	28	29	30
31						

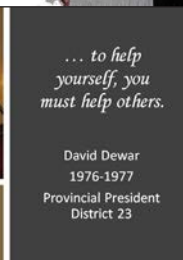
May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Bridge	9 EXEC	10 Tech	11
12	13	14 Bridge	15 Tech	16 Tech	17 Tech	18
19	20	21 Bridge	22 Tech	23 Tech	24 Tech	25
26	27	28 Bridge	29 Tech	30 ✂	31	

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5 Annual Meeting	6
7	8	9 Bridge	10 EXEC	11 Annual Meeting	12 Annual Meeting	13
14	15	16 Bridge	17 Tech	18 Tech	19 Tech	20
21	22	23 Bridge	24 Tech	25 Tech	26 Tech	27
28	29	30 Bridge				

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5 Annual Meeting	6 Annual Meeting	7 Annual Meeting	8
9	10	11 Bridge	12 EXEC	13 Annual Meeting	14 Annual Meeting	15
16	17	18 Bridge	19 Tech	20 Tech	21 Tech	22
23	24	25 Bridge	26 Tech	27 Tech	28 Tech	29
30						

# Old Friends and Reminiscing

Elisa Arciero, Archivist



I was pleased to assemble the PowerPoint presentation for District 23, North York's 50th Anniversary celebration. If you have not had an opportunity to see it, please visit our website and take some time to read about our history and the amazing educators who have made it all possible.

I also retrieved and displayed all the old photo albums where former members carefully labelled photos and recorded events. Many members took time to go through these books and enjoyed seeing old friends and reminiscing.



## Change of Postal / Email Address or Other Information

Please send changes to: RTOERO, 18 Spadina Road, Suite 300, Toronto, ON, M2R 2S7 or to [membership@rtoero.ca](mailto:membership@rtoero.ca); or call the RTOERO Membership Section at 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888 or fax: 416-962-1061. This will ensure your continued receipt of STONY Bridges, Renaissance, your RTOERO annual diary and other RTOERO mailings.

For questions about distribution of STONY Bridges, contact Gerard MacNeil at [g.macneil@bell.net](mailto:g.macneil@bell.net) or 416-481-7411. For the most efficient/rapid response, contact Gerard via the email address provided.

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