

# STONY Bridges



RTO  
ERO

District 23  
North York

Issue 133

November 2021



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- » "Orchid Misting Memories" on page 6
- » "Urban Wildlife Challenges" on page 20
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## In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that 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 updates from July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021.

Alan Beswick, Susie Bruce, Helen Campbell, Jacqueline Dorland, Ivan Eryavec, Vernon Farrell, Donald Felker, Balbir Kaur, Patricia Legge, Isabelle Leibovitch, Barbara Lloyd-Tomlinson, Jane Markowitz, Avis Oxby, Mary-Lou Oyler, M. Adele Patterson, Eileen Prettyman, Joan Stevenson, Lynn Storrey, Margaret Vitelli, Sonia Yaghdjian



## Welcome New D23 Members by John Giannone - Convener

The Executive welcomes all the new members who have recently joined RTOERO District 23 and invite them to become active participants in all our activities. As of September 30, 2021, RTOERO District 23 has a total membership of 2793 members.

The following information was taken from RTOERO Office's monthly updates from July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021

**July:** Elisa Arciero, Liliana Compagnone, Joanne DiCesare, Fortunato Gratta, Rita Mammone, Richard Storrey

**August:** Joël Beaudoin, Mario Vasquez, Frank Vitelli

**September:** Amalia Eryavec

### Cover Picture

Our charming Fall cover picture has been graciously provided to us by Ann Brokelman. Her nature blog can be found at:

[www.naturephotosbyann.blogspot.com/](http://www.naturephotosbyann.blogspot.com/)

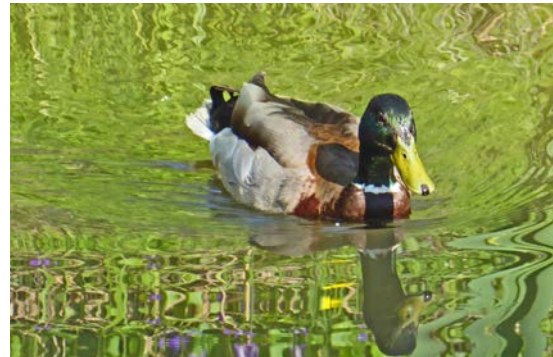


photo by Wendy Nurgitz, Member

## A MYSTIC SUMMER

*The starry, starry skies above  
All the sacred universes that a mystic  
summer seeks: The far-off hills, dark and  
brooding  
And all the holy silence of a nighttime's  
wildernesses... Echoes across all the holy  
places,  
The soul at rest...*

*All the secret places of the heart,  
All humankind's haunted vision, the eternal  
hope,  
The holy promise,  
Songs of endurance in a troubled, and trou-  
bling world...*

*The falling away into a peace filled silence...  
The following wave, the bend and flow,  
The tumbled down waters the call and the  
cry: Our holy awakening in the dream filled  
wilderness of an unknowable universe...*

*Step by step the poignant realization  
Of a world's full beauty,  
Our most holy experiences: the sacredness  
of our lives; The great beauty in our love of  
others,  
Our difficult search for freedom, for  
meaning,  
The courage to be...*

*The tragedy in our many losses,  
All the world's pain,  
All wild nature: its glory, its savagery... The  
great majesty, the sacred wonder... The  
ineluctable mystery: our lives as lived.*



by Bev Gorbet, Member

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## Submissions

RTOERO District 23, North York welcomes submissions for STONY Bridges from members. Do you have a story to tell, an experience to share or a poem you have written? Consider submitting your work for publication. Please include name, address, and telephone number. Articles should be from 400 to 1200 words in length. Up to 10 photos are also welcome (minimum 300 dpi in jpg or png format). Please send photos as attachments and do not reduce the size. We reserve the right to edit, condense, crop, or reject letters, photos, or other submissions. See the full guidelines [here](#).

Send submissions to: Maureen Capotosto at [mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca](mailto:mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca). STONY Bridges is published for its members in March, August, and November by the Retired Teachers of Ontario District 23, North York.

**The due date for material for the next issue is Friday, January 14, 2022**



# President's Message

by Mary Valtellini, President

"The best way out is always through."

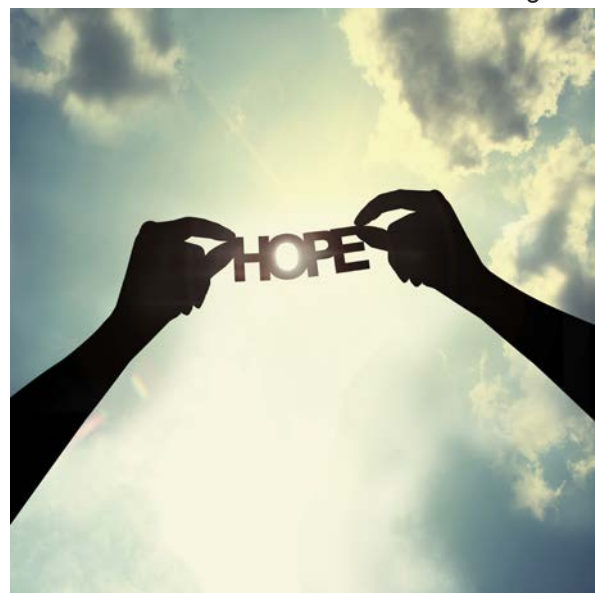
As we go to press, I cannot believe that we are in the midst of a fourth Covid wave. I so wished it would be over to return to some normalcy in our lives like get-togethers, travel, big family weddings. The list is long and varied for many. I continue to have hope that better things are on the horizon for all of us! We need to continue staying positive and participating in safe activities, even if it means more Zoom calls to stay connected.

I wanted to welcome our new retirees to District 23. It was lovely to connect with you, albeit through Zoom. It was wonderful to see familiar faces from my former life!! Please keep spreading the good news on retirement and our District. We hope that by next year we can have an in-person celebration. We do love to celebrate as a District!!

Although Covid has restricted our in-person activities, we have continued to reach out to our members by making dozens of phone calls as a District. We are a committed group, and we will continue activities that can be held safely via Zoom. These activities consist of e-Devices, Needlework and Crafts, Have-a-Java, Book Club, Champagne Breakfast, Speaker Series and Executive meetings.

We have a few members who are not connected to the web. Therefore, you will find our magazine STONY Bridges full of helpful information. STONY Bridges has printed submissions from our members on travel, poetry, and experiences on summer activities. It's great reading and another way of identifying and reliving similar experiences. The RTOERO Office has also provided us with Free Webinars and a plethora of information to keep us informed and connected. Please visit our district website ([district23.rto-ero.org](http://district23.rto-ero.org)) as well as the RTOERO website ([rtoero.ca](http://rtoero.ca)). If you do not find what you are looking for, then send me an email.

I recently attended the President's Workshop, where we reviewed the results from a national survey administered by RTOERO Office in 2021. The reason for sharing this information is to demonstrate that, as a national organization, we are on the right track.



These are the highlights from the 2021 - member feedback project.

There were 8,723 email respondents and 65 phone interviews. The summary indicated that the reasons for joining RTOERO (essential + very important) was to:

- get RTOERO insurance (76%); to access member benefits (58%); to learn/stay informed about issues relevant to me (50%)
- 86% of members believe that "RTOERO... is an honest and ethical organization and provides excellent customer service to its members."

We then had an opportunity to review our District 23 findings and compared it to the overall respondents: They were very positive and encouraging!!

- 298 District members responded
- Activities members engaged in:
  - »84% read the district newsletter;
  - »78% read district emails;
  - »30% attended online district events;
  - »15% follow district social media;

- Current volunteers – 26 + Goodwill Volunteers who call and send cards (This we need to grow!)

Covid has placed us at a disadvantage to engage more of our district members. We are hoping that you consider finding ways to contribute and join our district activities. We are open to new ideas and activities to serve our members best. A comment that sums up what we are about comes from an anonymous member who states, "RTO offers such diverse activities, that all members are able to connect. Much camaraderie is therefore experienced. And Senior well-being is always at the forefront." Would you please keep spreading the word, as nothing is better than personal endorsements?

Wishing you and your families and friends the best of health!! I look forward to the day when we can meet and hold in-person events. Please reach out to connect!  
[president23@districts.rtoero.org](mailto:president23@districts.rtoero.org)

– Robert Frost

## 2021 Membership Survey North York District 23 Report



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

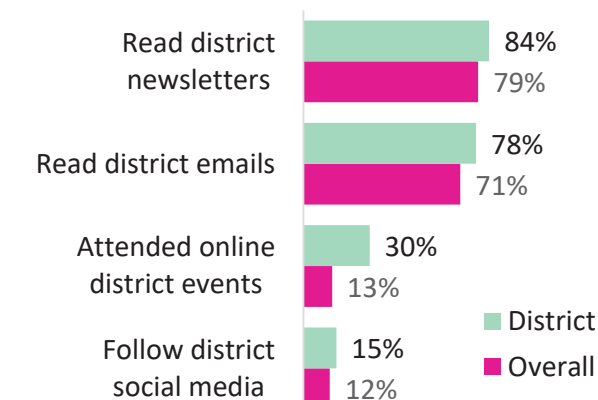
### Number of Survey Respondents

Overall = 8723      District = 298

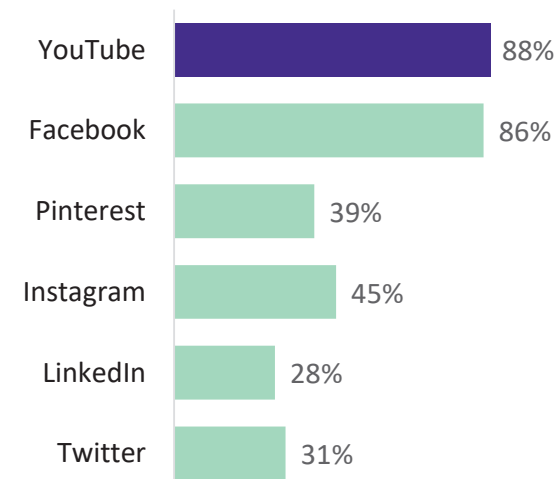
### Length of Membership in Years

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

### Which district activities did you engage in?



### Types of Social Media Used



### Current Volunteers

Overall n = 540  
District n = 26

Volunteers enjoy the social aspect of volunteering

### District voices

*I appreciate the initiative to have RTO persons call members to check on their welfare.*

*I like Stony Bridges, published by District 23 - they include many poems, photos, articles and travel pieces by members.*

*RTO offers such diverse activities, that all members are able to connect. Much camaraderie is therefore experienced. And Senior well-being is always at the forefront.*

Report prepared by: **CHRISTINE FRANK AND ASSOCIATES**  
RESEARCH & EVALUATION

# Calendar of Events

(W) Webinar - (ZM) Zoom Sessions

## November

- 3 Paths to Wellness for Older Persons: Body, Mind, Spirit (W)
- 5 e-Devices Basic (ZM)
- 10 Executive Meeting (ZM)
- 12 e-Devices (ZM)
- 16 The Women's Age Lab & gendered ageism with focus on older women (W)
- 17 Have-a-Java (ZM)
- 18 Needlework & Crafts (ZM)
- 26 e-Devices (ZM)
- 24 Book Club (ZM)

## December

- 3 e-Devices Basic (ZM)
- 8 Executive Meeting (ZM)
- 10 e-Devices (ZM)
- 15 Have-a-Java (ZM)
- 16 Needlework & Crafts (ZM)

## January

- 7 e-Devices (ZM)
- 12 Executive Meeting (ZM)
- 14 e-Devices Basic (ZM)
- 21 e-Devices (ZM)
- 19 Have-a-Java (ZM)
- 20 Needlework & Crafts (ZM)
- 26 Book Club (ZM)

## February

- 4 e-Devices (ZM)
- 9 Executive Meeting (ZM)
- 11 e-Devices (ZM) Basic
- 16 Have-a-Java (ZM)
- 17 Needlework & Crafts (ZM)
- 18 e-Devices (ZM)
- 23 Book Club (ZM)

## March

- 4 e-Devices (ZM) Basic
- 9 Executive Meeting (ZM)
- 11 e-Devices (ZM) Basic
- 16 Have-a-Java (ZM)
- 17 Needlework & Crafts (ZM)
- 18 e-Devices (ZM)
- 30 Book Club (ZM)



Orchids by Elaine Sugar

## Orchid Misting Memories

*A child, a daughter  
A niece enloped  
And so the orchids droop.*

*There's sight, hope  
With trials of pain  
And so the orchids wane.*

*This lurking menace  
Abducts to keep  
And oh – oh the orchids weep.*

*If memories, tears in time  
Keep mists of love alive,  
Might our orchid hearts survive?*



*by Joyce Arnsby née Farrow,  
Member*



# Goodwill Report

by Gwen Bumbury, Goodwill Convener

“Never underestimate the difference you can make in the lives of others. Step forward, reach out and help. Reach out to someone that might need a lift.”

– Pablo Valle

## Welcome!

A warm welcome to the newly retired members. District 23, North York is a vibrant organization that offers a wide range of activities and events. We encourage members to become involved in the ones that interest you. Read about these in our **STONY** Bridges magazine.

## Time to Reach-out

Although many of us had hoped that COVID 19 would be over by Fall, this has not happened. The lockdowns, social and physical distancing and the ongoing uncertainty have left some people feeling more anxious, depressed, and lonely. Instead, it has made us more diligent when it comes to our interactions with others.

As we look forward to the Fall and Winter, District 23, North York plans to continue the phone call initiative started more than one year ago. A committed group of callers will attempt to contact more senior members late Fall and throughout Winter. It is a known fact that social isolation and loneliness impact those who live alone or are isolated. Maintaining contact with our members has proven in the past to be invaluable and meaningful, as many have expressed.

I look forward to working with our dedicated group of volunteers to connect with our members. Thank you, volunteers, for your continued support.

## Cards and Recognition

Every month, the Goodwill Committee continues to mail birthday cards to members reaching their 80th, 85th, 90th, 95th and over. In addition to sending birthday cards to members, we honour these members who are celebrating a significant birthday by donating annually to the Breakfast Programs of the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

We also remember members who have passed away and send the appropriate acknowledgement to the deceased member's family.

A donation was made to the RTOERO Foundation in honour of District 23 members who have died during the current year.

## Reminder

If you know of anyone who is sick or shut-in and should receive a Get Well or Thinking of You card, do not hesitate to contact one of the Goodwill members: Xenia Cooper, Maria Fernandes, and Kathy Shorney or District 23 Executive.

Is there a change in your contact information? Remember to inform RTOERO Membership Department by email [membership@rtoero.ca](mailto:membership@rtoero.ca) or call 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888 to update your mailing and email addresses. Updating your information avoids the return of mail and ensures accurate contact information.





## Yes! There is Light at the End of the COVID Tunnel!

by Merv Mascarenhas, Editor

“We have almost — almost — gotten past COVID. Just try to do the things you need to do, and maybe hold back on doing the things that you just want to do.”

— Deputy PM Chrystia Freeland

The Habs did not bring back Lord Stanley, but our youth shone at the US Tennis Open. The women’s singles of the US Open 2021 were historic. Emma Raducanu became the first tennis player to win a Grand Slam tournament starting from qualifiers after the straight sets win over her peer Leylah Fernandez, 19. While we were rooting for Leylah, we could console ourselves that Emma was born in Canada. And for Felix Auger-Aliassime, 21, who did so well in the Men’s up to his semi-final’s loss to Daniil Medvedev, who went on to beat Joko and take the Men’s Finals. The future is bright for these two young tennis stars. Canada has vaulted to become a Tennis Powerhouse to reckon with now with Bianca Andreescu, Denis Shapovalov and Milos Raonic in our wheelhouse, too.



Lewes Beach, Delaware - Merv Mascarenhas

To my surprise, 2021 has exceeded our expectations in terms of travelling in the Time of COVID. We pushed our limits by renting a cottage in Drag Lake in the Haliburton Highlands during the week of Canada Day – it was a delightful experience sharing it with family members we had not seen since the shutdown in March 2020. An Air Canada one-day FLASH SALE saw us booking our tickets to Vancouver for late July to visit our daughter. She decided to take a break from Toronto and accept a job at Vancouver General Hospital ostensibly for a year. Our daughter in the Washington DC area invited us for a week at the beach (Rehoboth, DE) in September, and we were off in a shot.

Our preference would have been to drive down, but President Biden did not reciprocate Canada’s welcome to vaccinated Americans until much too late. We enjoyed a delightful week-long family reunion in Lewes, DE, which proudly claims to be “The First Town in The First State.” Delaware Bay is better suited to our grandchildren aged 5 and 3 than the breakers at neighbouring Rehoboth Beach on the Atlantic. After our younger children left for home, we stayed in Virginia for another three weeks of doting over our granddaughters – lots of lost time to make up.

Yes, we did vote - through mail-in ballots that worked flawlessly – Thanks, Elections Canada. Ontario’s belated vaccine passports have kicked in, and we are looking forward to a safer Ontario,

In-person, RTOERO meetings will likely not occur until 2022, but that will not get in the way of our virtual gatherings – eDevices, Needlework and Crafts, Book Club, Have-a-Java, seminars, and our Champagne Breakfast in September. Interestingly, this was our first Champagne Breakfast, thanks to Zoom,

which allowed us to attend from Virginia, where we spend most Septembers celebrating our granddaughter’s birthdays. Thanks, Mildred Frank, and the team, for this memorable welcome to our new District 23 members.

I suspect that some of our groups may never return to in-person meetings in the new post-COVID norm – it’s much too comfortable to roll out of bed in your jammies into an e-Devices or Have-a-Java meeting with a café au lait

and our favourite treat. Besides, we can be wherever and still participate fully. We have already begun discussions on how to host in-person meetings with remote users connecting via Zoom, but the logistics are challenging. Many of our meeting sites do not have Internet connectivity, and interaction between in-person and remote participants could be awkward. We shall continue our investigations.

I, for one, enjoy our recent COVID editions of STONY Bridges– the travelogues, poems, and human-interest stories make each one a keeper. Being able to relive past trips through the eyes of a fellow traveller rekindles our memories and doubles the pleasure. Same for the Book Club that heightens our reading experience.

We hope you enjoy this edition of STONY Bridges. It has been a challenge to top our 44-page blockbuster August 2021 edition. My thanks to Assistant Editor Maureen Capotosto, her partner in crime Karen Quinn, and Gerard MacNeil, who manages the logistics of getting printed copies to your mailboxes.



## What’s the Buzz? — tell me what’s happening!

by Karen Quinn, Communications Convener

“Good communication is the bridge between confusion and clarity.”

— Nat Turner

On Wednesday, September 22, the first day of Autumn, we hosted our annual Champagne Breakfast and welcomed some of our newest members and RTOERO Chair, Rich Prophet to the ZOOM meeting. Several key bits of information were provided and will be shared here again as a review for all. We’ve included the member names for all committees and our Communications addresses.

### Executive Table Officers for 2021-2022

**Mary Valtellini, President**  
[president23@districts.rtoero.ca](mailto:president23@districts.rtoero.ca)  
Gwen Scriven, Past President  
Karen Quinn, 1<sup>st</sup> VP  
Maureen Capotosto, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP  
Vern Paige, Treasurer  
Olga McKenzie, Secretary

### Executive Members for 2021-2022

Archives ~ Mary Cairo  
Benefits ~ Gwen Scriven  
Book Club ~ Sylvia Skippen  
Bridge ~ Alan Ward  
Communications ~ Karen Quinn  
Community Grants ~ Cheryl Paige  
e-Devices ~ Vern Paige  
Goodwill ~ Gwen Bumbury  
Governance ~ George Meek  
Have – a – Java ~ Elizabeth Clarke  
Member-at-Large ~ Danielle Ingster  
Member-at-Large ~ Valerie Sterling  
Membership ~ John Giannone  
North York Strollers ~ Joanne Famiglietti  
Needlework/Crafts ~ Margaret Schuman  
Associate STONY Bridges Editor ~ Maureen Capotosto  
Newsletter Distribution ~ Gerard MacNeil  
Photography ~ Vern Paige  
Pole Walking ~ Kathy Shorney  
Political Advocacy ~ Kathy Shorney  
Recruitment ~ Mary Ellen Lawless  
RTOERO Foundation ~ Sara Di Nallo  
Social Committee ~ Mildred Frank  
STONY Bridges, Twitter, Webmaster ~ Merv Mascarenhas  
Trips, Excursions ~ Mary Valtellini

### Why do we keep reminding members to Update their Personal Information?

Please send **all** changes (home address, email address, telephone number) to:

**RTOERO** which is the **ONLY** contact. This will avoid any confusion about your information and ensure all RTOERO mailings and communications reach you promptly.

District 23 cannot input your changes.

**Phone:** [416-962-9463](tel:416-962-9463) or

**Email:** [membership@rto-ero.org](mailto:membership@rto-ero.org)

Below, find contact information for our Social Media sites:

### Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict23NorthYork>



This site is closely connected with the information directly linked to RTOERO information. It also features upcoming events open to members online such as webinars and event registration.

We also post STONY Bridges only and all our monthly activities in the monthly e-Newsletters. This is the place to check for current activities if there is a rapid change in District activities.

### District 23 Website:

<https://district23.rto-ero.org/>

This website is our District 23 location for all news pertinent to our North York members. It is one of the 51 Districts across Canada with RTOERO’s non-profit organization. Merv Mascarenhas can’t wait to begin his updates to the site when the new design is released. All e-Newsletters are posted on the site. Every issue of STONY Bridges can also be found there.

The site also provides “a home” for Vern Paige’s e-Devices course and provides a fabulous list of resources for our members to use to find connections for everything from

travel links, government information to agencies for seniors to connect with for assistance.

**Twitter:**

[www.twitter.com/@rto23\\_NorthYork](http://www.twitter.com/@rto23_NorthYork)



Merv has the handle on our Twitter account for rapid and very current-information. Our Twitter account will keep you informed by:

- Tweeting Breaking News and new content on our web-site
- Retweeting curated content related to seniors' matters,

education and health issues.

**WhatsApp:**

This WhatsApp group supports Vern's eDevices group by providing members an opportunity to share information as it happens between meetings. If you wish to join the eDevices group or this WhatsApp group, please send an email to Vern Paige at [Vernon.Paige@gmail.com](mailto:Vernon.Paige@gmail.com).



# Bridge Report

by Alan Ward, Convener

With no immediate resumption of our RTO face-to-face activities likely to happen in 2021, Bridge continues to be restricted to online games for those who need their regular fix and who are willing to gaze at a small screen for hours on end.

For me, it is a time to read and study in hopes of being a more difficult opponent once regular competitions are again possible. For now, consider how the following hands might have been bid and what was the most likely outcome.

**Kaleidoscope**  
 A myriad of prisms,  
 Ever-shifting shapes,  
 Dazzling colours  
 Edged in sombre borders,  
 Tinkling and rustling  
 Like taffeta dresses.  
 Miniature cathedral windows,  
 Radiating inspired artistry.  
 Cascading patterns  
 Tumbling with delight:  
 Celebrating eternity  
 With joy.

*by Carole A. Martyn, Member*

## Bridge Heroes

*Here's to Sue, the one who knew.  
 Playing the ten, the Jack only when.*

*A few guiles, teased by smiles.  
 A glint of sass, golden not brass.*

*A woman of charm, beauty and fun.  
 Always smiling. Problems? None.*

*Unknown the Olympic task.  
 Unknown the strength she'd amass.*

*She came with pain.  
 She came with cane.*

*Ah, bridge heroes ...*

*Gordon Downie goes "Hip". Sue's glow stays lit.  
 She's radiant sun, rather than moon.  
 Seven decades, gone too soon.*

*by Joyce Arnsby née Farrow, Member*

Dealer: East  
Love All

**Hand 1**

♠ A Q 7 3	♠ 8 2	
♥ A K Q 4	♥ —	
♦ 7 4	♦ A Q J 3	
♣ K 7 5	♣ A Q J 8 6 4 2	

	♠ K J 10 9 4	
	♥ 10 9 7 5 3 2	
	♦ 5	
	♣ 9	

	♠ 6 5	
	♥ J 8 6	
	♦ K 10 9 8 6 2	
	♣ 10 3	

Dealer: South  
N/S Vul.

**Hand 2**

♠ 9 4	♠ K J 10 7 3	
♥ Q J 9 8 7 6 3	♥ —	
♦ 5 2	♦ A K Q 10 8 7	
♣ K 2	♣ 10 5	

	♠ A	
	♥ A K 10 4 2	
	♦ 4	
	♣ Q J 7 6 4 3	

	♠ Q 8 6 5 2	
	♥ 5	
	♦ J 9 6 3	
	♣ A 9 8	

Dealer: West  
E/W Vul.

**Hand 3**

♠ K J 10 9 7 5 2	♠ 4 3	
♥ 9 2	♥ A K 8	
♦ A K 3	♦ Q J 6 4	
♣ 5	♣ K Q 7 3	

	♠ Q 6	
	♥ Q 10 7 6 3	
	♦ 10	
	♣ A 10 8 6 4	

	♠ A 8	
	♥ J 5 4	
	♦ 9 8 7 5 2	
	♣ J 9 2	

Dealer: North  
N/S Vul.

**Hand 4**

♠ A Q 4 3	♠ 10	
♥ —	♥ 10 9 8 7 6	
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♦ Q J	
♣ —	♣ Q 9 8 7 6	

	♠ 9 8 7 6 5 2	
	♥ 5 4 3 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ 5 4 2	

	♠ K J	
	♥ A K Q J	
	♦ A K	
	♣ A K J 10 3	

Dealer: North  
Love All

**Hand 5**

♠ 9 6 4	♠ A K 7 5 3 2	
♥ 9 7 6	♥ A K	
♦ 10 9 7	♦ A 5 2	
♣ 9 4 3 2	♣ K Q	

	♠ J 10 8	
	♥ 10 8 5	
	♦ 8 4	
	♣ J 8 7 6 5	

	♠ Q	
	♥ Q J 4 3 2	
	♦ K Q J 6 3	
	♣ A 10	

Dealer: North  
N/S Vul.

**Hand 6**

♠ K 3	♠ 9 7 4	
♥ —	♥ A Q 9 6 5 2	
♦ A K J 10 9 8 6 4	♦ —	
♣ 8 6 4	♣ K J 3 2	

	♠ 2	
	♥ 10 7 3	
	♦ Q 7 3 2	
	♣ A Q 10 7 5	

	♠ A Q J 10 8 6 5	
	♥ K J 8 4	
	♦ 5	
	♣ 9	

**Hand 1.** Both pairs have 11 tricks against best defence. 7D by South will make if West leads a heart.  
**Hand 2.** West preempts 3H; North's 4H bid shows 2-suiter, What West lead will defeat 6S by South?  
**Hand 3.** West declares at 4S. N leads 4 of spades, S wins Ace and returns a trump. Down 1.

**Hand 4.** As South, wouldn't you hate defending an unbeatable grand slam in spades by EW?  
**Hand 5.** NS have 38 HCP. Would you believe even a 6C contract can be made?  
**Hand 6.** EW outbid NS 6H bid and declare at 7D. Will North find the killer lead (a spade)?



# Benefits Report

by Gwen Scriven, Benefits Convener

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

– Publilius Syrus

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

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

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

## Successful Ageing: What it Means for Older Adults

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



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

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

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

## Tips to Improve Your Memory

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

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

1. **Include physical activity in your daily routine** - Physical activity increases blood flow to your whole body, including your brain. This might help keep your memory sharp. If you don’t have time for a full workout, squeeze in a few 10-minute walks throughout the day.
2. **Stay mentally active** - Just as physical activity helps keep your body in shape, mentally stimulating activities help keep your brain in shape — and might keep memory loss at bay. Do crossword puzzles. Play bridge. Take alternate routes when driving. Learn to play a musical instrument. Volunteer at a local school or community organization.
3. **Socialize regularly** - Social interaction helps ward off depression and stress, which can contribute to memory loss.
4. **Get organized** - You’re more likely to forget things if your home is cluttered and your notes are in disarray.



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

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



Source: Mayo Clinic, March 2021  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging/in-depth/memory-loss/art-20046518>

## Make Walking More Fun

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

as their primary mode of transportation. Despite its waning popularity among older adults, walking has many positives.

**Try Nordic walking:** Nordic walking uses poles that look like those used in cross country skiing. It is beneficial in that it involves the muscles from your lower body and those from your arms and upper back to move the poles. Research has shown that Nordic walking (compared to regular walking) burns more calories and is perceived as less strenuous.



**Listen to music while you walk:** When you're walking and hear a catchy song, does the music encourage you to step up the pace so that you're moving in time to the beat? Listening to music while walking has been shown to help improve walking speed and «gait» (pattern and manner of walking), which are important for optimal ageing. Choose music you like with a distinct and steady rhythm, making sure the volume still allows you to hear traffic and other noise around you.

**Walk with someone else:** Walking with others can improve blood pressure, heart rate, body fat, fitness, and walking speed, among other benefits. During the pandemic, gathering with others outside of your household is not recommended, but if you live with others, walking with those in your home can help motivate you.

**Use wearable technology to record performance:** Wearable technologies, including simple pedometers to multi-function devices, are popular among people trying to lose weight, become fit, and improve overall health. They can track your distance and heart rate and encourage you to be more active. If you are an avid walker or are looking for something to keep you accountable, a wearable device could help.

Source: McMaster Optimal Aging Portal, February 2021  
<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/hitting-the-headlines/detail/hitting-the-headlines/2021/02/16/4-simple-ways-to-make-walking-more-fun>



The RTOERO Foundation is inviting you to **Chime In**.

**Chime In** is a regularly scheduled, weekly chat, for RTOERO members to engage in open discussion and social connection with one another.

**Chime In** launches on October 6, 2021. Foundation volunteers will host an open conversation hour on Zoom every Wednesday from 1 to 2 p.m. EST. You can join using Zoom or you can call in by phone.

Follow the link button below to register now for the program. You only need to register once to gain access to each weekly session, but you are not obligated to attend every week. You are free to **Chime In** as often as you wish.

**Chime In** is a platform for open conversation and we hope you enjoy the chance to connect with other RTOERO members and even find new friends.

We can't wait for you to join us in October as we all **Chime In**.

### REGISTER:

<https://tinyurl.com/RTOChimeIn>

- Oct 6, 2021 01:00 PM
- Oct 13, 2021 01:00 PM
- Oct 20, 2021 01:00 PM
- Oct 27, 2021 01:00 PM
- Nov 3, 2021 01:00 PM
- Nov 10, 2021 01:00 PM
- Nov 17, 2021 01:00 PM
- Nov 24, 2021 01:00 PM
- Dec 1, 2021 01:00 PM
- Dec 8, 2021 01:00 PM
- Dec 15, 2021 01:00 PM

Time shows in Eastern Time (US and Canada)



## Webmaster Report

by Merv Mascarenhas, Webmaster

*"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."*

*– Mahatma Gandhi*

Our District 23 will transition, when it is our turn, to a new website over the next two years. The phase-in of this initiative began with the new Districts formed across Canada. Lori Hunter has joined RTOERO as its eLearning Specialist – she will assist with responding to ICT issues. She will create an eLearning curriculum to help with training district webmasters on the new platform. LearnDash (<https://www.learndash.com/>), a WordPress learning management system (LMS), is being considered for the learning platform.

If you wish to get a glimpse of our future website, please visit the District 4 Sudbury, Manitoulin website at <https://district4.rtoero.ca/>.

What does this mean for you?

- A new shiny district website with lots of glitz, glamour and the new EROERO branding with its bold, vibrant colours that we have become familiar with at the parent RTOERO website and publications for over a year;
- A new URL for the website, but the existing URL should automatically redirect us to the new website – the new URL will likely look like <https://district23.rtoero.ca>; and
- A website that is accessible, i.e., compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) <https://www.aoda.ca>.

Beyond this, the promise is that the new website will be easier to navigate and find information and offer new functionality to assist you. We might even be able to allow you to register for in-person events and pay for them through the website without having to rummage around the home for your lost cheque book (does anyone still use cheques?) and a postage stamp.

Like moving into a new home, this will allow us to declutter, weed out the stuff that we no longer need and experience the rebirth of our district website. Since RTOERO Office has indicated that existing content will not be automatically migrated, it will be up to us to decide what will be moved to the new website and left behind. Some of the things that I think should be kept are:

- Our collection of past issues of STONY Bridges dating back to September 2003
- Activities going back to Fall 2019

- Annual Meeting Reports
- Previous Governance Document (Constitution)
- E-Devices website resources
- Pictures and videos.

If there is anything that we have missed or something that you wish included on the website, please provide us with your feedback through the Contact Us (<https://district23.rtoero.org/district-contact-us>) webpage.

Our goal for the new district website will continue to be a one-stop GoTo place for all information related to RTOERO District 23, North York. We will not duplicate information available on the parent RTOERO website but will make navigation a seamless experience for you.

Since Vern Paige's e-Devices group has been so successful, we hope to post his slide decks, meeting notes and resources on the new website so that those who miss a meeting can still access them, and those who are memory challenged like me can easily retrieve tidbits that elude us.

The Toronto District Webmasters have banded together to collaborate as we navigate these uncharted waters.

*P.S. If you have not done so yet, we encourage you to use the Refer a friend page (<https://tinyurl.com/RTOERO23refer>) on the RTOERO website to invite colleagues in the education sector to join RTOERO for FREE until they retire.*

*This is the best way to grow our membership and do your friends a favour.*

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





# Memories of Beautiful British Columbia

by Merv Mascarenhas, Member

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

– Nelson Mandela

**Feeling Hot Hot Hot!** This Merrymen song best described British Columbia this past summer where air conditioning is non-existent because opening your window was all that you needed to cool off in the past. A one-day Air Canada Seat Sale had us flying in July to beautiful British Columbia where Joanna, our youngest had moved to for a “year” last October. Add to the drought, fire, and smoke new COVID hotspots in the interior and you have the makings for an interesting vacation.

## Victoria

Imagine my panic when the 5-minute warning blares out and I walk out of the terminal building at Tsawwassen through a different door to find the empty parking lot now filled with ten lanes of identical black SUVs. How I lamented that washroom break! I literally had to walk to the head of the lines and then walk forwards looking for our rental. Found it just in the nick of time.



BC Ferry, Tsawwassen - Merv Mascarenhas

Despite the drought, Victoria was a sea of colourful cascading flowers and luxuriant flora.



Victoria Harbour - Merv Mascarenhas



Memorial to honour the children who died in residential schools - Merv Mascarenhas

The findings of the TRC were evident in the capital of BC, from the sad display of children’s shoes in front of Parliament Buildings to the BC Museum that showcased The Indigenous Collections representing 10,000 years of history from across the province, celebrating the diversity and resilience of First Nations cultures in BC. They broadened and deepened our understanding of our Indigenous peoples – their cultures and languages.



Leaside Wildcats, Victoria Harbour - M. Mascarenhas

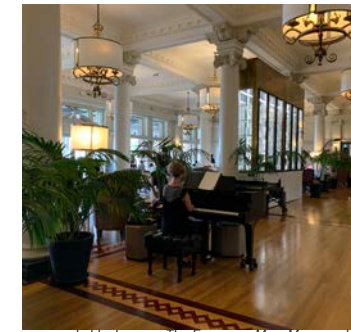
Pickle Pub Crawl on Water Taxis - Merv Mascarenhas

Joanna’s Leaside hockey buddy, Steph Field, suggested we do the Pickle Pub Crawl – a drink fest with a difference. You criss-cross the harbour in these quaint little tugboat-like



Parliament Buildings, Victoria - Merv Mascarenhas

ferries from one pub to another where you enjoy a free app with a pint of a variety of local brews. Near midnight we were surprised to run into a raucous street festival near the iconic Johnson Street Bridge which is Canada’s largest single-leaf bascule bridge. Victoria is not a sleepy town!



Lobby Lounge, The Empress - Merv Mascarenhas



High Tea at The Empress - Merv Mascarenhas

The Sunday morning High Tea at the Empress was unforgettable. We were treated like royalty in the elegant Lobby Lounge with a soothing grand piano in the background. The hot freshly baked flaky scones with clotted cream and homemade strawberry jam were as good if not better than anything in Gretna Green. The premium loose-leaf tea in royal china went well with the fluffy pastries and finger sandwiches.



Victoria Harbour Ferry Water Ballet - Merv Mascarenhas

The Victoria Harbour Ferry Water Ballet was awesome. When the harbour ferries were originally brought to Victoria in 1990, the skippers were amazed by their dexterity. In a take off on the world famous RCMP Musical Ride, they set out to test their abilities by creating a synchronized performance. With no passengers on board, the captains were able to push their little boats to the limit, making them twirl around the water in and out of beautifully choreographed sequences. This is a Sunday ritual in front of the Empress.

We finished our visit by touring the spectacular Butchart Gardens, a National Historic Site of Canada. The Butcharts of Portland cement fame moved to the west coast because of rich limestone deposits necessary for cement production. When their quarry on Tod Inlet was exhausted, Jenny set about turning it into the Sunken Garden. Some of its highlights include the Italian Garden, Ross Fountain, the Sturgeon fountain, Japanese Garden, and the Star Pond. While the unseasonal hot weather and drought had taken its toll on the gardens, the fifty full time gardeners still made Butchart Gardens an enchanting place to visit.

## The Okanagans

Despite dire warnings of fires and COVID hotspots in the interior, we drove on the spectacular Coquihalla Highway to Kelowna 400 km away. Sadly, the mountain tops were shrouded in smoke.

Lake Okanagan could not be seen unless you descended to it. Undeterred, we embarked on our winery tours. starting off at Indigenous World Winery where we tasted wines from the land that has supported the Syilx people for over 10,000 years. They were formed over time with glacial ice, volcanic eruptions, and other geological events.

Our next stop was Quails’ Gate. What should have been a gorgeous view of the lake and vineyard was shrouded in a pleasant smoke reminiscent of a campfire and smores. As we did the wine tasting we had to settle for the sommelier showing us a photograph of the beautiful lakescape and vineyards. We fell for the taste of Queue, an estate exclusive blend of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah that captures the essence of its Upper Boucherie bench vineyard block.

We had a few minutes to wander around Mission Hill, this picturesque estate before we sat down to one of my most exquisite dinners at its Terrace Restaurant. The four-course prix fixe menu had each course paired with a matching wine – Wild Scallop Crudo, Day Boat Halibut, Whole Roasted Dry Aged Beef Rib Eye, Hibiscus Poached Stone Fruit, followed by King Cole Blue. Sounds more like five courses to me!



Mission Hill Winery, Kelowna - Merv Mascarenhas

Cherry and peach picking at Peachland did not quite work out as planned – due to COVID restrictions, we were only able to buy fruit from the orchards. There is nothing quite like a freshly picked ripe peach or cherries bursting with juicy tartness. Onwards to Vernon where we met up with a 95-year-old family friend. Joanna insisted that we visit Lake Kalamalka. Despite the haze, it was very beautiful and refreshing with the mountains as a backdrop.

We took the northern route back to Whistler, amazed at how desolate and desert like northern BC is. To our chagrin, Hwy 8 was closed because of forest fires, and we had to backtrack 50 km to Merritt and take Hwy 97C to Ashcroft before we connected with Hwy 99.

The mountain ranges and rugged terrain were spectacular. Suddenly we rounded a turn in the highway to see a terrifying fire directly ahead of us. The flames were red hot and the sky a cloud of angry, red smoke. Were we going to have to drive three hours back to Merritt? Fortunately, as we kept driving towards the fire, the road turned south away from the fire. It was certainly an unnerving experience.



Forest fire near Hwy 97C approaching Ashcroft - Merv Mascarenhas

Driving south on scenic Hwy 99, the traffic suddenly came to an abrupt halt. There was an accident downstream from us. Firetrucks, ambulances and two medical helicopters descended on the scene which was beyond a few bends. If we had to pick a place to be stranded, we could not have picked a nicer place than scenic BC Sea-to-Sky Hwy 99. It appears that a motorcyclist had lost it on one of the bends. Hope he/she was not badly hurt.

South of Lillooet approaching Pemberton, we stopped off at Lower Joffrey Lake where a trail through the redwoods opened into a breathtaking lake which rivals Lake Louise AB. Rising steeply from Lower Joffrey Lake, the glacier-laden peaks are visible from an easily accessible viewpoint 500 metres from the parking lot. A highlight of the park is the turquoise blue waters of the three lakes, all located along the trail, and each more stunning than the last. Their striking, saturated blue colour is caused by "rock flour" (glacial silt) that is suspended in the water and reflects green and blue wavelengths of sunlight.



Lower Joffrey Lake, BC - Joanna Mascarenhas

## Whistler

My sister's condo in Whistler Creekside has a spectacular view of the mountains and is 100m from a gondola that takes you up Whistler. We walked the scenic Whistler Valley 4.5km trail from Creekside along Nika and Alta Lakes, past Whistler Golf Course, and its spectacular 16th hole elevated tee with glorious views of Blackcomb and Whistler Mountains.



Peak 2 Peak Gondola to Blackcomb - Merv Mascarenhas

Cynthia and her husband Jim joined us on the weekend and showed us around the area. We had a very enjoyable round of golf at Whistler Golf Club – didn't have to tiptoe around a black bear on the fairway as they had to do a few weeks earlier.

On Sunday Jim took us to the top of Whistler and then on the Peak 2 Peak Gondola to Blackcomb. For a while it held the world record for the longest free span between ropeway towers—3.03 kilometres, but it is still the highest point above the ground—436 metres (1,430 feet). Sadly, we descended into a cloud and could not experience the true spectacle.

## Ferrari 430 Spider

And now to the highlight of my life! Jim opened the soft top, a magical piece of automation, and let me get behind the wheel. The Ferrari integrates F1-racing technology into its powertrain, suspension, chassis, and body aerodynamics to bring racing performance to the road. The 4.3-liter V8 mid engine produces 490-horsepower at 8500 rpm and the car sports a 6-speed manual with F1-style steering column-mounted shift paddles that allow for extremely quick gear changes. The trannie even automatically double clutches as you gear down!

This Italian wallops your cochlea. As Jason Cammisa of Motor Trend wrote, "There is nothing graceful, respectful,



Behind the wheel of Jim's Ferrari 430 Spider - Merv Mascarenhas

or restrained about the Ferrari's exhaust note. In response to any quick stab of the aluminum accelerator pedal, the engine-control computer tells valves in the exhaust to bypass the mufflers. Those baffles are sometimes called valvole di \$%@\$ , because to open them is to raise an acoustic middle finger to anyone within earshot. It is Italy's favorite NC-17 way of telling you to go fly a kite. Luckily, the 490 rambunctious horses under the glass cover provide sufficient thrust to make the car disappear in an invisible cloud of hydrocarbons before anyone has the chance to flip the bird back at you."

The car is a dream to drive at any speed irrespective of whether you are crawling on the DVP or going all out on the Sea-to-Sky. You just point the car at a curve without taking your foot off the gas pedal and it tracks perfectly without any sway, oversteer or lean – it hugs the road like a glove. And there is no more scenic road to drive on than the 120km Sea-to-Sky from Whistler to Vancouver.



## Vancouver

Vancouver is named consistently as one of the top five worldwide cities for livability and quality of life. Rising from the sea to the sky, it is truly spectacular – mountains fringe the city of water and parks – Burrard Inlet, English Bay and False Creek. At 28 km, its Seawall is the longest uninterrupted waterfront path.

The cyclist is king in Vancouver – everyone cycles, walks, and hikes. EVO is a unique car sharing service – they have a fleet of exclusively Toyota Prius Hybrid vehicles with rooftop bike racks and feature one-way point-to-point rentals. You just leave the EVO at any legal parking spot when you are done with it. Another interesting feature on main roads are flashing green lights at every other block. Pedestrians and cyclists wishing to cross the street press a button to stop traffic. They make for a very fast flow of traffic on main roads.

Right on the Seawall at False Creek, bohemian Granville Island comes replete with Granville Market which makes Toronto's St Lawrence Market pale in comparison – the lemon smoked salmon was our favourite. Granville Brewery



Vancouver Seawall along False Creek looking towards Cambie Bridge - Merv Mascarenhas



Iconic Bridges Restaurant on Granville Island



Basking in the shade on Bridges Patio

provides craft beer to the area that is home to many patio restaurants, bars, and quaint stores. The iconic waterfront Bridges restaurant has a large patio that's perfect for meeting friends for casual drinks and dining while watching birds and boats sail past, seaplanes land and ferries whisk passengers across False Creek.

While Joanna did the 90-minute Grouse Grind climbing 2,830 steps up the mountain, Margaret and I took the Super Skyride Aerial Tramway. We visited Grinder and Coola, two grizzlies and learn about their habitat and lengthy hibernation each year. The lumberjack show was wacky and loads of fun.

UBC's Museum of Anthropology's focus is the First Nations of the Northwest Coast, but it boasts a collection of close to 50,000 ethnological objects including objects from all



The Raven and the First Men by Bill Reid - Merv Mascarenhas

continents. The most iconic one is probably the yellow cedar sculpture **The Raven and the First Men** by Bill Reid. It would take a month of Sundays to view a fraction of the artifacts in this exceptional museum.

We finished off our visit at Steveston, a fishing village near Richmond with a thank you dinner at Embers, a bright cheerful restaurant that is

owned by a fellow Ugandan refugee. It features many of the culinary delights that we feasted on dining out when young. Also tastefully displayed were large murals of Uganda. A fitting closure to our whirlwind tour of Beautiful British Columbia.

Little wonder that so many of our members are Going West!



# Urban Wildlife Challenges

by Cheryl Paige, Convener

“Life is as dear to a mute creature as it is to a man. Just as one wants happiness and fears pain, just as one wants to live and not die, so do other creatures”

– Dalai Lama

Toronto Wildlife Challenges is this year’s District 23 Community Service Grant Project.

## Recent Stories from The Toronto Wildlife Centre

Just as we are trying to survive the best we can under a cloud of the pandemic, our wildlife is encountering struggles. Every week Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC) posts stories about their rescue work. I am inspired by the spirit to survive these animals display. Here are some of their stories compliments of TWC.

If you wish to read more stories, please go to the Toronto Wildlife Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/torontowildlifecentre/photos>. Their stories are inspiring.

Let me share with you recent stories posted by TWC.

### The Red Tail Hawk

Downtown Toronto has its fair share of wildlife, and you may be lucky enough to see a bird of prey briefly soar overhead. But rarely do these magnificent animals descend into the



busy streets filled with noisy cars. This young red-tailed hawk was clearly out of place when he perched on a car in a high traffic area.

Concerned onlookers worried for the hawk’s safety and called for help.

At TWC, the feisty bird was examined by a rehabilitation team member who suspected the patient was quite young. Some of his feathers were brand new and still in the process of growing in. The poor bird also had blood in the back of his right eye, and there was bruising on the third eyelid

of his left eye – a special, thin membrane that protects and moistens the eye while still allowing the bird too to see. The wildlife rehabilitator suspected the hawk must have collided with an object or window based on these injuries. He seemed quite sensitive to light and would often squint during the examination.

She gave the patient medicine to ease his pain and started him on a course of antibiotics to prevent infection in his eyes. After less than a week of treatment and care, the injuries healed! This resilient patient has since been moved to an outdoor enclosure to strengthen his muscles before flying back to freedom!

### The Snapping Turtle

With shells often covered in algae and large, powerful jaws, most people would steer clear of snapping turtles as they may appear invincible upon first glance. But these prehistoric-looking Species-at-Risk are just as vulnerable to road mortality as any other species of wildlife. This impressive snapping turtle was found on the side of a busy road after being hit by a car.



His lower jaw was fractured on both sides, which left him unable to close his mouth, making it impossible to eat. The poor turtle also sustained painful injuries to his carapace (top of his shell), including a large crack near his head and missing scutes (external plates covering the shell), revealing the sensitive bone underneath.

When he first arrived at TWC, the turtle was reluctant to use his limbs and tail, likely due to intense pain. After a day of rest and medication to reduce his discomfort, the snapping turtle was brought in for surgery. With the patient under anesthesia, the TWC Veterinarian was able to stabilize his jaw using pieces of wire, which would allow the jaw to heal in the proper position and tended to the wounds on his shell.

After a week of treatment and wound management, the doctor was happy to see the turtle snapping again! As he continues to recover at TWC, this now feisty turtle is being fed a variety of nutritious foods, including specially formulated turtle gel donated to us by our friends at The Toronto Zoo!

### The Brown Bat

Bats are the only true flying mammal on the planet – their wings are formed by elongated “fingers” with a membrane that stretches in between, giving them the ability to fly, manoeuvre, and, most notably, for bats in Canada, catch insects!



All bats admitted to TWC have wings that tell a story – many have scars, tears or fresh wounds that need immediate care. Their wings, however, are resilient and heal quickly.

This big brown bat was brought to TWC after she accidentally flew into a home and was repeatedly hit with a broomstick. Although still alive, the poor bat was unable to sustain flight after the traumatic encounter. She suffered several injuries to her wings and had fractured her left canine tooth, making it painful to eat. A Registered Veterinary Technician gave her medicine to ease her discomfort and prevent infection, fluids to keep her hydrated, and mealworms dipped in calcium water to provide her with the nutrients she needed to regain her strength.

After several days of consistent treatment, this big brown bat is slowly showing signs of improvement, moving around actively in her enclosure, and gaining a healthy amount of weight. She continues to receive excellent care and treatment for her injuries until she’s fully recovered and ready to be on her own in the wild again!

RTO/ERO District 23 would like to thank the staff at Toronto Wildlife Centre for allowing us to share their animal stories and pictures.

### What You Can Do to Support Wildlife

In our efforts to support urban wildlife, we would like to share some information as to how, through human actions, we can support backyard diversity. The following is a list of suggestions supported by most experts.

- Leave dead and dying vegetation (leaves) in your garden and yard overwinter as these provide food and shelter material for animals in winter.
- Consider planting native trees and shrubs such as red osier dogwood, silver maple, white spruce, eastern cedar, elderberry, dogwood, snowberry, hackberry, serviceberry, etc. These plants provide a natural food source and shelter for wild animals.
- Put up a bird or bat house. These are a great way to provide shelter for little animals.
- Establish a bird feeding station.

Wildlife experts agree that you should not feed wild animals since this results in wild animals losing their fear of humans, becoming dependent on one food location, and increasing the spread of disease as animals congregate closely. Also, when wild animals get used to a feeding spot, and suddenly that feeding station no longer exists, they have trouble going back to foraging for food. Birds, however, have an innate survival instinct that enables them to scout many sources of food, and as a result, if a feeding source shuts down, they will move on quickly to another food source.



The reality, however, is that with the decline of forest areas, green spaces and natural water bodies, bird populations are at high risk and so many experts encourage **responsible bird feeding**, particularly during the winter. Hanging feeders in your garden can be a lifesaver for the wild bird population during the winter.

When feeding birds, please consider the following:

- Try to use a good quality bird mix. Most birds spurn red millet or oats and red milo, wheat, and cracked corn, and they will throw these seeds on the ground to get to the preferred seeds. These discarded seeds provide an accessible food source for rodents and other creatures. To prevent undesirables, keep the area around your feeder clean by sweeping up ground seed regularly. Alternatively, consider hanging a seed catcher tray under the bird feeder to catch the unwanted seeds. If issues persist with rodents, remove the feeder for a while.

- Birds fly away from feeders at high speeds; therefore, to reduce the chance of a window collision, position your feeder 0.5 metres or 1.5 feet or less from your window. Also, make sure any nearby windows have visual markers no more than 4 inches apart placed on the outside of the window. You can use soap dots, and this generally lasts a season. (Fatal Light Awareness Program Canada, FLAP)
- Feeders create an artificial feeding ground – birds congregate more, and disease spreads more easily. Therefore, it is important to take down your feeder weekly, dump out old seeds, and wash it (outside, if possible) in a bucket of very hot soapy water using separate scrub utensils. Let it dry completely before filling it and putting it back up. Always wear gloves to clean the feeder and wash your hands with soapy water after you have finished. You might also consider spraying the feeder with a non-toxic veterinary disinfectant.

On a sad note, the situation surrounding waterbirds along Toronto's waterfront continues with more birds being found sick or, sadly, already dead. Most of the affected birds have been concentrated around the Toronto Islands and Lakeshore waterfront. Preliminary lab results support the speculation that botulism is the cause of this tragic situation.

TWC is appealing to members of the public for help in finding these poor birds before it's too late. Botulism is treatable with emergency medical care if caught early enough. Early detection can be the difference between life and death for the magnificent birds with whom we share our waterfront.

Birds affected by this terrible disease are most often found in the water as they cannot get themselves onto land. If you or someone you know is out on the water or boating in the area, please keep an eye out for waterbirds (particularly ducks or geese) who are struggling to swim, easy to approach and appear to be experiencing paralysis specifically in their feet or neck. If you see a bird with these symptoms, please call TWC's hotline immediately at 416-631-0662.



## A Summer's Songs

*A sacred meditation: sacred source of immortal song  
A lone heart set free...*

*Timeless promises to carry us in the radiant summer lights... Promises in a rising shadow, in summer storm nights... Mystic landscapes, all of a most beautiful majesty...*

*The rising windstorms; a falling away midst bended branch  
and bough Time standing still...  
Melodies, whispers as silver edged leaf touches silver  
edged leaf... Far songs as the poplars gently bend*

*A tender dancing grace, the toss, the turn, the strong backlit trees  
Softly moving, elegant against the rising sunset skies...*

*The returning silences: night and shadow's soft descent  
Windsong windswept fields of bending green,  
The long grasses, wave upon wave flowing...  
Tender melodies in the following night airs...*

*Still moments of deepest reflection...*

*All the great joys of summer are here:  
Summer's glory: the blood red rose and the white...  
The golden lily: overture on a bright summer's day...  
Flight of hawk and dove high above a welcoming summer  
land All the treasured recollections on a wondrous summer's day.*



by Bev Gorbet, August 2021




# Our Role in Environmental Stewardship

by Kathy Shorney, Political Advocacy Convener

**“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”**

– Jane Goodall

District 23, North York, continues to advocate for and support the Vibrant Voices Campaign. In the past election, we encouraged our members through emails from Rich Prophet, Chair of the Board - RTOERO to encourage the candidates to support legislation to improve the Physical and Mental Health of Older Adults. We also encouraged the development of a Senior Strategy for support of ageing in place and universal pharmacare.

The third focus of the RTOERO Strategic plans for the Vibrant Voices Campaign is that of Environmental Stewardship. The significant issues are developing strategies and legislation for the responsible use of resources, conservation, protection of our air, land, and water. Improvement in all areas is critical to a sustainable future. Individual companies, industry groups and governments all have a part to play in Environmental Stewardship. We need to maintain the viability of our ecosystems for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren. I will briefly explain the four main areas of concern.

## 1. Single-Use Plastics

Single-use plastics usage increased significantly with the Covid pandemic. The Federal government established a list of bans placed on the usage of some products. We need to encourage the expansion of the list and address the use of non-essential plastics. On a smaller scale, we can personally reduce our usage with reusable shopping bags, reduce disposables in our homes and when in the community and be responsible for the disposal of the plastics we use.

## 2. Effective Recycling Standards

The development and monitoring of effective recycling standards are a concern. We should be questioning the lack of harmonization of recycling practices across political jurisdictions and even in the places we live, i.e., apartments and condos.

## 3. Environmentally Sustainable Transportation

We can support the continued development of electric vehicles, make them less costly to purchase and continue supporting the growth and expansion of cleaner public transportation and fuels.

## 4. Safeguarding the Water Supply and Drinking Water

We can promote effective prevention of pollution and misuse of the water supply.

People need continuous education about Environmental Stewardship. We, as a District, have selected Urban Wildlife Challenges as our Community Service Project. We are working with the Toronto

Wildlife Centre to offer educational opportunities to our members and through the support of school projects to broaden the knowledge of everyone about environmental stewardship. You may want to see the article in this magazine about our community projects “Urban Wildlife Challenges” on page 20 for further information.

As your Convener, I will continue to reach out to you with any current information and project updates as I receive them. This includes effective prevention of pollution and misuse of the water supply.



Congratulations!

Respecting Urban Wildlife Challenges and Environmental Stewardship

Patricia Rogers, Chair, Community Grants and Scholarship Committee advised us that our 2021 Community Grant Application was approved by the RTOERO Board of Directors: “The Community Grants and Scholarship Committee commends you for your worthwhile project and recommended that it be fully funded for the proposed amount of \$2500.”



# Barcelona

by Gail M. Murray, Member

Big, bustling Barcelona is modern and thriving with 5.5 million people. The sea on one side and mountains on the other; they build up countless tall apartment buildings with attractive balconies. I would not be drawn here except for the modernist architecture.

Hordes of travellers mill about Gaudi's Sagrada Familia. This unfinished basilica is Gaudi's most well-known creation, begun at the pinnacle of his celebrated career. Antonio Gaudi (1852 – 1926) was the greatest exponent of Modernism and leading light of the Art Nouveau Movement.

I crane my neck to see the sculptures on The Nativity Façade. Angels play harps and horns. I like the individual carvings, especially of The Holy Family and the youthful Jesus. Sculptors have depicted his human side, evoking tenderness, and joy. The Passion Facade is austere, showing pain and suffering. The sandstone is a dirty brown due to years of pollution. This saddens me. From a distance, the basilica resembles a child's beach sandcastle. Inside it feels like a splendid art gallery – light and airy and full of colour. The light shines through the floor-to-ceiling stained glass windows in rose, blue, and gold hues. I'm impressed with the streamlining of groups of tourists, 25 whisked through undisturbed wearing whisper headsets.



My feet are sore from all the standing. We make a grocery stop – lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. At the Hotel Capri, we have spacious, ultra-modern deluxe studio apartments. Why didn't I buy more of that gazpacho bottled like pop – a great compliment to the club sandwich I order with room service? It's lovely to relax in quiet after a long yet fulfilling day.

In the main square, protests continue. It is all over the

news. Many balconies prominently display the Catalan flag. As protesters shut down airport traffic, Denise and her husband were forced to spend an extra night in Barcelona, missing a day in Granada. Jonathan advised us to use taxis at night.

On our free day, Cathy Weathers and I take the Hop on Hop Off bus. It's my first experience on one of these. Though windy and chill, I like the headsets, informative commentary, and bird's eye view from the upper deck. A beret would have come in handy! The weather is overcast, and traffic is bumper to bumper at 11:30 AM. Rain is forecast, so it's a good day to visit museums.



The architecture is incredible, but the city is loud and reeks from diesel cars and motor-bikes. Cathy's prior booked us online. Though we're 30 minutes late for our entry time, we speed in. Casa Batllo gets 200 daily visitors.



The upper classes sought Passeig de Gracia Avenue to demonstrate their wealth through huge homes designed by fashionable architects. Things haven't changed much since 1910.

For me, this home, more like a masterpiece, inspires joy. Industrialist Joseph Batlló commissioned Gaudi (at his height) to outdo his neighbour, chocolate baron Amatller. Taking his lead from the ocean depths is like walking

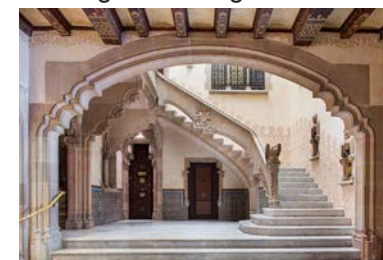


through a Monet landscape undulating and swirling – a fusion of function and décor.

Gaudi put his brushstroke on modernism which is defined as a mixture of current technology and former styles, a response against the regimentation of the Industrial Age.

Many modernist buildings line **Passeig de Gracia** ("Block of Discord") in the **Eixample** neighbourhood (pronounced eye-sham-plah). Iron structures form the bones over which concrete is poured and moulded into waving curves. Embellishments are created using wood, stone, marble, stained glass, and ceramic tile.

**Casa Batlló** is a swirling art museum of textures. I keep thinking if Monet had been an architect. Five alluring shades of blue tile are used in the elevator shaft. Everyone wearing headsets is quiet and contemplative, mesmerized, drinking in the magic. Two hours fly by.



Next door at **Casa Amatller**, you can enjoy fresh bread and decadent, melted chocolate. I sip café con leche in the tiny courtyard with its living wall of plants, as Cathy shops for chocolate in art deco tins. As it begins to sprinkle, Cathy joins me for tea and carrot cake – a sweet respite.

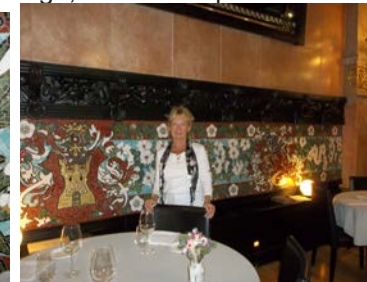
I notice all the plane trees along the boulevard as we wait for our bus, arriving with the rain. Luckily, they have put up the tarp.

Our final day, and we are back with our group touring Casa Mila – La Pedrera – The Quarry. This is Gaudi in full form and attracting controversy. The greys and blacks of this apartment tower are depressing on another overcast day. With headsets that activate on autopilot as we enter a room, we're free to explore.



There is an informative black and white film on Barcelona from 1880 to the 1930s with carriages, old cars and men wearing straw bowler hats. One station in the attic demonstrates how Gaudi was directly influenced by nature – hands-on learning at its best.

At Casa Mila, there are four large, exclusive apartments

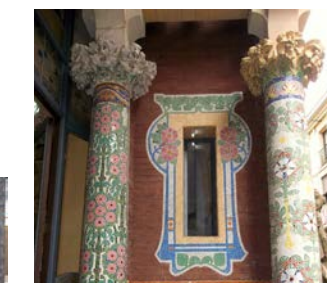


per floor. One is furnished to show how the upper classes lived at the time. Today only one is open to the public; the rest have tenants. I wonder for what exorbitant price they rent. On the roof, chimney ventilation towers become disturbing, haunting creatures. Did George Lucas come here before designing his Star Wars' Darth Vader and the stormtroopers?

We dine in style at Michelin star Fonda España in the elegant Hotel España in the Las Ramblas district - our farewell meal. The exquisite dining room has ebony and stained-glass ceilings, walls of oranges and orange blossoms on ceramic tile. Michele and I are entranced in the breakfast room, photographing blue tile motifs of castles, crowns, pomegranates and floating cream and azure mermaids. Servers perform choreography as they distribute delicious courses and leave us feeling relaxed and royal.

As we exit, it is pouring. Michele, former teacher-librarian with Peel Board, shares her travel enthusiasm and umbrella with me.

Our last stop, Palau de la Música Catalana, built between 1905 and 1908 by the modernist architect Lluís Montaner, is a jewel and the only concert hall listed as a World Heritage



Site by UNESCO. I am captivated by its beauty and the 2000 sculpted roses. Roses are everywhere: in columns, on ceilings, stained glass windows, and even the floor. Palau is referred to as "the stone garden," rather fitting for a garden tour. A lone musician walks out to the grand piano centre stage and plays a concert just for us: four pieces (including Mozart and Schubert). With their instruments from diverse parts of the world, the eighteen muses surround the stage and represent music without frontiers. After a café con leche in the elegant lobby, it is time to pack.

**What a glorious adventure it has been!**





# Midtown Toronto's Hidden Sculptures

by Joanne Famiglietti, Strollers Convener

## Virtual Walk 3:

### Midtown Toronto's Hidden Sculptures

including addresses where they are found

Al Green, owner of Greenwin Construction, an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and artist, built many homes, condos and rental apartments since the 1950's. He was a lover of the arts, especially sculpture. Around many of the buildings, he displayed these sculptures.

**The Walk begins** on Davisville Ave., just east of Yonge Street, near the Davisville Subway Station, and ends at Mount Pleasant Ave.



**The Couple**  
- Etrog



**Al Green's Sculpture Garden**



**Leaning Torso**

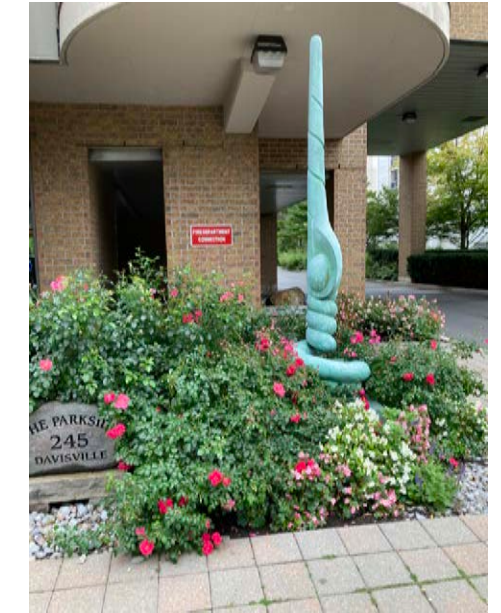
141 Davisville Ave.

**People Helping People**



**Star Search**  
- Kantaroff/Green

245 Davisville Ave.



We begin opposite the stunning, new, modern Davisville Junior School.

33 Davisville Ave.



**The Source**  
- Etrog



**The Guitarist**

**Touching Heaven**

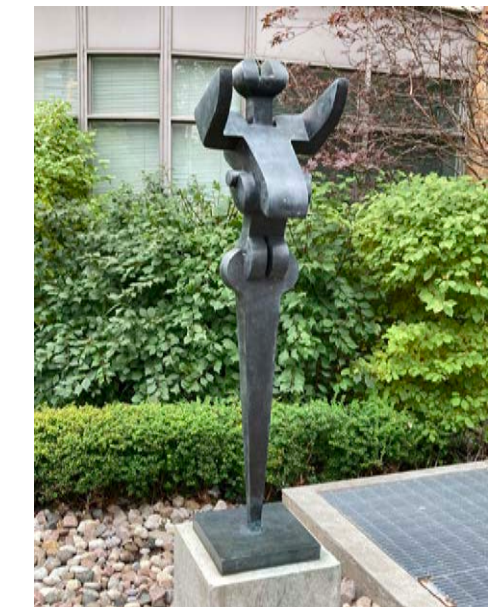


**Homage to a Higher Power**

225 Davisville Ave.



**A Couple**



**Winged Bird**  
- Etrog



**Homage to a Higher Power**  
- Al Green

77 Davisville Ave.



**Landing Sculptures**  
- C. Lander



**Embrace**



# Book Club

by Sylvia Skippen, Convener

“Reading is a conversation. All books talk. But a good book listens as well.”

This year the District 23 Book Club has been meeting by Zoom on the last Wednesday of the month. Meeting online has allowed us to meet safely during COVID-19. We have enjoyed getting together with other keen readers in the comfort of our own homes and have appreciated not having to travel. Our get-togethers begin at 2:00 p.m. and are approximately one and a half to two hours long. We plan to continue meeting via Zoom for the first three months and assess the situation in the new year. In the past, we met in person at Edithvale Community Centre.

In reflecting on our booklist for this season, we will have a year of reading where we might have to do our soul searching and reflect on forgiveness and the impact of the evils of war.

We are fortunate that we have members who volunteer to lead the discussions. The facilitators provide the author's biography, critic reviews and thought-provoking questions for discussion. We are looking forward to another great year of reading and discussion. We always welcome new members, and you are not obliged to attend every meeting.

The Zoom meeting invitation is sent to all those who have indicated an interest in attending the book club meeting for that particular month. If you wish to participate in the book club, please send me an email a few days before the meeting date to ensure you are included in the Zoom invitation. Also, information will be published in the monthly e-Newsletter sent at the beginning of the month.

Contact: Sylvia at [sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com](mailto:sylvia.skippen@hotmail.com)

*A tip is to place a hold on all the upcoming book club selections as soon as possible then immediately change the status to inactive. This allows a popular book time to move up the queue even while it is inactive. When you are closer to being ready to read the book, change the status back to "active." During COVID-19 times, it often takes up to a week to receive a book once the change in status is made back to active.*

## Past Sessions

- The Huntress, by Kate Quinn, Sep 29, 2021
- The Barbizon Hotel: The Hotel that Set Women Free, by Paul Bren. Oct 27, 2021

## Winter in Madrid

by C.J. Sansom, Nov 24, 2021

This is a historical fiction novel set in September 1940,

when the Spanish Civil War is over, and Madrid lies in ruins while the Germans continue their march through Europe. Britain stands alone as General Franco considers whether to abandon neutrality and enter the war. This book is a vivid and haunting depiction of wartime Spain. It is an intimate and remarkable tale that offers a sense of history unfolding and reveals the profound impact of impossible choices.

## Becoming Mrs. Lewis

by Patty Callaghan, Jan 26, 2022

It is the complicated relationship between writer C.S. Lewis and American author Joy Davidman. This is the tale of an unlikely friendship turned true love between Joy Davidman and C.S. Lewis that tests the leap of faith and radically changes both their lives. When poet and writer Joy Davidman began writing letters to C. S. Lewis—Jack—she was looking for spiritual answers, not love.

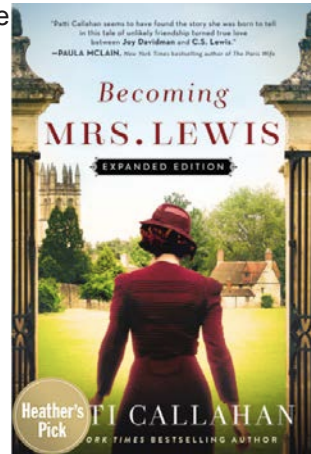
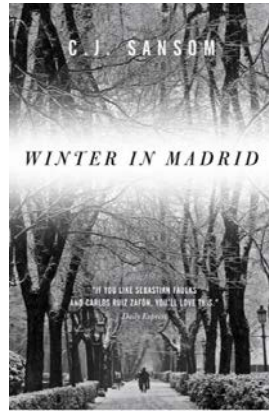
Love, after all, was not keeping her marriage together. Everything about New Yorker Joy seemed ill-matched for an Oxford don and the beloved writer of Narnia. However, their minds bonded over their letters, and Joy embarks on the adventure of her life. She travelled from America to England and back again, facing heartbreak and poverty, discovering friendship and faith, and against all odds, finding a love that even the threat of death could not destroy.

## The Splendid and the Vile: a saga of Churchill, Family and Defiance During the Blitz

by Erik Larson, February 23, 2022

This is a thoroughly researched report of Winston Churchill's first year of leadership. In 1940, he led the country through France's surrender, the miraculous rescue at Dunkirk, and the Nazi air force's bombing blitz of the UK, which killed over 44,000 Britons. Through it all, he retained his sense of humour and controversial personality that guarantees him a fond place in our collective memory.

– Mark Haddo



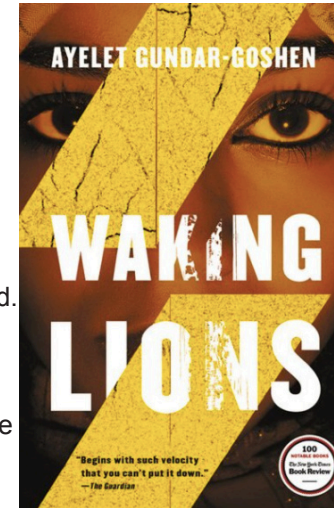
While Larson focuses heavily on Churchill and his family, he also provides an impressive Blitz account. Larson explores the reactions to the bombings from the prime minister, the royal family, and ordinary Britons. While Churchill is the main character, Larson's profiles of his aides and colleagues add valuable context to the prime minister's role in the war. There are many things to admire about *The Splendid and the Vile*, but chief among them is Larson's writing. The book reads like a novel. Even though everyone knows how the war ended, he keeps the reader turning the pages with his gripping prose.



## Waking Lions

by Ayelet Gunder-Goshen, Mar 30, 2022

Waking Lions is a suspenseful and morally devastating drama of guilt and survival, shame, and desire. One night, neurosurgeon Dr. Eitan Green is driving home from his long hospital shift near the Israeli city of Omer. His SUV hits a man who appears out of nowhere on a moonlit desert road. The man looks to be African, a migrant. He is still breathing, but his skull is split open and the African man's life cannot be saved.



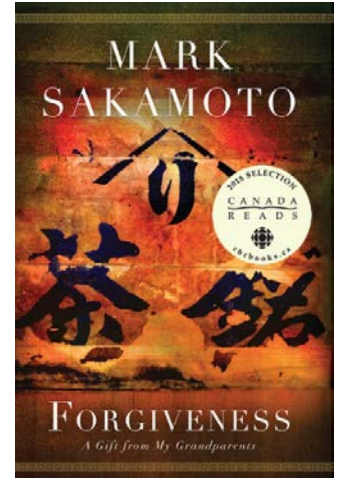
After a few minutes of tortured soul searching, Eitan decides to leave the accident scene in hopes that his life, the one he has built with his wife and two young sons, can be saved. He gets into his SUV and drives home. When the victim's widow knocks at Eitan's door the next day, holding his wallet and claiming that she knows what happened, Eitan learns that her price for silence is not money but his expertise. It is something that will shatter Eitan's safe life and take him into a world of secrets and lies he could never have imagined. Eitan comes to realize that in trying to avoid disaster, he stepped back into deeper ruin.

## Forgiveness

by Mark Sakamoto, Apr 27, 2022

This is a heart-rending true story of two families on either side of the Second World War and a moving tribute to the nature of forgiveness. When the Second World War broke out, Ralph MacLean traded his quiet yet troubled life on the Magdalene Islands in eastern Canada for the ravages of war overseas.

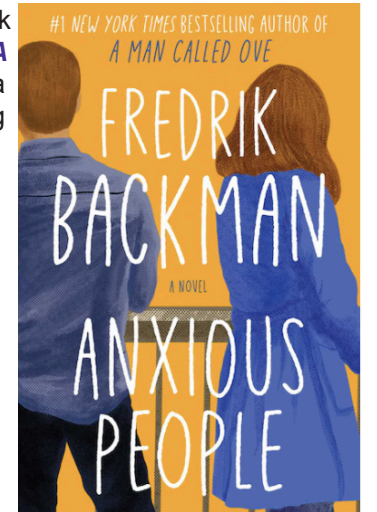
On the other side of the country, Mitsue Sakamoto and her family felt their pleasant life in Vancouver starting to disappear after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. One would live out the war in a prison camp, and the other would find herself and her family packed off to a working farm in rural Alberta. Forgiveness intertwines the compelling stories of Ralph MacLean and the Sakamotos as the war rips their lives and their humanity out of their grasp.



## Anxious People

by Fredrik Bachman, May 25, 2022

This is a book by #1 New York Times best-selling author of *A Man Called Ove*. It is about a bank robbery that went wrong and eight extremely anxious strangers who find they have more in common than they ever imagine. Viewing an apartment usually does not turn into a life-or-death situation, but this open house becomes just that when a failed bank robber bursts in and takes everyone in the apartment hostage.



As the pressure mounts, the eight strangers begin slowly disclosing to one another and revealing long-hidden truths, grievances, hurts, secrets, and passions.

First, Zara is a wealthy bank director who has been too busy to care about anyone else until tragedy changed her life. Then there is Roger and Anna-Lena, a recently retired couple on a never-ending hunt for fixer-uppers to avoid the painful truth that they cannot fix their marriage. Julia and Ro are a young lesbian couple and soon-to-be parents nervous about their chances for a successful life together. They cannot agree on anything, from where they want to live to how they met in the first place. Then there is the 87-year-old woman who has lived long enough not to be afraid of someone waving a gun in her face. Despite the story she tells them, Estelle has not come to the apartment to view it for her daughter, and her husband is not outside parking the car. Added to the mix, a real estate agent and mystery man has locked himself in the apartment's only bathroom.

As police surround the premises and television channels broadcast the hostage situation live, the robber must decide which terrifying prospect: going out to face the police or staying in the apartment with this group.



## Resistance is Futile!

by Vern Paige, Convener

**“In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or step back into safety.”**

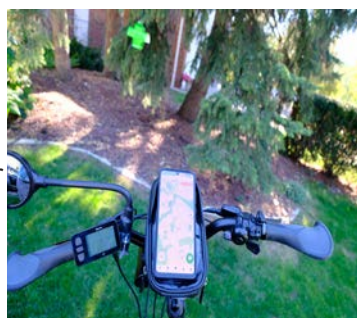
Are you annoyed by Internet passwords? They are being replaced by “2FA”, 2-factor authentication. At more and more websites, a single password will no longer be sufficient for access. A second level of verification will be required. Security experts prefer sending a one-time digital code by text message (first choice), only available to smartphone users. You must then enter the code on the website. The second choice is email, which is more convenient for smartphone users if you are not at your computer. There are a few other methods, less respected by experts, such as remembering one or more of the “security questions” that you provided when creating your account (e.g., “What was the name of your second spouse’s first pet?”). Members of the e-Devices group share their experience and recommendations about Internet security and buying and using smartphones for these and other purposes.

If you still resist getting one of those expensive fancy smartphone things or a tablet or new computer, you are about to feel more pressure from family and advertising. The “holiday season” (November to January) brings new, improved models and seasonal sales, and the pandemic has accelerated the world’s increasing dependence on technology. Our lives will only become more reliant on “e-Devices,” never less; **resistance is futile!**

Everything will inevitably fail; most things require periodic maintenance if we postpone their failure to a “more convenient” time. We’ve learned to live with those inevitabilities in most areas of our lives, and they are not sufficient excuses to avoid them. In the e-Devices Group, we aim to share the experiences involved in learning and using online technology. We share learning about maximizing benefits and minimizing disadvantages. Following are a few examples of our Group’s interests.

The pandemic has severely restricted in-person group participation in cycling, walking, and simply visiting parks. Still, such actions are significant in maintaining both our physical and mental health. Smartphones and tablets can help us continue these activities safely and share our experiences with friends and family.

A mapping “app” can show



us a route or destination and record our route to share with others. We can take photos on the way and share them.

We need hardly ever be out of touch with “virtual meeting” and messaging tools such as Zoom and WhatsApp.

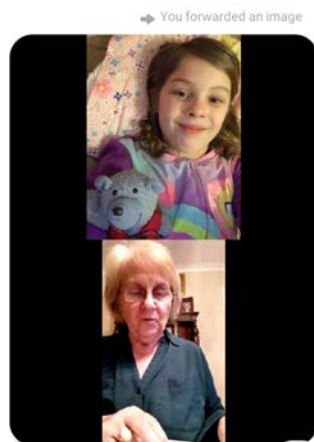
To facilitate a gradual, safe return to some of our former in-person activities, Ontario and other jurisdictions have implemented a “COVID vaccination certificate” system. We can use a printed certificate, but a digital certificate stored on a smartphone is the most efficient one. Whether printed or digital, these certificates incorporate a QR (Quick



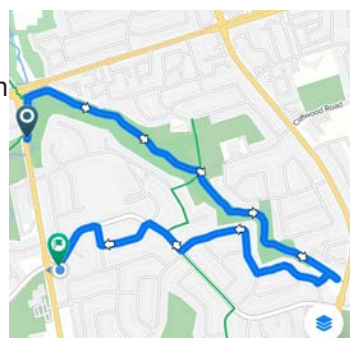
Response) code, a much-enhanced form of barcode which can be scanned and interpreted by another smartphone. QR codes are used for many other purposes. Often, they link to information, pictures or video saved on an Internet webpage. Examples include restaurant menus, information about

exhibits in museums, maps, product information in stores, additional information about articles in newspapers or magazines and on television.

The pandemic has limited in-person contact with friends and family, burdening many of us with feelings of loneliness and isolation. We can counter this with live video communication apps such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Zoom by smartphone, tablet, and computer. In many ways, this is a poor substitute for the real thing, but in other ways, it offers advantages. Online “visits” can occur on short notice with no travel, and they can be recorded to be “re-enjoyed” later. Visits can occur as often as desired when there is no need to travel, and distance is not an obstacle. Our online meetings are not limited



– Abraham Maslow



to “talking heads.” We read bedtime stories to grandchildren. We play online games.

We have discovered and shared many opportunities online that we would have missed at another time, opportunities that were first made available to help everyone cope with pandemic conditions and opportunities that we wouldn’t have sought anyway because of distance or time constraints. Concerts, theatre, cinema, “virtual travel,” “virtual museum” visits, university-level courses on thousands of subjects and informal courses about hobbies and crafts are available.

One of our members shared a website that offers conversation and presentations on a seemingly unlimited range of subjects, <https://MeetUp.com>. Nothing to do while stuck at home waiting for a delivery? Browse for a group meeting at the right time about an interesting topic.



## Father’s War

Bruce Jacobs Davidovitch, Member



This photo is of my father, ‘Harry Jacobs Davidovitch’ circa 1944.

He spent the Second World War as an Air Force mechanic on the Home Front, stationed in Manitoba and servicing training airplanes.

## Father’s War

Winter 1944 - Fort Osborne, Manitoba

“Hey Harry, there’s a shipment of fifty-one Gypsy Mark 1’s arriving at midnight tonight.”

There’s sequence to dismantling an engine for overhaul and examination or scrap:

Drain the oil out of the oil sump

Remove ignition, harness, spark plugs, manifolds with a manifold wrench

Separate ferrous from non-ferrous parts in a clean place

Remove push-rods, cylinder head with a crow’s foot wrench using the Stagger System

Remove cylinders, place them heavy side down

Remove the gudgeon pin and cirlet with fingers. If stuck use hot water rags.

Remove magnetos, oil lines, gallery rear timing cover

Invert engine block in stand and remove oil sump, connection rods, main bearing caps

Work from the centre to the periphery

Remove crankshaft

Tabulate all parts

“Got that corporal craftsman?”

“...and tomorrow you’ll be assembling poppet valves on a payload of Avros...”





## Sharing Friendship and Ideas

by Margaret Schuman ~ Convener, Needlework & Crafts

“Our most valuable resources - creativity, communication, invention, and reinvention - are, in fact, unlimited.”

– David Grinspoon

The Needlework and Craft Group will continue to meet on the third Thursday of the month. Presently we attend Zoom meetings. Members share their latest projects and make suggestions that are usually full of ideas that could enhance the items.

Completed articles often find their way into hospitals, seniors' residents, schools, and various other places or as draw prizes at our annual luncheons which, support the RTO Foundation or the group we are supporting at the time.

Now, hospitals and nursing homes are not accepting twiddlemuffs, so if you would like one for a senior living at home, contact our Convener to see what is available.

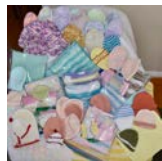
Needlecraft is always looking for donations of yarn for its various projects and will accept full or partial balls of acrylic yarns, which are washable (Sayelle, sport or fingering weight).

New members are always most welcome.

To join us or to get a twiddlemuff contact : Margaret Schuman, Convener: [schumanmp@gmail.com](mailto:schumanmp@gmail.com) or Joan Bourne: [joan@nbjb.ca](mailto:joan@nbjb.ca)

### Needlework & Craft Group Meeting Dates 2021-2022

- Thursday, October 21, 2021
- Thursday, November 18, 2021
- Thursday, December 16, 2021
- Thursday, January 20, 2022
- Thursday, February 17, 2022
- Thursday, March 17, 2022
- Thursday, April 1, 2022
- Thursday, May 19, 2022
- Thursday, June 16, 2022.



## Promoting RTOERO Membership

by Mary Ellen Lawless, Convener

“Anytime you get to join a group of people you admire and respect, you want to keep those doors open.”

– James Wolk

Under Covid Restrictions, reaching out to those who are considering retirement is not an option. Think about anyone you know who is retired and not a member or is close to retirement and become a salesperson for the many advantages of membership we all enjoy through RTOERO.

What follows is a detailed outline of the essential facts you should give to your friends and relatives as this organization keeps getting better and better:

- an ever-increasing plethora of supports, information, and improvements to our very own insurance plans,
- guidance and advice around ageing, health issues, finances,
- the savings available through Venngo options,
- and the amazing reading available in our magazines such as District 23's STONY Bridges, RTOERO's Renaissance and the reports from the Foundation for research into ageing issues... (another success for RTOERO and a bonus for all of us as we age).

Here is some of the information for you to share with friends and colleagues who are still employed but thinking about the future:

Get a copy of the ESPRIT booklet, which RTERO has designed to hold a person's hand while taking the essential steps to prepare for those retirement years (<https://rtoero.ca/membership/download-member-info-kit/>):

1. 15 to 20 years before retirement, contact RTOERO to start planning;
2. 5 to 10 years before retirement, attend a Retirement Planning Workshop - currently available online - contact <https://rtoero.ca/events/retirement-planning-workshops/> ;
3. 1 to 5 years prior, join RTOERO (it's FREE), and you enjoy the discounts and services - contact <https://rtoero.ca/landing/free-membership/> ;
4. 6 months before retiring, meet with your financial advisor (everyone needs to have a personal financial advisor) and talk to RTOERO about your health, house, and vehicle insurance: <https://rtoero.ca/insurance/> ;
5. fill out all necessary forms required to retire so that, when the big day comes as a retiree, you will be free to travel (after COVID), volunteer, attend the many events District 23 organizes for members and pursue all your dreams. Enjoy!

The ESPRIT booklet lists 39 (yes, thirty-nine) reasons for joining RTOERO under nine categories...something for everyone and available upon request from RTOERO at 416-962-9463 or me, your Recruitment Convener at 416-223-4969

Please, get recruiting! Share the benefits of our outstanding Canada-wide bilingual organization-RTOERO! Come and Join Us!



## Nordic Poling

by Kathy Shorney, Convener

“Walk towards the good in life and you will arrive.”

– Atticus

As the Fall approaches and the weather continues to be pleasant, it is important that although we can't meet as a group, we continue to keep our fitness levels up mentally and physically. We have many beautiful trails and parks and beautiful streetscapes that will soon show off their fall colours. I encourage you to get out with maybe a friend and

walk or use your poles. Poles do provide fitness opportunities and stability for walking. Videos are available on YouTube for techniques and hints.

I am looking forward to possibly meeting as a group in March. Watch the e-Newsletters and other District 23 communications for information.



# Six Qualities of a Solid Estate Plan

by RTOERO Communications

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

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

## 1. Legal in Canada

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

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

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

## 2. Customized to your life situation

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

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

## 3. Discussed with your loved ones

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

## 4. Kept up-to-date

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

anything.

## 5. Includes plans for an unexpected emergency

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

## 6. Leaves a legacy

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



# Champagne Breakfast

by Mildred Frank, Social Convener

My experience of being introduced to District 23 was at an afternoon tea in a church hall. How we have changed!

When I became Social Convener, champagne and a continental breakfast became the order of the day, so to speak. And now, we greet new retirees on Zoom with virtual champagne.

Our second Zoom Champagne Breakfast was held on Wednesday, September 22. Attending were the newly retired, some stalwart regular members and the Executive members, of course.

Mildred Frank opened the event with a few words of a warm welcome to all. Then Mary Cairo proposed the toast and then Mary Valtellini introduced the table officers---Gwen Scriven, Karen Quinn, Maureen Capotosto, Olga McKenzie and Vern Paige. Her comments about each were really appropriate.

Several convenors spoke briefly about their programs—Elizabeth Clarke about Have-a-Java, Maureen Capotosto (for Sylvia Skippen) about the Book Club, Vernon Paige about the e-Devices, Margaret Schuman about Needlework & Crafts, George Meek (on behalf of Gwen Scriven) about Health Benefits, Karen Quinn about Communications, and Cheryl Paige about Urban Wildlife Challenges - our Community Service Project.



A highlight was a visit from Rich Prophet, Chair of the RTOERO Board. He was delightful, explaining the various projects that have been undertaken by RTOERO, projects that can be useful to us, bringing relevant information.

Members were reminded that there would be no Holiday Season Luncheon but were asked to stay tuned. Any occasion—even on Zoom to be together might be welcome.

Everyone was thanked for coming, invited them to stay tuned but specially to stay well. That ended the event.



# Have-a-Java

by Elizabeth Clarke, Convener



We will continue to offer Have-a-Java on the third Wednesday of each month. The sessions will run from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Contact Convener Elizabeth Clark to register at: [clarkemeneguzzi@gmail.com](mailto:clarkemeneguzzi@gmail.com) Contact Liz at least 3 days before the event to request your Zoom link. Come and share some time with colleagues, old friends and new members.

Here are the remaining fall/winter dates.

- Wednesday, November 17, 2021
- Wednesday, December 15, 2021
- Wednesday, January 19, 2022
- Wednesday March 16, 2022.



# Garden Photos

by Brian Hodge, Member

"I know that there are many more serious and talented people than I amongst our membership."  
"In this crazy COVID- driven world, I enjoy taking photos of many objects that catch my fancy."

Brian uses his photos as backgrounds for both himself and his wife, Barbara's zoom calls. There is always a wonderful background behind them as they join in on the Needlework & Crafts or e-Devices calls.



# Happy Retirement - Satisfaction

by Marcellina Lobalsamo, Member

Today, it is the simple things in our daily lives that bring us satisfaction. Friends and family are pictured experiencing simple activities that bring calm.



"I challenge other members to share ideas and pictures of activities that have enriched their lives. Does anyone have information to share on how to stay organized and keep track of things? This is a topic that confronts us as our memory begins to change."  
*Marcellina*

EXPLORE

EXPERIENCE

REWARD



# 50 things to do in retirement

by RTOERO Communications and Marketing Group

## Wondering what to do in retirement?

Every month RTOERO Communications sends us articles to complement themes we are exploring. This month we are looking at how are members are choosing to explore and spend their time in new activities together.



- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Adopt a pet   | 18. Go to festivals                      | 35. Open an Etsy shop                              |
| 2. Learn an instrument                                   | 19. Join a choir                         | 36. Practise meditation                            |
| 3. Become a garden consultant                            | 20. Join a dragon boat club              | 37. Propagate indoor plants                        |
| 4. Become a photographer                                 | 21. Join a group for retirees            | 38. Start a blog                                   |
| 5. Become a tour guide                                   | 22. Join a non-profit board or committee | 39. Start a business                               |
| 6. Bring back macrame                                    | 23. Join or create a travel group        | 40. Start a community garden                       |
| 7. Cross-country ski or snowshoe                         | 24. Keep a journal                       | 41. Start a podcast                                |
| 8. Develop your cooking skills                           | 25. Learn a language                     | 42. Support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples |
| 9. Explore Canada by rail                                | 26. Learn stand-up paddleboarding        | 43. Take a dream vacation                          |
| 10. Explore your spirituality                            | 27. Learn to paint                       | 44. Take up cycling                                |
| 11. Find a cause to advocate for                         | 28. Learn to play chess                  | 45. Try pickleball                                 |
| 12. Focus on healthy eating                              | 29. Learn to bake bread                  | 46. Try yoga                                       |
| 13. Get a personal trainer or join a group fitness class | 30. Learn woodworking                    | 47. Visit family and friends                       |
| 14. Get involved in local politics                       | 31. Look after kids                      | 48. Volunteer                                      |
| 15. Get to know your neighbours                          | 32. Make your own cards                  | 49. Work part-time                                 |
| 16. Go back to school                                    | 33. Map your family history              | 50. Write a book                                   |
| 17. Go geocaching  | 34. Mentor others                        |  |

Read the online version of the article at:

[rtoero.ca/wondering-what-to-do-in-retirement-here-are-50-ideas/](https://rtoero.ca/wondering-what-to-do-in-retirement-here-are-50-ideas/)



# Six Habits of Happy Retirees

by RTOERO Communications and Marketing Group

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

## Here are six habits of happy retirees

### 1) Plan, but expect some uncertainty

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

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

### 2) Prioritize your health

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

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

### 3) Nurture relationships

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

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

RTOERO District and participate in social activities.

### 4) Pursue interests

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

### 5) Cultivate positive thinking

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

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



### 6) Give yourself peace of mind

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

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



# “A Step Back in Time”---

by Mary Cairo, Archivist

Niagara on the Lake trip April, 2016 – A group of 40 members travelled to Niagara on the Lake. We began the day with a visit to the Butterfly Conservatory, shopped in downtown for about an hour, shared lunch at the Queen’s Inn and enjoyed an afternoon of wine tasting at Pillitteri Estates Winery before heading home.



### 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](tel:416-962-9463) or [1-800-361-9888](tel: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. If you did not receive your copy of STONY Bridges, contact Gerard MacNeil at [416-481-7411](tel:416-481-7411) or email him at: [g.macneil@bell.net](mailto:g.macneil@bell.net).

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