



A better future, together
Ensemble pour un avenir meilleur



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year! I hope you had a safe and happy holiday season and were able to spend it safely with some family and friends. Welcome to Winter 2022! Again we find ourselves living through the pandemic with another variant - Omicron - an even more virulent one than before. I hope you are still being careful, staying in your bubble and following the COVID protocols. It will be safer in the long run.

We were very fortunate to have had our November Annual Meeting and Christmas Social in person and had a wonderful turnout to both. We had almost 60 people at the Annual Meeting and 90 at the Holiday Social. Rich Prophet, the President of the Board of Directors was in attendance and spoke about the pillars of RTOERO, how vital it is that we support the organization in its important work advocating for our members and seniors, in general. He also shared some of RTO's efforts to help care for our environment and to advocate to provincial and federal government on our behalf. Thanks to Jill and Christine for making the Meeting so successful and Lynn for heading up the planning for the Social. Both the venues were very careful about the COVID protocols; members who attend Brant 40 events are all double or triple vaxxed. Everyone seemed to really enjoy reconnecting again. It felt almost normal, even while we were very careful to observe all the protocols in place to keep us safe.

We are hopeful we can hold our Spring Membership Meeting in person but, if not, we will do so on line. It has been far too long since we have met regularly. (continued on page 12)

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MEMBERSHIP GATHERINGS

Thanks to all those folks who attended our AGM last November 3rd. It was so nice to see those who could get out, mingle and catch up with each other.



*You're
Invited*

We look forward, (hopefully) to seeing you again in the Spring for the

Annual Spring Membership Meeting and Luncheon

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Best Western Brant Park Inn

(proof of Vaccine Required)

Please continue to check the website for all the details and register at

rtobrant40events@gmail.com

District forty website

Check out the District 40 Website at <http://district40.rto-ero.org>

For Events, Newsletters, Trips & Tours, Opportunities to Volunteer, and more.

“Like” our District 40 Facebook Page

<https://m.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict40Brant/>. Great page to keep up-to-date with items of social interest.

Want to promote a community event?

Email [Barb Rogelstad](mailto:rogieba@rogers.com), Webmaster & Social Media. rogieba@rogers.com



On November 24th, approximately 80 members and guests started the Holiday Season off with an enjoyable celebration at the Brantford Golf & Country Club. It was absolutely wonderful to be able to share some holiday cheer while socializing with friends and colleagues...in person!!

The setting was beautiful and the food well-presented, delicious and plentiful...cheese and crackers, antipasto, veggies, fruit and desserts. Guess which tray had little left at the end of the evening?

Members were asked to bring donations of money or food for the Brantford Food Bank and we were thrilled with the response! Thank you for your generosity - we collected \$1,570 and two boxes of food!

We hope that the spring will bring more opportunities for us to get together!

- Lynn Haylock

Change of address or personal info?

Please make sure to let RTO know!

RTO office: 1-800-361-9888 or

RTO website <http://www.ero-rto.org>



Vibrant Voices ~ Older adults are the fastest growing age group in Canada and RTO-ERO is advocating for critical policy improvements to address urgent needs now and create a more secure and compassionate future for everyone.

Check out the many good ideas in these resources from *Vibrant Voices*, “*The Power of One*” “*The Power of Many*”, or watch the three-part **webinar series** on our *key advocacy issues* - geriatric health care, seniors strategy and environmental stewardship.

To register go to <https://rtoero.ca/vibrant-voices/>

We also encourage you to send a personal email to your elected representative using the ***Long Term Care Advocacy Form***. This can be a powerful tool for change.

For more information on Vibrant Voices go to our website <http://district40.rto-ero.org> and Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/RTOERODistrict40Brant/>

Look for information regarding the next upcoming election in the spring newsletter.

Quick Contacts:

M.P.P. Will Bouma

www.willbouma@PC.OLA.org
NEW Phone Number 519-759-0361

M.P. Larry Brock

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Seniors and Kids Intergenerational Programs (S.K.I.P.) aims to bridge the gap between generations and is helping to build an age-friendly community. S.K.I.P., originating in Brantford -Brant County, initiated a program called "Buzz Me". "Buzz Me" connects seniors with a live person between the hours of 8am-8pm Monday through Friday. In an effort to combat social isolation, seniors can stay up to date about what's happening in the community or simply enjoy a pleasant conversation with a dedicated volunteer. This line of communication is NOT a crisis line, but a friendly voice.

Brant District 40 received a Community Grant in October 2021 towards a project called "Buzz Me Bears" which intends to spread the word about the "Buzz Me" program to seniors in hospitals, long term care homes, and seniors residences in Brant County. Brant District 40 is presently working with S.K.I.P. to reach seniors in isolation and promote beneficial live connections between seniors and trained volunteers in social work degree program.

What are "Buzz Me Bears"?

"Buzz Me Bears" are stuffed teddy bears with attached information cards that have a telephone number for the "Buzz Me" senior call centre which is a service providing social connection to seniors in isolation. Brant District 40, in collaboration with S.K.I.P., purchased 250 teddy bears and distributed them to BGH, Willett, RiverView, Tranquility, Amber Lea, Charlotte Villa, Hardy Terrace and Brierwood Gardens. Through our efforts we hope to see a number of seniors engage in the Buzz Me program and find a meaningful connection with a trained volunteer.

Vibrant Voices explains that "... social isolation can affect emotional, mental and physical health." We believe that those seniors engaged in this "Buzz Me" program will experience an increase in positive health outcomes as a result of the socialization that is available through this highly accessible program. We hope that the seniors receiving a teddy bear will be among those living alone in their own homes, or in long term care residences, or those living in low income facilitates where perhaps resources are thin. Providing "Buzz Me Bears" will not only provide access to information about the "Buzz Me" program but will alleviate the stress on family members, health care providers, and activity coordinators who may not have the time/ resources to provide individualized social engagement for every senior in need.

It is our hope that the delivery of "Buzz Me" information using a teddy bear gives seniors a unique opportunity to read the information card, make a call, and book a weekly time to chat with a friendly voice. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving a "Buzz Me Bear" please email Barb Rogelstad rogieba@rogers.com and she will put one aside for you.





Your Executive has been brainstorming what we could do that you might enjoy. After a 2-year hiatus things have changed. So we need your help to organize some activities.

How about any of these? Please call one of the Executive and volunteer to help and /or to express your interest in any of these:

1. Virtual Coffee

Join me for a Casual Coffee Chat' **11:00 - 12:00 Friday Feb.25th.**

Get a mug of your favourite coffee or other beverage

You may want to add a sticky treat.

An email with the link to a Zoom meeting will be forthcoming after you register at rtobrant40events@gmail.com

Hopefully we can meet again at a Coffee Shop in the spring when it is safe!!



2. Do you want to learn to ZOOM ?



You can take part in RTO Zoom activities.

You can talk with your friends and family face to face.

It's fun!

3. Join a BOOK CLUB ?

Talk about what you read with others with the same interests.



4. Attend a Speakers Series ?

What topics would you like to hear about?

Do you know any good speakers to suggest?

5. Play Golf. Be part of the team.

We need a new Golf Committee.

We have the planning information from the former committee but we need you to help organize one or it cannot happen.



CONTACT Betty Anne about any of these ideas that may be of interest to you

president40@districts.rtoero.ca or 519-484-2742



Pres. ~ Betty Anne Whitney...president40@districts.rtoero.ca

Past Pres ~ Keith Gloster...keithgloster1@rogers.com

Governance~ Dave Haylock...david.hayock@hotmail.com

Sec. ~ Janet Rubas ..rubasil@gmail.com

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Membership ~ Lynn Haylock... rtobrant40membership@gmail.com

Breakfast/Luncheons ~ Christine Hazell 519-865-9463 or Jill Elliott 519-717-4430

...rtobrant40events@gmail.com

Political Advocacy ~ open

Members at Large ~

Mary Hryniw ...51mhryniw@cruiseshipcenters.com

Deb Skoretz ... skoretz@execulink.com

Jim Harder...jimharder@hotmail.ca

Local Charitable Donations

Each year, Brant District 40 makes charitable donations to local organizations that fit the criteria of our Local Charitable Donations Policy. Please see the Brant District 40 website for the 'Brant District 40 Local Charitable Donations Policy'. This policy will provide details regarding criteria and timelines. If you feel your organization meets the parameters described in the policy and thus would be an appropriate recipient of a donation, please send a request and a brief description of how your organization supports the local community to District President Betty Anne Whitney. As indicated in the policy, this request must be received by the District President by April 1, 2022. For 2022, \$1000 has been set aside in the District 40 budget for local charitable donations. The members of the executive of Brant District 40 are pleased that Brant 40 RTO is able to support worthy local organizations.



BEAT THE FEBRUARY BLUES

TRY A TRIVIA LIFT and *Challenge your COVID brain!*

Noel has devised some TRIVIA challenges for you!

The **June Szeman Just4fun Trivia Games on Zoom** have been a great warm-up on Thursdays throughout February.

Now it's time for the **Gord Osmond Trivia Challenge**

Thursday March 3,

7:00 pm sharp start

Register your team of 4 at

rtobrant40events@gmail.com



FUN PRIZES!

If you know of anyone retiring in the next five years, please pass on the information about the Retirement Planning Workshop. Lynn Haylock

If you would be happy to be removed from the list of members who receive the print version of the newsletter, please let me know. **This would mean that you would only receive the newsletter by email.**

Please contact me at rtobrnt40membership@gmail.com

Also, mix-ups can occur at the District level and at the Provincial level. If you know of any members who did not receive this newsletter by email, please ask them to contact **Provincial** by phone to get the problem resolved.

Virtual Retirement Planning Workshops

Do you know someone retiring soon? RTOERO is hosting **Virtual Retirement Planning Workshops!**

To register go to: <https://rtoero.ca/events/retirement-planning-workshops/>

The comprehensive session covers what you need to know to prepare for retirement.

- Benefits of activating your free RTOERO membership while you are still employed
- Planning for your financial future
- Your pension
- Health benefit for retirees, including the advantages of group insurance
- How RTOERO benefit plans can help secure your future
- Retirement insights from your peers



Our session is for everyone from the education community – whether you are retiring this year or considering retirement in the next few years

- Private schools, First Nations, public/Catholic schools and school boards
- Early years staff
- Post-secondary faculty and staff
- Ministries of Education, education associations, student transportation



Thanks to our members for their continued support of Goodwill. We appreciate your communication. Please keep us informed of passings, anniversaries and significant occasions in the lives of our members.

Shirley Latulippe shirleylatulippe@rogers.com

Margaret Gillan mlgillan@gmail.com

New RTOERO white papers shed light on healthy aging

How can Canadians age the best? That's a critical question for a country where almost 18% of the population is over 65, heading to 20% within a few years and 25% by mid-century. Canadians are living longer, and as they do they also need to live better. To explore how, RTOERO released four white papers to look at different dimensions of healthy aging:

- The health coverage gap: How Canadian retirees can protect themselves against the inevitable
- 5 ways to think about retirement planning...and money isn't one of them
- Healthy at any age: Understanding wellness across the lifespan
- The nuances of ageism: How intersectionality can impact the experience of aging

Find the white papers in the [resource](#) section on the RTOERO website at rtoero.ca/resources.



**RTO
ERO**

A better future,
together
Ensemble pour
un avenir meilleur

Better lives for Canada's education
community retirees

Une vie meilleure pour les retraités du
secteur de l'éducation au Canada

Pandemic travel coverage

If you have questions about travel during COVID please go to rtoero.ca.

At the very top of the page , you will see a red line entitled : Learn how RTOERO is responding to COVID-19.

Read and click through the information below. Some of the information is below, including:

"Our travel insurance now covers COVID-19 medical emergencies while travelling, even during the time of government-issued travel advisories. This change is retroactive to Oct. 1, 2020.

Trip cancellation or interruption.

Coverage remains in place if you need to cancel or interrupt your trip for any of the reasons on page 73-76 of your Insurance Plans Booklet, including an existing medical condition that has become unstable.

Important note: You are not covered for trip cancellation or interruption related to COVID -19. However, unlike other travel plans, RTOERO will continue to reimburse for cancellations and interruptions unrelated to COVID-19.

You have emergency medical coverage as long as you did not have any symptoms within 90 days prior to leaving. This coverage applies even during the government's advisory to avoid travel outside of Canada due to the pandemic. Coverage includes, but is not limited to, hospital accommodation, physician charges and prescriptions. Please note that Emergency Air Transportation benefits may be available, when medically required and approved in advance. Contact Global Excel Management using the applicable phone number on your benefits card before starting any medical treatment. For complete details of emergency medical coverage, please refer to pages 50 to 67 of the Insurance Plans Booklet.

Travel with care.



(continued from page one)

You can register at rtobrant40events@gmail.com and I will send you a link if it has to be by Zoom. Either way, I look forward to seeing you on May 4th. Watch for an announcement closer to the date but mark it on your calendar.

You will have read about our Buzz Me Bears Community Grant Project for this year. RTO donated \$2500.00 to the project. Barb Rogelstad has worked tirelessly on your behalf to bring this to the community. You may have seen an article in the paper about it. If you have a pet community project in mind for 2023 that would benefit seniors please contact one of the Executive. We will be making a decision about the next year very soon.

At the Annual Meeting we did a survey about what members might like us to do as a group. In addition to our regular fare people thought golf, coffee, get-togethers and an Art Show would be worth trying. We will see what we can do as soon as COVID restrictions are relaxed. Watch our website for updates. If you would be interested in helping with any of these, or if you have other ideas, please let me know. If you are an artist or craftsperson, start saving your creations.



Betty Anne

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N3T 4B9