



THE ISLAND CONNECTION

DISTRICT 47
VANCOUVER ISLAND

SPRING 2018

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Editor's Notes:

Welcome to this issue of District 47's newsletter, 'The Island Connection'. The focus of this issue is "Your Life, the Next Chapter". We have articles on Self-improvement, Health and Volunteering as well as the usual information plus upcoming events. May you find inspiration and motivation as you write the next chapter of your life in retirement. Enjoy and make the time and effort to get out, to learn new things, to pursue hobbies and socialize with colleagues and friends.

"Success is when you look back at your life and the memories make you smile."

Upcoming Events

1. **Thurs. Mar 15**, Nanaimo-Lunch at Cactus Club-see p. 10
2. **Wed. Apr. 25**, Trip to Shelter Pt. Farm/ Distillery-see p. 10
3. **Wed. May 2**, Spring Gathering, Cowichan Golf Club-see p. 2
4. **Thurs. June 14**, Qualicum Beach-Lunch at CView Restaurant-see p. 10
5. **Tues. June 12**, Willows Beach Walk-see p. 11.

All members and their guests are welcome at our events.

Spring Gathering

Wed. May 2, 2018

Cowichan Golf and Country Club

Agenda: 10:00 Registration, Tea, Coffee, Muffins, Business Meeting
Speakers: Martha Foster, Provincial President, RTO/ERO
Stephen Wong, Health Benefits administrator,
Johnson Inc.

12:15 Lunch Buffet

Cost: \$25 (partly subsidized by your District)

If you require transportation to the Spring Gathering check the bottom of the form on page 3 or contact one of the executive members listed.



Directions: From the South

Take Trans-Canada Hwy 1 north toward Duncan (Golf Club is about 5 Km south of Duncan). Turn Right onto Bench Rd. (traffic lights). Turn Left onto Golfers Dr., which will lead you into the Golf Club.

From the North

Take Trans-Canada Hwy 1 south from Duncan (Golf Club is about 5 Km south of Duncan). Turn Left onto Bench Rd. (traffic lights). Turn Left onto Golfers Dr., which will lead you into the Golf Club.

Sometimes circumstances dictate that we have to change our plans. If this happens, and to ensure that you receive a refund, please notify Rex Sharman PH: 250-294-6304, email: sharman9@gmail.com at least 3 days before this event.

**District Executive
2017-2019**

President:

Bill Huzar (250-995-3154)

Past President:

Gloria Humphrey

Vice-President:

Debbie Walker (250-729-0604)

Secretary:

June Farmer (250-756-0660)

Treasurer:

Rex Sharman
(250-294-6304)

Victoria Unit President:

Ron Hall (250-538-0046)

Mid/Upper Island Unit President:

Penny Stowell-Smith (250-760-0095)

Mid/Upper Island Unit Representative:

Phil Little (250-245-7245)

Victoria Unit Representative:

Barbara Strachan (250-383-3195)

Members at Large:

Ruth Beninger (ruthbeninger@gmail.com)

Jim Ross (wjross2001@shaw.ca)

Executive Member Emeritus:

Irene McDonald

**SPRING GATHERING
WED. MAY 2, 2018
10:00 a.m. COWICHAN
GOLF AND COUNTRY
CLUB**

**Special Guests: Martha Foster,
Provincial President RTO/ERO,**

**Stephen Wong, Health Benefits
administrator, Johnson Inc.**

12:15 Fabulous Buffet Menu

**Cost: \$25 to members and guests
(partially subsidized by District)**

**Spring Gathering coupon
Please complete and return by April
21, 2017 to:**

**Rex Sharman
516 Harbinger Ave.
Victoria, B.C.
V8V 4J1**

phone: 250-294-6304

Name(s): (print)

phone/email:

Number: ___ X \$25= _____

**Cheques only payable to:
RTO District 47**

**Deadline: Mon. Apr. 23
I will attend if transportation
can be provided _____**



District President's Message

A Timely Reminder of our Mortality

It was with great regret that I learned of the death of our District Past President, Gloria Humphrey, on January 24, 2018. She started her career as a grade one teacher in Ontario and proceeded to grow her career in Manitoba and British Columbia before returning to Ontario where she received her Master's Degree in Education. Her influence on the education systems she taught in, particularly Dufferin County, were significant.

As an active RTO member, Gloria served as President of the Victoria Unit from 2013-2015, as District President 2015 -2017 and as Pensions and Retirement Concerns representative both at the Unit and District Level. She attended several Senates representing District 47. Gloria chaired the Victoria Unit phone committee for several years. She was active as an Executive member of the Canadian Club in Victoria, an avid bridge player and golfer. She and her husband, Harvey, were members of the Royal Colwood Golf Club. Gloria was diagnosed with lung cancer in December 2016 and died of cancer on January 24, 2018. Gloria leaves her husband Harvey and extended family. There was no service at Gloria's request. A donation on Gloria's behalf was made to Victoria Hospice.

The New World of RTO-ERO

As you read this newsletter, RTO-ERO will be undergoing a significant change. At the October 2017 Senate attended by me, Debbie Walker as Senators and Ron Hall, Victoria Unit President as Observer, the new Bylaws and Policies for RTO-ERO were adopted. This would lead to a change in registration of the organization from the Ontario Not For Profit Corporations Act to the Canada Not For Profit Corporations Act.

Under the new Bylaws, the existing Provincial Executive (President, First and Second Vice President, two Executive Officers and Past President) will be replaced at the May Senate by a nine-person elected Board of Directors who will elect among themselves a Chair and Vice Chair and other officers of the corporation.

In this first election, there will be three board members elected for a three-year term, three for a two-year term and three for a one-year term thereby setting up a rotating Board membership renewed at each Annual General Meeting to be held in May of each year.

Along with me, attending Senate in May will be Ken Lee as Senator (replacing Ron Hall, Victoria President, who is unable to attend) and Debbie Walker as Observer.

Bill Huzar, President, District 47

Retired Teachers Support Programs for Refugee Families

Retired teachers from Ontario, District 47 RTO/ERO, have provided \$4,000 through a STO (Service to Others) grant, to the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society for resource materials to benefit early childhood programs offered by CVIMS to children from refugee families.

"Play is the child's natural language and allows them the opportunity to externalize their own stories. We are committed to promoting the value of play in supporting children's emotional development, particularly those suffering from trauma," said Jennifer Fowler, CVIMS executive director.

AND THEN IT IS WINTER

Time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. But, here it is, the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise. How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is, my friends are retired and getting grey-or gone, they move slower now and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me, but I see the great change. Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant but, like me their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! Taking a nap is not a treat anymore it's mandatory!

And so now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did! But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last, this I know-that when it's over on this earth it's NOT over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done, things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime. So, if you're not in your winter yet, let

me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. Whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it now!

Life goes by quickly. So do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life, so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one.

LIVE IT WELL!
ENJOY TODAY!
DO SOMETHING FUN!
BE HAPPY!
HAVE A GREAT DAY!

Submitted by June Farmer

Remember: It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.

Scholarship Application: Change in Application Date

We are pleased to advise that the deadline date for the submission of Project – Service to Others Scholarship Applications has been extended and is now the close of business on **Thursday, March 15, 2108.**

The application and information can be found at: <https://www.rto-ero.org/programs-services>

The Man from Ugly

One advantage being on this side of retirement, and with our RTO plan that covers some travel issues, is that we do tend to roam a bit and in doing so we meet some very interesting people.

I was in El Progreso, a small city in the north of Honduras. I have travelled there 7 times now to accompany a friend, a Jesuit priest, who has received death threats because of his work as director of a radio station and a human rights investigative center. Padre Ismael (Melo) Moreno invited me to accompany him, as among human rights and environmental defenders it is thought that the presence of "International Accompaniers" provides a measure of safety.

One day I was at a church for the funeral of Fr. Gustavo, another Jesuit priest who was born in California but who worked most of his life as a missionary in Mexico and Honduras. Gustavo lived a full life and died from a stroke while visiting in the south of Honduras. He was a very gentle and kind man, who perhaps because of his Hispanic roots was not a typical "gringo". After the funeral there was a brief gathering at the entrance of the church with light refreshments being offered. There I noticed a short elderly looking man walking with great difficulty using two crutches. A while later as I got into a car to go to the cemetery with my friend Melo, I was surprised that this man also got into the car with us. I was introduced to "Gilo" (pronounced Hee-low) and when we arrived at the cemetery high on the mountain behind the city it was suggested to Gilo that perhaps he should wait by the car as the climb up to the grave site was quite difficult.

Gilo did not accept the suggestion and with great difficulty he made his way up to the gravesite. He was a friend of Padre Gustavo and had travelled more than 10 hours by bus to be present for the funeral. Then Gilo had to come back down to the car, just as difficult a walk as was going up. We were invited to the house of one of Padre Melo's sisters for lunch and Gilo came along. I did not realize that I was the stranger, as Gilo was well known by the family and obviously very dear to everyone. Gilo delighted in telling me that he was from the town called "Feo", Spanish for "Ugly". That is its real name! The province is called Bonito (Pretty) and when it was being opened up for agriculture a group of migrant Mexican workers were sent in to clear brush. Bonito is in the far northeast of the country and is mostly "selva" (jungle), characteristically hot and humid. These workers were sent to one area and in a short time most of them contracted malaria. They called their work camp "Feo" and it later developed into a town and kept the name.

Later that day I asked Melo about Gilo. His name is Virgilio and he is considered by Melo's family to be one of them. When Melo was a young priest he was sent to the area of Bonito. There was a rare moment when the government proposed land reform which was opposed by the feudal landowners but was welcomed by the landless poor and supported by Melo. The parish covered a large section of Bonito and Melo had a schedule for visiting different villages. Gilo managed this schedule.

It came to Gilo's attention that a group of the landowners had paid a group of "sicarios" to assassinate Melo on his next visit to Feo. Melo was unaware of this threat. Quietly Gilo changed Melo's schedule, and on the weekend when Melo was scheduled to be in Bonito, he was sent off to a different village. However the sicarios arrived brandishing their weapons and waited in vain for three days for Melo to arrive. Some months later the landowners learned that Gilo had changed Melo's schedule and the sicarios were again dispatched to get their revenge. They arrived in Feo, found Gilo shot him multiple times leaving him for dead and left.

When Gilo was found, he was barely alive. He was carried out, taken to a medical station, then to a clinic and then finally to a hospital in San Pedro Sula – a 12 hour trip by car or truck. The bullets did not kill Gilo but they exacted huge damage to organs and bones. He was in the hospital for 6 months where Melo's sister visited daily. When he was released he went to the home of this sister where he was cared for during a lengthy period of recovery. Gilo survived but was left with major physical challenges.

Melo's family reveres Gilo, knowing that it is because of him that Melo is alive today and that Gilo's medical difficulties are a direct consequence of his intervention to protect Melo. Since that day I have learned that Gilo has had more surgery on his legs which has given him some improvement.

This "man from Ugly" turns out to be one of those unsung heroes, who seeks neither compensation nor acclaim. He chose to do what was right and he paid the price for that choice. Unlike so many others in a country known as the "murder capital of the world", he has survived. One of his great pleasures is to show strangers his official identification that verifies him as the man from "Ugly".

Written by Phil Little

Fatuma and Me (One Member's Experience Volunteering to Mentor a Refugee)

We have done many things together in the last few months.

We have suffered through cold temperatures, snow and grey skies in several Tim Horton's in Nanaimo. One day we drove up a hill to look down on the ferry terminal at Departure Bay, as we talked about how to catch a ferry, where it goes, and the distant lights of Vancouver near Horseshoe Bay and the ferry terminal. Another day we looked downtown for a government building that Fatuma needed to find. We visited a beach and took photographs on Fatuma's phone. Twice we went to Walmart (ugh) to send money to Africa, and then found a bank machine to withdraw some money. We visited the library in the northern part of Nanaimo to see the books and the new building, and another day visited a book sale in a large mall. Two weeks ago we drove to find the closest Dairy Queen, and of course we have visited London Drugs many times, in search of cold medicine, phones, a tablet and a crock pot. We have found lots of groceries in SaveOn Foods too.

When doing our work, we have read about refugees crossing from the US into Manitoba, Malala, the new governor general, Tim Hortons, and a citizenship ceremony. We have practiced grammar many times while looking for verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs. We've also read some recipes, the Canada Food Guide and the rules to find work in Canada, and how to write about your hopes for a job and which kinds of jobs would suit you best. We have read about how to find directions in a city and catch a ferry. We've also looked a number of times at an atlas to find where different places are: Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Yemen, India, and South Africa, as well as Emerson in Manitoba, Ottawa in Ontario, and the provinces of Canada. We looked carefully at a local map showing Nanaimo, nearby waters and the route to Horseshoe Bay near Vancouver.

The above was written before Fatuma and I broke for the summer holidays when her English needed simplification, as seen in the sentence structure and basic verbs. I used it as a dictation for her, and then we broke down the grammar somewhat, again simplistically. Now in February our work is more complex with more parsing of the grammar, and a more complex vocabulary. We often work on homework she has from her English class at the multi-cultural centre, topics such as advanced job-seeking, forming questions from more complicated sentences, specifics about banking, information gathering from readings about such things as the sinking of the Titanic. She is now in part 5 of the 8 part English program, and even studied on her own to pass her learner's driving test. She has a very strong work ethic, and is curious about all kinds of things about what it is to be a Canadian woman. From a very male-dominated country and cultural group, she is remarkably open to hearing about what we experience, such as women's roles, marriage patterns, alcohol use, bringing up children, Canadian foods, driving rules as we drive to and fro..... She says that if she ever gets a car she will explore every part of Nanaimo and learn everything!

If you can, I encourage you to consider helping a refugee or immigrant family with their language, their understanding of Canada, the interpretation of what they see around them in the community, and go to every Tim Horton's you can. They seem happy to have us visit, to drink coffee and do our studying there. Good for Nanaimo too, to see us around the place!!!

Shirley Bell

Victoria Unit President's Report

2017 was an election year for our unit, and several members came forward at the To Hell With The Bell AGM on 6 September to join our executive. At a well-attended gathering at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, Barb Strachan's position as acting Vice-President was taken on by Ken Lee. Barb also relinquished her stand-in role as Political Advisor to Carol Steward. We were also happy to welcome Andrea Rowan who is our new secretary. Fortunately, Barb agreed to stay on the executive as a Member-At-Large. The members who were previously serving in the other positions were all returned. So, once again, we are pleased to report that there is a strong and full complement forming our executive for the next two years.

Another important feature of this meeting was to hear Mr. Murray Rankin, MP, as our guest speaker. He engaged us with a very well informed talk about Medical Assistance In Dying, (M.A.I.D.). This is often a difficult and complicated matter that individuals and families can face, as health declines from a variety of debilitating diseases. Mr. Rankin clearly articulated several insights into how we can manage decisions during very trying circumstances. The audience appreciated his sharing his thoughts and experience with us.

In late October, I joined Bill Huzar and Debbie Walker in Toronto at the RTO's Fall Senate, where elections were held and several issues were discussed in detail.

On 6 November the executive met at Royal Colwood Golf Club.

Our Annual Christmas Social was well attended once again with close to 75 members coming out to The Beach House in Cordoba Bay. It was a beautiful sunny day outside, and inside we enjoyed a tasty buffet luncheon with lots of good music, camaraderie, and fun.

On 17 January we started the new year by setting our budget for the year ahead and planning future events for 2018.

SPRING AGM

Our annual district AGM will be held on Wednesday 2 May, 2018 at the Cowichan Golf Club. Our guest speaker will be Stephen Wong, who always offers engaging and valuable information about our benefits. We encourage our members to head to Duncan to catch this event and enjoy a buffet luncheon. Please be sure to send in your cheque for \$ 25 made out to " RTO District 47 " along with the cutout registration form to Rex Sharman by the April deadline. Look for further details in this newsletter. We look forward to seeing you there!

Ron Hall, President, Victoria Unit

PENNY'S THOUGHTS

Happy New Year to all of you. As I sit writing this, the sun is shining brightly. Something we have not seen for a while. It has seemed to me that there have been more rainy/ gloomy days this winter than usual. Perhaps though, I think that every year. Having spent some time in Scotland, I do enjoy the fog, and the horn of the ferries as I am reminded of the time I have spent there with family.

Your Executive are all working hard to plan Social Events as well as acquiring grant money for special projects, which our members can become involved in. Please look for a report by Phil Little on a project he spearheaded involving the Multicultural Society in Nanaimo. We are grateful for all of his efforts in successfully obtaining grant money for this STO project.

Bonnie McGlynn planned a wonderful Christmas Party held in December at the Nanaimo Golf Club. Bill Huzar, our District President attended as our special guest. The food was delicious, the door prizes fabulous and the camaraderie of those attending all made for a special Event. We thank Bonnie for all of the planned social activities. Please check this newsletter to check on social events she has planned during the next few months. Please support Bonnie and your Executive by attending as many occasions as possible, as it is your attendance that makes for a successful time.

I hope you all enjoy the rest of this winter. Lets hope for an early Spring. May 2018 be a happy and healthy one for all our members.

**Penny Stowell-Smith, President,
Mid/Upper Island Unit (MUIU) District 47**

RTO/ERO Foundation Update

Two new projects received funding to empower healthier aging Canadians. In late October, the RTO/ERO Foundation proudly announced almost \$50,000 in funding for two new aging-related research.

GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT INITIATIVES:

- Urinary Incontinence
Self-Screening for Healthy Aging is designed to increase awareness and timely treatment of urinary incontinence in older adults through a self-screening process, designed in two versions—one for men and one for women. The self-screening project is based out of the School of Nursing at the University of British Columbia, RTO/ERO's first grant in B.C.
- Dancing for Cognition and Exercise (DANCE) is a series of 12 videos that engage frail older adults in fundamental movement that target balance, strength and body coordination. Led by the GERAS Centre, part of Hamilton Health Sciences. The DANCE project is developed through a collaboration of a geriatrician, occupational therapist, research student trainees and trained dancers. Once complete, the video learning tools will be widely accessible including through the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal, an RTO/ERO partner.

RTO/ERO Foundation has now invested in 13 outcomes-based research and programs that focus on healthy aging.

Members are encouraged to learn more about the Foundation and its key priorities:

1. Aging-related research and training
2. Innovative community-based programs to reduce social isolation

Your donations support these priorities.

Learn more about the RTO/ERO Foundation at www.embrace-aging.ca <<http://www.embrace-aging.ca>> .

**Ruth Beninger
Foundation Representative**

Celebration of Spring's Arrival LUNCH

Join your RTO friends for lunch. Spouses, partners and friends are welcome also.

Where: Cactus Club Cafe

5800 Turner Rd. (near A & W, off Island Hwy. North), Nanaimo

Website: www.cactusclub.com

When: **Thursday, March 15**, at 11:45 a.m.

****Contact: Bonnie McGlynn by March 13, if attending**

phone: 250-751-0235 or email: bonnseam@shaw.ca

Mid/Upper Island RTO Trip to Shelter Point Farm/Distillery on April 25

Shelter Point Farm and Distillery produces small, artisanal batches of whiskey and vodka. Grain grown on this 380 acre farm, augmented with grain from other B.C. farms, is used to produce liquid spirits. Also, pure spring water, from a mountain-fed aquifer, is used. The Island's beautiful climate adds substance to the winning taste.

Even if you aren't a connoisseur of spirits, Shelter Point farm and the distillery is very scenic, and interesting.

We will end this tour with lunch at a local restaurant. The restaurant will be chosen when the list of participants is compiled, so that your final destination is taken into account.

Location: Shelter Point Farm and Distillery,
4650 Regent Road,
Campbell River, B.C. V9H 1E3
(south of Campbell River, off the Old Island Highway)

Website for more information: www.shelterpoint.ca

When: Wednesday, April 25. Tour begins at 10:30 a.m.

Itinerary: Guided tour of the farm and the distillery, followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Cost: \$10 per person will be collected before the tour on April 25.

Please note that we need at least 10 participants, but no more than 16 participants. If you wish to attend please contact Bonnie McGlynn. **April 18** is the final decision date.

Bonnie McGlynn - phone 250-751-0235 or bonnseam@shaw.ca

Celebration of Summer's Arrival LUNCH

Join your RTO friends for lunch. Spouses, partners and friends are welcome also.

Where: CView Restaurant (Qualicum Beach Inn)

2690 Island Hwy. W., Qualicum Beach

When: **Thursday June 14**, at 11:45 a.m.

Website: www.cviewrestaurant.com

****Contact: Bonnie McGlynn by June 12, if attending**

phone: 250-751-0235 or email: bonnseam@shaw.ca

Please join us for a Willows Beach Walk & Coffee or Lunch

When: Tues. **June 12**, at 11 a.m.

Where: Meet at Cattle Point parking lot, Victoria, B.C.

**Contact Ed Uhig eeuhl@shaw.ca or phone 250-592-3317

PENSION AND RETIREMENT CONCERNS

The following websites may be of interest to you:

McMaster's Optimal Aging Portal provides high quality scientific evidence about healthy aging, written in consumer friendly language. The Portal evaluates health research and resources. This free portal can be found at

www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org

Retire Happy is a website that treats issues that affect retired people, from financial to health and well-being.

jim@retirehappy.ca

RIA Research Institute for Aging. Agri-food for Healthy Aging (A-HA) is a collaborative research and knowledge translation group that aims to improve the health and well-being of older adults through the innovative use of food.

<http://aha.the-ria.ca/>

Pension Pulse is a blog written by Leo Kolivakis, an independent senior economist and pension investment analyst. Previously this blog was written by Keith Ambachtsheer, Director Emeritus, International Center for Pension Management, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

www.pensionpulse.blogspot.ca

Canadian Snowbirds Association provides information for Canadian travellers to the United States.

<http://www.snowbirds.org/>

CAMH's Geriatric Mental Health Services (GMHS) is dedicated to the provision of specialized, interprofessional assessment, treatment, consultation and follow-up services to older persons with mental health concerns, with or without addiction issues. Although treatment is located in Ontario, the website provides mental health information for seniors.

www.camh.ca

District Website

Check out our District 47 Website at [District 47.rto-ero.org](http://District47.rto-ero.org).

Thanks to Bill Huzar for maintaining our website.

50TH ANNIVERSARY GRANT TO 'SPEAKING OUR TRUTH'

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, 2018 is a year of celebration for RTO / ERO. It is the 50th Anniversary of the organization, and as part of honouring the anniversary, each of the 48 districts is being given a special grant of \$2000. In the case of District 47, Vancouver Island, we received permission to spend our \$2000 from our current funds in 2017, and be reimbursed by the provincial office in 2018.

The reason for spending money before we received it, was that we had an opportunity to participate in 2017's Year of Reconciliation by purchasing copies of a marvellous book, *Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation*, by Monique Gray Smith, a local Victoria author. The Year of Reconciliation was being observed by Canadian libraries, museums and archives across the country. The writing of Monique's book was requested by Orca Book Publishers to fill a need in Canadian school curricula in response to recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Indigenous history and residential schools are important aspects of Canadian history and need to be taught in our schools. This book was meant for youth, but adults will gain knowledge from reading it, as well.

In the fall of 2017, there was a lot of publicity about *Speaking Our Truth* and Monique toured and was interviewed by the national media. There were hundreds of people at the official launch of the book at Camosun College in October. Victoria MP Murray Rankin was present as were other dignitaries.

Monique spoke on November 7, 2017, at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre as the last speaker in a Reconciliation Speaker series sponsored by the VNFC Library (where another RTO member, Dale Shortliffe, and I volunteer regularly), the Greater Victoria Public Library and the Victoria Foundation. Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon was a guest, and CBC Radio personality Shelagh Rogers interviewed her friend Monique Gray Smith on stage before an audience of 250+ people. An edited version of the taped interview with the award-winning author was broadcast on CBC Radio's *The Next Chapter* on January 31 and February 4.

The publisher, Orca Books, offered us a special discounted price of \$15 + GST per book (half price), and delivery of the books to the 12 school districts on Vancouver Island and the Prince Rupert district was arranged with the coordinator of Aboriginal Education for Victoria School District 61, Nella Nelson. She delivered them to Duncan at the end of October where she attends regular monthly meetings with colleagues in a similar role at the other 12 school districts. We felt the Aboriginal education coordinators would be the best school district staff members to determine which schools would be the best ones to receive copies of the book. RTO District president Bill Huzar sent a letter before delivery to the Superintendent of Schools in each district to explain the gift of books and why they were receiving them from Retired Teachers of Ontario. Each book had a book plate added inside the front cover: "A Gift from The Retired Teachers of Ontario District 47 Vancouver Island Celebrating Its 50th Anniversary and the Year of Reconciliation 2017."

We believe that *Speaking Our Truth: a Journey of Reconciliation* has the potential to engage readers of all ages and help them to better understand why Indigenous history is a major component of Canadian history, and why we have the painful issues we have confronting us today, as a result of our settler cultures' previous actions. The hope is that from knowledge comes understanding and empathy.

For more information about the book: www.speakingourtruth.ca.

Barbara Strachan, PAC Rep for Unit 1, District 47 Vancouver Island

Highlights and Resolutions passed from the Provincial Executive Meeting January 16-17, 2018



HIGHLIGHTS

The following are the highlights of the Provincial Executive meeting of January 16-17, 2018:

1. Staff explained the successful various strategies to implement the 'Open Enrollment' campaign.
2. The Provincial Executive reviewed the theme and activities that are in place for "Bright Beginnings" event, which are connected to the RTO/ERO 50th Anniversary.
3. The terms of the Provincial Chairs and Committee members will be extended to May 31, 2019, with the exception of the Nominating Committee, which exists under the Constitution, not the new by-laws. This will allow for a smooth transition under the new Governance model.
4. Vacancies for all Advisory and Standing Committees, following the Board of Directors' election of May 29, 2018, will require an application, selection and appointment process due by August 31, 2018. Once this process is finalized, the Nominating Committee under the former Constitution will cease to operate, and only the new Nominating Committee, elected at the Annual Meeting, will exist.
5. Provincial Committee Chairs and the Provincial Executive had a successful meeting, reviewing priorities for the committees' work in 2018.
6. The President and the Executive Director provided the Provincial Executive with a summary of the presentation to CODE (Council of Ontario Directors of Education) which outlines the concern that all retiring staff members should not be prevented from access to retirement planning workshops. The decision of the CODE Executive was to inform all 72 Directors of Education and to ask them to share the information with senior staff and principals within their school boards.
7. The Provincial Executive reviewed the reports of the Constitution Committee, and the Transition Nominating Committee.
8. ACER/CART (Association canadienne des enseignantes et enseignants retraités/Canadian Association of Retired Teachers) has asked RTO/ERO to keep Bill C-27 on the radar.

RESOLUTION PASSED

1. THAT the Provincial Executive approve an increase of the 50th Anniversary Committee budget from \$100,000 to a maximum of \$145,000.

Make Self-Care a Priority for 2018

Self-care is key to good health and happiness. Its many benefits include lowering blood pressure, slows aging, improves sleep and provides effective ways to deal with stress. It will help you experience more energy, mental clarity and inner peace. It supports you both internally and externally to take back control of your life. Self-care was once considered selfish but not anymore. Studies show that it is essential for good health. Massage is fantastic for self-care because you can let go of the worries and burdens of life. Simple breathing exercises and meditation are other great options.

Tammy; Phye R.A., EOT, Lifestyle Harmony LifestyleHarmony.ca

Fitting Self-Care into Your Schedule

Self-care is often seen as selfish however, if we do not care for ourselves, we run the danger of losing who we are. We put our children, our family, and friends ahead of our own needs. Who will they have if you lose YOU? Self-care does not have to be done alone. You can do it along with the other important people in your life. Self-care is more about how you feel when you are doing it rather than what you are doing. Do little things that help you stay true to yourself. Go for a walk. Meet friends for coffee. Volunteer in a place that is important to you. Loving yourself is the only sure way that life's little ups and downs can be managed in a healthy and productive way.

From an article by Jaclyn Younger, RTC,

Self-Improvement Tips for Better Health

At the beginning of a new year many people may like to set goals for self-improvement. Here are some tips that may help get your planning underway:

Identify the 'Why'-It's often easy to know what healthy habits you want to incorporate into your life, but identifying the reason will often be the secret ingredient to success.

Stick with it-A London study followed 96 subjects who were trying to make a change and found that on average it took participants 66 days to make a behaviour a habit.

Incorporate the 3 R's Pattern-REMIND ourselves why we trying to create a healthy habit, establish a regular ROUTINE that develops that habit and REWARD ourselves along the way for our successes.

Tammy Toor, City of Nanaimo, Nanaimo.ca

Wellness-One Step at a time

Wellness is an active, lifetime process of making decisions to help you live a more balanced and fulfilled life. It is the result of deliberate effort of caring for ourselves; eating well, exercising, obtaining preventative medical care and treating chronic medical conditions. Healthier, happier people tend to live longer and have higher energy levels. A sense of wellness helps improve mood and can alleviate depression. A simple thing that can easily be incorporated into our day that will improve wellness is walking! It doesn't matter if you can only make it half way down the street. Make a commitment to walk every day and before you know it, you will have made it right around the block.

Kindness Health Facts

The positive effects of kindness are experienced in the brain of everyone who witnessed the act, improving their mood and making them significantly more likely to 'pay it forward.'

Kindness is kind of like 'weight training'. Studies have found that people can actually build up their compassion muscle and respond to others' suffering with care and a desire to help.

Witnessing acts of kindness produces oxytocin, occasionally referred to as the 'love hormone' which aids in lowering blood pressure and improving our overall heart-health. Oxytocin also increases our self-esteem and optimism, which is extra helpful when we're anxious in a social situation.

Participants in one study reported that they feel stronger and more energetic after helping others; many also reported feeling calmer and less depressed, with increased feelings of self-worth.

When you are kind to another person, your brain's pleasure and reward centres light up, as if you were the recipient of the good deed—not the giver. This is called the "helper's high."

People 55 and older who volunteer for two or more organizations have an impressive 44% lower likelihood of dying early, and that's

after sifting out every other contributing factor, including physical health, exercise, gender, habits like smoking, marital status and many more. This is a stronger effect than exercising four times a week or going to church.

Like most medical antidepressants, kindness stimulates the production of serotonin. This feel-good chemical heals your wounds, calms you down and makes you happy!

Kindness has been shown to decrease pain by producing endorphins, the brain's natural painkiller.

Perpetually kind people have 23% less cortisol (the stress hormone) and age slower than the average population.

Performing acts of kindness can decrease feelings of anxiety and depression.

Committing acts of kindness lowers blood pressure according to Dr. David R. Hamilton. So, protect your heart, reduce stress, feel more positive, increase your energy, boost your self-esteem and live a longer, healthier, more meaningful life. All you have to do is add some kindness to your day. Be kind and if you receive kindness, 'pay it forward.'

Missing Your Newsletter?

Occasionally members don't receive this newsletter. These members may have moved without notifying RTO in Toronto.

If you hear of any members who are not receiving this newsletter, ask them to contact RTO (1-800-361-9888) to make sure their contact information is correct and current.

Due to privacy rules we cannot change member's addresses at the local level.

RTO/ERO

The Retired Teachers of Ontario is a provincial organization of retired teachers, administrators and others receiving pensions and allowances under the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board.

RTO/ERO is the best organizational friend a retired teacher can have. Formed in 1968, RTO/ERO is dedicated to the needs of Ontario's retired educators and is their official voice, promoting and protecting their interests, particularly in the area of pensions, health care and insurance.

RTO/ERO has maintained this unwavering commitment for over 30 years.

HERE FOR YOU NOW...

HERE FOR YOUR FUTURE

This Publication is distributed to all members of RTO/ERO District 47 British Columbia.

Editor: Jim Ross

Articles of interest are most welcome. Insertion of articles will be at the discretion of the Editor and/or District Executive.

Submission Standards: Electronic TXT file preferred, (or Word DOC file)

emailed to the editor at **wjross2001@shaw.ca**

Typed or hand-printed submissions are accepted. Send snail mail to:

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Moving?

Update your mailing and email address with the membership department at membership@rto-ero.org or by calling 1-800-361-9888.