



THE RETIRED TEACHERS OF ONTARIO
LES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS
RETRAITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

**THE ISLAND
CONNECTION
DISTRICT 47
VANCOUVER ISLAND**

SPRING 2015



Darrell Grande
District President

RTO District 47 President's Message

When my wife Patti and I moved to Vancouver Island from Pickering in 2002, becoming involved with the Retired Teachers of Ontario wasn't a very high priority. (We had a house to build, and we were still getting over the "culture shock" of not only retiring but also living in the relatively small—by Metropolitan Toronto standards—community of Nanaimo. In fact, it was over 1½ years before we even attended an RTO social event: a "To Hell With the Bell" barbeque held at a member's house in Nanaimo.

The friendliness and sense of community that I experienced at that first social gathering somehow drew me into becoming more involved with our organization—even though I'm not, by nature, a "joiner". I eventually joined the executive of the Mid/Upper Island Unit, more or less as a Member at Large, and was impressed by the commitment and sincerity that my colleagues had in trying to address the needs of the membership.

Prior to 2007, there was only one district (District 42) representing all the RTO members living in British Columbia. It consisted of four units: two on Mainland BC, and two on Vancouver Island. The logistics of trying to administer those four units over such a large geographical area led to the realization by the District 42 Executive that a second district was needed in British Columbia. Following approval by the RTO/ERO Senate and Provincial Executive in Toronto, District 47 was created, with the mandate to serve the needs of the RTO members living on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. (District 42 would continue to serve those members living on the mainland.)

District 47's "birthday" is January 1, 2007. With some trepidation, I accepted a position on its inaugural Executive. At that time, we had a membership of 325 (188 in the Victoria Unit, and 137 in the Mid/Upper Island Unit). Eight years later,

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our membership has grown to 420 (236 in Victoria, and 184 in the Mid/Upper Island Unit). We have a vibrant organization whose members share the common bond of having spent much, if not all, of their careers in the educational system.

In May of this year, my term as President of District 47 will end. As I look back on the past, and how our district has grown, I want to express my gratitude to the membership as a whole for their support and encouragement. I also want to thank the members of the unit and district executives with whom I've served over the years for their leadership and commitment to serving the members.

I encourage our members to become actively involved with their unit and district executives. Our organization can only flourish when its members take an active role in its "life". I can speak from personal experience that serving on either the unit or district executive is extremely rewarding. I will always appreciate having taken that first step.

Darrell Grande

A Trip Down Memory Lane

On page 5 of this newsletter you can read a memoir, 'Thank you Thumper'.

Now the Island Connection is inviting you to complete this sentence: "**I remember...**" by sharing a photo, an anecdote, a memory of a past event or person, or anything else from the past you'd like to share.

Each participant will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Hortons.

1. Limit your article or anecdote to no more than 500 words.
2. If you can, submit a photo with a brief description of how it relates to your special memory.
3. Send: by Canada Post to Jim Ross, 5812 Ralston Dr., Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6C5. (hard copies will be returned)
OR as an attachment in an email to wjross2001@shaw.ca

Deadline for next newsletter is July, 17, 2015.

**Your Executive Members are Volunteers...Volunteers are unpaid, not because they are worthless...but because they are priceless!
Show your worth...Volunteer.**

**District Executive
2013-2015**

President:

Darrell Grande
(250-760-0201)

Past President:

Barbara Strachan
(250-383-3195)

Vice-President:

Gloria Humphrey
(250-658-0725)

Secretary:

Penny Stowell-Smith
(250-760-0095)

Treasurer:

Rex Sharman
(250-294-6304)

Victoria Unit President:

Bill Huzar
(250-995-3154)

Mid/Upper Island President:

Jim Ross
(250-756-4794)

Mid/Upper Island Unit Rep:

Phil Little
(250-245-7245)

Victoria Unit Rep:

Irene McDonald
(250-477-0009)

**SPRING GATHERING
WED. MAY 6, 2015
COWICHAN GOLF
AND COUNTRY CLUB**

**Special Guests: Isobel Mackenzie,
B.C. Seniors Advocate, or a
representative + June Szeman,
Provincial President RTO/ERO**

Noon: Fabulous Buffet Menu

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

**Spring Gathering coupon
Please complete and return
by April 22, 2015 to:
Margot Lods
608-105 Gorge Rd. E.
Victoria, B.C.
V9A 6Z3**

phone: 250-920-3893

Name(s): (print)

phone/email:

Number: ___X \$25=_____

**Cheques only payable to
RTO Victoria Unit**

News from Victoria Unit

The Victoria Unit plan to apply for the STO grant of up to \$4000 to support the creation of a Library Corner in the new daycare being built and set to open in the fall of 2015 at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. The money would be used for purchasing some library furniture, shelving and books. RTO volunteers will come on a schedule to read stories to the children in the daycare. Some RTO members are already volunteering in the lending library at the Friendship Centre, the only lending library in a friendship centre in Canada, as far as we know.

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.

Events from Mid/Upper Island Unit

HAVA JAVA

We have switched our meeting place and time to **Haz Beans** coffee shop at the corner of Rutherford Rd. and the Island Hwy. 19A, in Nanaimo.

We still meet on the last Monday of the month at **2:00 p.m.** Please join us for your favourite brew, maybe a goodie and some friendly conversation.

THURSDAY April 9, 2015 Drop In Lunch and Tour of the Longwood Brew Pub

at Longwood Station at the corner of Hwy 19A and Turner Rd., in Nanaimo. Meet at 11:30 for a free tour showing how the beer is brewed. Tour lasts about 30 minutes. Enjoy a pub lunch in the restaurant afterwards around noon.

WEDNESDAY June 17, 2015 Tour of Mooberry Winery and Qualicum Cheeseworks.

The Winery and Cheeseworks are located at 403 Lowrys Road, Parksville. Enjoy a guided tour of the winery and cheeseworks as well as their heritage dairy farm beginning at 11:30. Cost of the tour is \$10 each. The tour lasts approximately one and a half hours, and includes a wagon ride and tasting of their wine and cheese.

Afterwards, for those who wish, we can go to Morningstar golf course for lunch.

FOR THE ABOVE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PLEASE LET PENNY STOWELL-SMITH KNOW IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING SO SHE CAN LET THE VENDOR KNOW APPROPRIATE NUMBERS. CONTACT PENNY AT STOWELLSMITH@SHAW.CA OR 250-760-0095 AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT.

Thank-you Thumper!

By Jim Ross

Do you remember someone who played an important part in your life? Was it a relative, a youth leader, a coach, a clergyman, a teacher, or maybe a friend? When you became an adult did you ever tell that person how influential they had been in your development? Did you ever thank them?

Once I wish I had, now I'm glad I do!

The person who I missed telling how much I appreciated and admired was my junior basketball coach in high school, Mr. Thompson. His nickname (affectionately used behind his back not to his face) was 'Thumper' because when he wanted to get your attention while you were on the court in order to instruct you, he would thump his foot loudly on the floor. You couldn't help but hear it. He would follow up the thumping with instructions on what he wanted you to do.

I wish I had told him how much I learned about the game from him in that one year he was my coach and how much I appreciated his dedication to us during our difficult high school years when we were trying to find our way as young adults. He always took the time to instruct and to provide counsel. He taught me, not only basketball skills, but also some important lessons about dedication, setting goals, and hard work, which helped me focus on my future. Unfortunately, he passed away before I realized how much influence he had on me at a crucial time in my life and I regret that I never told him.

So, when an influential university English professor retired, I did take the time to write a letter, subsequently published in the university magazine, thanking her for her influence on my career choice. Here is that letter:

'Life's journey is about the decisions we make, the opportunities we seize and the people we meet. Sometimes people pass in and out of our lives and we wonder why. But usually each interaction changes us or influences us in some way. However, occasionally we come across a person who has a profound influence on our life's direction, whether he or she knows it or not. A number of people have been influential in my life, but I've missed the opportunity to acknowledge that fact to some of those people. Fortunately one such person, who I now realize did influence my life's journey in a positive way, is still influencing others and I'd like to thank her for the positive influence she had in my life.

When I attended WLU, back when it was still Waterloo Lutheran University in the late '60's, Dr. Flora Roy taught me English. To say she taught me English is an understatement for she taught me much more. She really taught me about having passion, be it for a subject or for living. I came to love the study of literature and how to relate it to my life. As a result of her influence, I earned my undergraduate degree in English, learned to love reading and became a teacher myself, hoping to instill a 'passion for learning in my students'.

I have little doubt that Dr. Roy's influence played a major role in my life and my career choice. Now that I am retired from the teaching profession, I have had a chance for reflection on some of my life's decisions and the people who influenced them.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Roy for the role she played in my life and all those other lives she touched. Thank you, Dr. Roy.'

I'm glad I wrote that because she has since passed away.

And, thank you, Mr. Thompson!

In writing this I hope others will take the time to thank those people who might have influenced their own personal lives. Don't miss the opportunity to thank someone who meant a lot to you. I did, and will continue to do so.

Spring Gathering Wed. May 6, 2015 Cowichan Golf and Country Club

Agenda: 10:00 Socialize
10:30 Business Meeting
12:00 Lunch Buffet
Guests: Isobel Mackenzie, B.C.'s Seniors Advocate or a representative, June Szeman, Provincial President, RTO/ERO

Menu: A sumptuous, delicious and filling Buffet-Cost \$25.00
COMPLETE COUPON ON PAGE 3, BY APRIL 22



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 Margot Lods (250-920-3893, email mlods@shaw.ca) at least 3 days before the event.

B.C.'s Seniors Advocate Appointed

In March 2014, the Province of British Columbia appointed Isobel Mackenzie as the first seniors advocate. Isobel brought over 20 years' experience to the role, working with seniors in home care, licensed care, community services and volunteer services.

The responsibilities of the Advocate include monitoring seniors' services, listening to the issues that seniors say are important to them, providing information and referrals to individuals for services and supports, analyzing broad-reaching issues, and making recommendations for change to the Minister of Health, service providers and health authorities.

Over the next few years, the Advocate will inform seniors about the quality and adequacy of services provided to them in B.C., including surveying residential care clients, recipients of publicly-funded home support, and users of HandyDART. The Advocate will also examine the use of the SAFER subsidy, waitlists for housing and residential care, income levels, elder abuse and the provision of dementia care.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate will begin the review and analysis of seniors' services with a full review of housing, from independent home ownership and rental, to assisted living and residential care. A report on the review's findings will be issued in the spring of 2015.

Mackenzie expects that analysis and reporting on data, adding in seniors' input, as well as listening to the voices of the Seniors Advocate Council of Advisors will begin to make incremental changes in the system of supports for seniors in B.C.

"It has taken a long time to get to where we are today, so changes won't happen overnight," said Mackenzie, "but there are some early recommendations that can make an important impact for individual seniors."

Challenges expected for this role include affecting change in a reasonable amount of time, ensuring the recommendations are actually what seniors want, and making sure that seniors voices are reflected in advice to government and service providers.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate can be reached via email at info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca or by phone at 1-877-952-3181 (toll-free) or in Victoria at 250-952-3181. Read the Advocate's first report on the website at www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca

We are fortunate to have Isobel Mackenzie, or her representative, address our group at the Spring Gathering on May 6, at the Cowichan Golf & Country Club.

Our members of R.T.O. in B.C. need to realize that power of attorney provisions are different in this province than in Ontario. If for any reason a person is unable to exercise care of oneself, it should not be presumed that a family member or friend could automatically step in to help. A formal power of attorney ensures that your wishes are respected when for any reason you cannot manage your own affairs, either financial or health care.

Power of Attorney and Representation Agreements

What is a power of attorney?

A power of attorney is a document that appoints another person, called an "attorney," to deal with your business and property and to make financial and legal decisions for you.

BC has a new Power of Attorney Act

A new Power of Attorney Act came into effect in BC on September 1, 2011. It brought in many new changes relating to "enduring powers of attorney" (discussed later in this script). Powers of attorney signed before September 1, 2011 will generally still be valid. But since the new Power of Attorney Act brought in many changes, it's a good idea to have a lawyer review your power(s) of attorney to ensure they are still valid and will do what you need them to do. Any powers of attorney signed on or after September 1, 2011 must follow all the new laws.

Who should you appoint as your attorney?

Consider carefully who to appoint as your attorney and the powers you want to give. You cannot appoint anyone who is paid to provide you with personal or health care or who works at a facility through which you receive personal or health care, unless that person is your child, parent or spouse. It's important that you trust the person's honesty and judgment. If you have no family member or friend that you can or want to appoint, you can appoint a respected professional such as your lawyer, accountant or trust company. As a power of attorney gives your attorney very broad power, it can cause you a lot of harm if misused. **When is an enduring power of attorney useful?**

An enduring power of attorney may help avoid having the court appoint a "committee" of one or more people to look after your legal and financial affairs in the event that you become mentally incompetent. A committee appointment is much more expensive than making an enduring power of attorney. See DAL script 426 <http://www.cba.org/bc/public_media/health/426.aspx> on "Committeeship" for more information on this.

Do you need a lawyer to make a representation agreement?

The law doesn't require you to consult a lawyer to make a representation agreement. But you should actually see a lawyer if you want to make an agreement. A lawyer can help you to understand the wide range of issues that arise with a representation agreement.

Summary

A power of attorney is a document that allows you to give another person, called the attorney, the authority to act for you in financial and legal matters. The power can be as specific or as general as you wish. But unless you use an enduring power of attorney, it will automatically end if you become mentally incompetent. A representation agreement, on the other hand, can cover personal care and health care decisions, as well as certain financial and legal decisions, if you're unable to make them on your own. notes from Canadian Bar Association - BC Branch

http://www.cba.org/bc/public_media/wills/180.aspx

Ten Tips to make your Life more Fulfilling

Do you ever feel like you aren't getting enough out of life? By doing a few simple things, you can brighten your days and make your life more fulfilling.

1. Get outside more often. It has been said that if you want to live a long life, you should spend as much time outdoors as you can while doing things that are not too physically stressful. Taking a half-hour walk every day will help you avoid depression and decrease any anxiety you may be feeling.

2. Trust your gut. Tune into your own feelings, look at them and work on understanding where the pain is coming from. All of the answers you need are there inside you.

3. Make a new friend. You may think you have enough friends already or that you don't have time to make new friends, but there is always room to add a positive person into your life. Get closer to people you may already know or see on a regular basis.

4. Get involved in your community. It's hard to open a paper and not see the charity events going on close by. If you have the desire to help out, act on it. You will make a difference in the lives of others, and you will feel better, too.

5. Slow down. We rush so much of the time and it's understandable with all that's going on around us. But, if you relax for a moment here and there, just to take in your surroundings and what you are doing. It will make you breathe easier and help you enjoy whatever you are doing more.

6. Appreciate what you have. We all want things, which is fine, but if not getting what you want when you want it makes you sad and angry, you may be asking for too much too soon. Look at your life and focus on the good stuff, see what you have, and don't focus on what you lack.

7. Try a new activity. Take a class, go some place you've never been, or create a new space in your home. Taking on hobbies and activities can be enjoyable and it gives you the opportunity to meet new people and experience new things that will enrich your life.

8. Write your story. Many people are tracing their family histories online these days, and it's a fun hobby. You can also research and write your own story. It may not become a hit movie, but it will give you a fresh perspective on your life and allow you to remember things that you may have forgotten. If writing an autobiography is too daunting, try keeping a journal. Then your story can write itself.

9. Make that apology. If there is someone in your life to whom you need to say, "I'm sorry," go ahead and do it. Letting go of resentments and owning up to your mistakes will give you more room to enjoy your time on the planet. It may also help you connect with a long lost friend.

10. Plan some fun. Happiness comes from moving toward what you want, not from getting it, so you need to have new things to look forward to. Start planning for the year ahead. If you are just sitting around and letting the world pass you by, it's time to get up and start moving. Getting the most out of life is a matter of putting one foot in front of the other and making it happen.

Reprinted from The Times Colonist, August 2014. Thanks to columnist Dr. Barton Goldsmith, author of 'The Happy Couple: How to Make Happiness a Habit One Little Loving Thing at a Time.'

2016 Pocket Planner: call for art submissions. Again this year we are asking you, the talented members of RTO/ERO, to contribute a potential image to be featured on the cover of the 2016 Pocket Planner. We are looking for your own photographs or paintings to be featured, preferably with an abstract or nature theme. Those that are not used may be featured in Renaissance, Liaison, or on Facebook or Twitter and credited appropriately. **All submissions must be from members of RTO/ERO only.** For full details, read the winter issue of Renaissance or email renaissance@rto-ero.org

Boost Your Memory!

From caregiversolutions.ca

Searching for misplaced car keys or eyeglasses? Dr. Anne Fabiny of Harvard Medical School has some simple ways to prevent memory slips and help your brain to learn and remember better.

1. Follow routines: Leave your keys, glasses and cellphone in the same place every day.
2. Slow down: Pay attention to what you are doing to give your brain's systems enough time to create an enduring memory.
3. Avoid distractions: Noisy environments and multi-tasking are major memory busters in today's fast-paced society.
4. Get enough sleep: Stress and lack of sleep are all potential memory spoilers.
5. Check your medications: Check with your doctor to see if your medication could be affecting your memory.

Ten Great Health Foods

By Mayo Clinic Staff

1. Almonds
2. Apples
3. Blueberries
4. Broccoli
5. Red Beans
6. Salmon
7. Spinach
8. Sweet Potatoes
9. Vegetable Juice
10. Wheat Germ

According to the Mayo Clinic these ten foods are the best because they are a good source of fibre, vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, anti-oxidants, low calorie density, are easily purchased and may help reduce heart disease and other health conditions.

**To retirees of George S Henry Secondary School/Academy,
There's going to be a 50th Anniversary Reunion, May 29th-31st, 2015.**

**Please contact Lorne Bradshaw at (613) 546-5922 or bgl10@bell.net <mailto:
bgl10@bell.net>**

Also, check out the George S Henry 50th reunion Facebook page.

Renaissance-call for submissions: Fall 2015-Ageless Spirit

Have you ever thought that you can do anything and that it does not matter how old you are? In this issue of Renaissance, we are going to tackle ageism and common barriers that some members may face and give them inspiration and suggestions on how to move forward and break through the stereotypes. As older adults you have knowledge and experience that is unmeasurable and we would like to hear about your stories of triumph, whether it is how you organized a fitness class or games day for you and others in your community, or how you have lobbied for better treatment of older adults or even how you have taught your grandchildren or young people why they should respect their elders. Share your stories with us. **Perspective to consider:** What does having an ageless spirit mean to you? **Proposal deadline: May 8, 2015**

Renaissance-call for submissions: Winter 2015-Creative Minds

According to Albert Einstein, "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination." How are you inspired by your imagination or creativity? Do you spend your days thinking about the next poem or novel that you are going to write or are you busy working on another masterpiece on your canvas? Maybe your creative juices are stimulated by music, theatre, sculptures or drawing. We want to hear about how your creative mind works and see what you have created. **Perspectives to consider:** How does your creativity effect your life? Why is using your imagination and being creative important to you? **Proposal deadline: August 17, 2015**

Remember:

If you are travelling and have an emergency, you must contact Allianz Global Assistance at the number on the back of your RTO/ERO Johnson Inc. ID card before you seek treatment or, if not possible, within 48 hours or coverage will be limited to \$2000.

Members are proud of our health care plans. Most members would like to see the maximum payouts for specific items increased. We all would like to see the premiums reduced. Since increasing payouts means increasing premiums, the committee governing the plan must balance the needs with the cost of changes.

District Website

Check out our District 47 Website at [District 47.rto-ero.org](http://District47.rto-ero.org). Thanks to Bill Huzar for setting up our website.

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:

W. J. Ross, 5812 Ralston Dr., Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6C5

Moving?

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