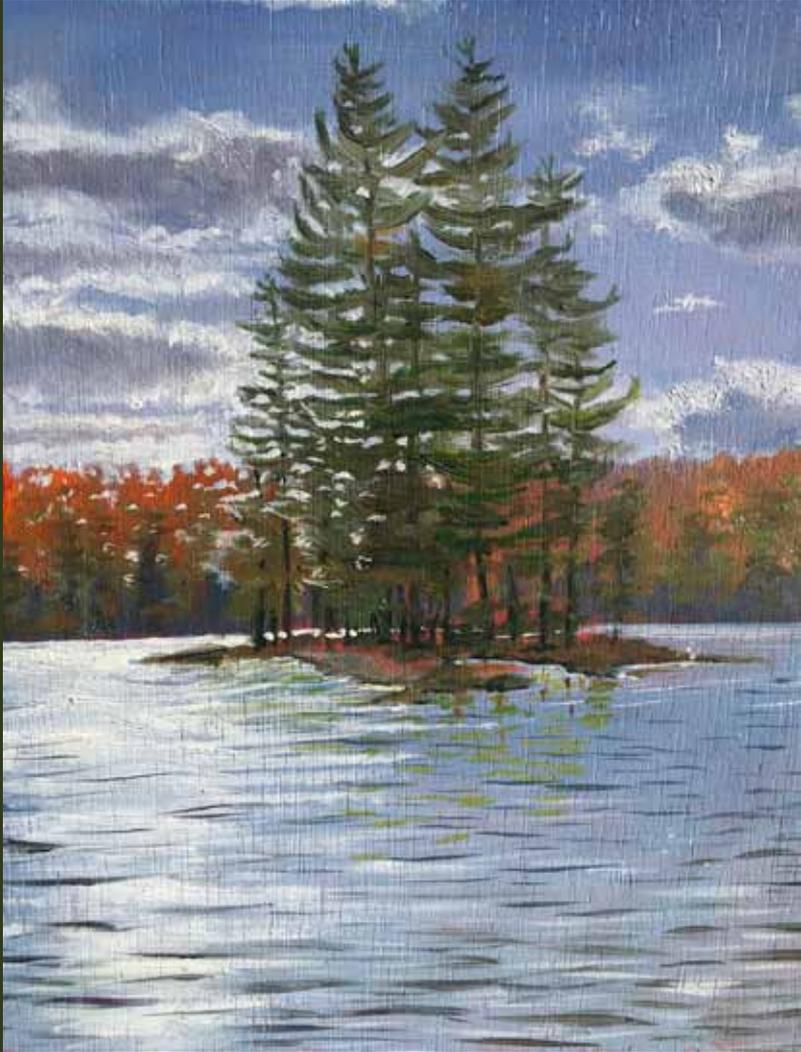




# 34th STORY

District 34 - York Region Vol. 33 No. 3 - September 2021



*Georgian Bay on a Windy Day*  
Plein Air Oil Painting by George Keltika

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Join us on the Internet at [www.our34thstory.com](http://www.our34thstory.com)

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*Jose Fernandes, President*

### President's Message

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Hopefully by the time you read this message, we have all had a great summer. Many of us who were willing, have now received our two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine so we should be ready to start anew this fall. Here we come!

If you will be going outside of our province and/or country, please take some time to review your travel benefits plan, particularly the stabilization clause. If you have any doubts or need clarification, please call our insurance partner, Johnson's Insurance at 1-877-406-9007. (Note that their office in York Region has moved to 500-95 Mural St. in Richmond Hill.)

RTOERO provides great health insurance, but we are more than just an insurance plan. We are involved in Canadian health issues for seniors; we provide access to Best Doctors; and information about isolation in older adults as well as reaching out to politicians and other policy makers when it comes to issues that affect the elderly. But it is at the district level that we really make the difference. We have members join us at all times of the year, but the large majority become members during the summer months. So on behalf of the 4,000 current members, we extend a warm welcome to all who joined us this year and particularly those of you who have just become members.

You are joining the fifth largest district in RTOERO. While it started as a teacher's organization, we are now much more diverse. Ten percent of our membership is now receiving a pension from OMERs, while 75% are receiving a pension from TPP. We are changing and that's a good thing. So, stay put. Our future is bright, diverse and joyful.

Your district board executive faces the challenge of getting our activities going again. We have had a very “unusual” year and we hope that is behind us. I am grateful to our executive members who in difficult circumstances offered members some opportunities to gather by Zoom.

At the time of writing this message, we have not been given the go ahead for in person gatherings, but we are preparing to move towards that. We do hope to have activities and outings in place by at least the beginning of the 2022 and will keep you informed. Please ensure that your (or a family) e-mail is forwarded to Angela Stewart at 34thstoryreminders@gmail.com. Angela sends out monthly updates to all members who have given us permission to send them our emails.

As a volunteer organization, it is often wonderful to hear from members, especially with kind words for our work. For me, it brightened my day to hear from an old friend, Ish Prabdial who took the time to send me a note which included the following

comments:

*“During this year of the covid virus you and your team have done a fantastic job. It was a difficult year to fulfil all the social activities of the organization, but all of you have persevered to make the best of a difficult situation. Congratulations to the team.”*

Among other emails that I have received, and I thank all for taking that initiative, was one from Marg Hall who wrote about the newsletter:

*“The positivity that so many articles display, the activism that the organization is taking vis a vis Long Term care is much appreciated and supported. You have promoted and given digital addresses to so many topics which members can hook into to help through this Covid crisis. Lastly, the photography by Rhonda Starr was breathtakingly beautiful.”*

Thank you, and now let’s get to work! Oops, not that kind of work. We are retired! I hope to see many of you at the activities we are planning in the future.

## Letter of Reply

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*Intro By David Szollosy*

*In our last issue, we shared the letter which our president Jose Fernandes sent to the politicians of York Region. Deb Schulte, Minister For Seniors, sent the following detailed response.*

Dear Jose Fernandes,

Thank you for your correspondence of February 2, 2021, to the Honourable Deb Schulte, Minister of Seniors. It was forwarded to the Honourable Patty Hadju, Minister of Health, on whose behalf we are responding. We appreciate you taking the time to write and share your concerns and recommendations for actions regarding long-term care facilities.

First and foremost, we would like to thank you for the work that you and RTOERO do to promote healthy active retirement living, and for your advocacy work to benefit seniors in Canada. We recognize and appreciate your contribution to the health of Canadian seniors.

As you know, COVID-19 has resulted in heart-breaking tragedies in long-term care facilities and nursing homes across the country – over-worked staff, under-staffed residences, and grieving families. Although long-term care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, in light of COVID-19, the federal government is working collaboratively with provinces and territories to protect vulnerable Canadians in long-term care.

In the 2020 Fall Economic Statement, the Government committed to establishing a new Safe Long-term Care Fund that will provide up to \$1 billion to help the provinces and territories protect people living and working in long-term care. Provinces and territories will be able to use this funding to undertake a range of activities, including carrying out infection prevention and control readiness assessments, making improvements to ventilation and hiring additional staff or topping up wages.

In addition, the Government is also committing \$38.5 million over two years to support training up to 4,000 personal support worker interns through an accelerated 6-week online training program combined with a 4-month work placement, to address acute labour shortages in long-term care and home care.

Additional funding commitments were made to support infection prevention and control measures in long-term care, including \$1 million to engage with third parties to help identify resources to conduct readiness assessments in long-term care facilities and support training on infection prevention and control. For more information, please visit: <https://budget.gc.ca/fes-eea/2020/home-accueil-en.html>.

The federal government has responded in a number of other ways:

- Through the Safe Restart Agreement, the Government of Canada is providing provincial/territorial governments with over \$19 billion that will help them restart the economy over the coming months, while making Canada more resilient to future surges in cases of COVID-19. This includes \$740 million in funding to support our most vulnerable populations, including infection prevention and control measures to protect those in long-term care, and those receiving home care and palliative care. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/intergovernmental-affairs/services/safe-restart-agreement.html>.
- Up to \$3 billion in federal funding has been provided to provinces and territories to support increased wages of low-income essential workers, which can include front-line workers in hospitals and long-term care facilities.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada has published guidance to support the care of residents in long-term care facilities, as well as for infection prevention and control in long-term care, assisted-living facilities, and home care. This guidance was developed with the National Advisory Committee on Infection Prevention

and Control and endorsed by the Pan-Canadian Special Advisory Committee. The guidance recognizes the contribution of families, caregivers and friends, and the need to balance meeting the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of residents with the risk of introduction and transmission of COVID-19. For more information about these documents go to:

- \* Infection prevention and control for COVID-19: Interim guidance for long term care homes
  - \* Interim guidance: Care of residents in long term care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Health Canada and Public Safety Canada continue to work with the Canadian Red Cross to support provinces and territories facing outbreaks in long-term care. Specifically, the Canadian Red Cross is recruiting and training paid volunteers to provide on-the-ground support to long-term care facilities in order to support epidemic prevention and control, basic care for long-term care residents and long-term care site administration.
  - In collaboration with partners, the Health Canada-funded Healthcare Excellence Canada (formerly the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement and Canadian Patient Safety Institute) has launched an initiative to spread promising practices in preventing and mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on long-term care and retirement homes. With an additional \$6.4 million from the Fall Economic Statement, the LTC+ initiative will expand to support up to 1,000 facilities across Canada. The goal is to better position participating facilities to prevent and manage any future outbreaks.
  - The Government of Canada is adapting the Investing in Canada Infrastructure program to respond to the impacts of COVID-19. A new temporary COVID-19 Resilience stream has been created to provide provinces and territories with added flexibility to use existing resources to fund quick-start, short-term projects, including health infrastructure, such as long-term care homes.

- The federal government has also helped provinces and territories to fight outbreaks in long-term care facilities by providing personal protective equipment, (PPE), contact tracing, rapid testing and vaccines.

COVID-19 has exposed a number of issues and challenges in the way we care for seniors in Canada. With an aging population, increasing rates of chronic disease and cost pressures tied to new drugs and technologies, our health system must adapt if it is to deliver better care and better outcomes at a cost that is affordable.

That is why the Government of Canada is providing \$6 billion over ten years for provinces and territories to improve access to home and community care services, including palliative care. Although funding is not specifically targeted to facility-based long-term care, this investment is expected to help more Canadians receive the care and services they need so that they may remain at home longer, and also allow the provinces and territories to optimize the home and long-term care resources at their disposal. Details of the bilateral agreements, including how federal funding will be spent, can be found on Health Canada's website at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/shared-health-priorities.html>.

As you may be aware, in the Speech from the Throne delivered on September 23, 2020, the Government announced its intention to work with the provinces and territories to set new national standards for long-term care so that seniors get the best support possible; and take additional action to help people stay in their homes longer. The government will also look at further targeted measures for personal support workers, who do an essential service helping the most vulnerable in our communities. Canada must better value their work and their contributions to our society. You can learn more about the Speech from the Throne at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/campaigns/speech-throne/2020/speech-from-the-throne.html>.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the state of elder care in Canada and potential solutions. The Government will carefully consider all suggestions made by Canadians, as next steps are determined on these critical issues.

Seniors deserve to be safe, respected and live in dignity. The federal government continues to work in collaboration with provinces and territories to take any action it can to support seniors, and increase resilience of long-term care facilities in order to prevent and mitigate challenges, such as COVID-19.

If you have questions about the information provided in this reply, please contact Sharon Harper, Director General of the Health Care Programs and Policy Directorate, Strategic Policy Branch, at [hc.spb-dgps.sc@canada.ca](mailto:hc.spb-dgps.sc@canada.ca).

Thank you again for writing. We hope this information has been helpful.

Yours sincerely,  
Strategic Policy Branch - Health Canada

## Be Sure to Sign Up For Event Reminders

*By Angela Stewart*

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### Welcome to our new retirees!

**R**TOERO – District 34 publishes a newsletter three times a year and it is usually full of many fun and interesting events. We are currently restricted from having live events, but are looking forward to seeing you soon. Meanwhile, we have some events happening via Zoom.

If you would like reminders of our events, in the form of a monthly email, please contact Angela at: [34thstoryreminders@gmail.com](mailto:34thstoryreminders@gmail.com).

## Our RTOERO Artists

*By Ann Evans*

In the spring of 2019 several members of RTOERO District 34 gathered together a few times and formed an art group. They chatted about techniques and shared their artistic pursuits and endeavours; whether it was subject matter, art mediums or creative writing experiences.

There was always a lot to talk about! Eventually, they were given wall space at a small cafe in Newmarket to display their work. Needless to say, you can guess what happened to their meetings; but their creativity, well that was not curbed!

Hopefully some time in the not too distant future, people will be able to return to their pre-Covid social activities and the art group can start up again. But in the meantime, while the group can look forward to their next F2F get together, this September 2021 edition of The 34th Story will replace the walls of the cafe!

Thank you to our fabulously talented members who have been

so kind as to share their creations with us! Their work has been photographed, and graces our newsletter for your pleasure. You will find oil and acrylic paintings as well as water colours. Enjoy!

## RTO Scholarship Winner

*By Regine Baker*

Proud Grandmother is how District 34 member, Ann Turner, described herself after learning that her granddaughter, Kathleen Gould, won a \$3,000 scholarship from RTOERO.

Kathleen completed her undergraduate degree in Kinesiology at McMaster University and is now working on a nursing degree at Trent University where she is on the president's honour roll.

Last spring, Kathleen worked in Ottawa as a nursing student helping to administer COVID-19 vaccinations. In the future she hopes to use her nurse's training and her kinesiology learning to help improve the quality of the lives of seniors.

Kate, as she is known to family and friends, is a fitness enthusiast who likes running, cycling and yoga and who also enjoys The Arts.

We extend our warm congratulations to both Kathleen and her proud grandmother, Ann.

For information on the RTOERO Scholarship programme or to find an application form go to [rtoero.ca](http://rtoero.ca)

## Supporting 2SLGBTQIA\* Older Adults in Ageing and Old Age

*By Elaine Adam*

**O**n June 9, the Foundation ran a webinar by Dr. Ashley Flanagan from the Ted Rogers School of Management and the National Institute on Ageing at Ryerson University.

Dr. Flanagan explained that sex is what can be objectively measured, such as chromosomes. Sex is assigned at birth due to external anatomy and physical

characteristics. Gender refers to psychological factors, emotions and behaviour.

Women are perceived to be soft and men strong. Gender identification is how you see yourself, while gender expression is how you dress, behave and interact. Sexual orientation is who you are attracted to, physically or emotionally. Usually there is a binary “either/or” orientation.

There are invisible advantages and privileges based on one’s sex; the opposite, marginalization and oppression, is also true. Intersectionality occurs when opposing factors come together for power or for oppression. Dr. Flanagan cited as an example, a white Christian straight male vs. a black Muslim gay woman.

Our society is witnessing the intersection of the LGBTQ community and ageing. Flanagan listed what an eighty year old gay man in Canada has experienced during his life time:

1960 - The RCMP keeps tabs on patrons of gay bars. They inform the FBI when someone crosses the border.

1969 - The Stonewall riots happen in New York City to protest treatment of gay men. Being Gay is decriminalized in Canada.

1973 - Homosexuality is removed as a mental illness.

1986 - Homosexuality is added to the Human Rights Code.

1995 - Gay people are protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

2005 - Civil marriage is legal.

2013 - Transgender people receive protection in Ontario.

2016 - The Pride flag is raised.

2017 - There are updates to the Human Rights Code and the Criminal Code.

With this intersection of the gay community and ageing, there are questions about how people will be supported by our health care system. Will they be confronted by prejudice? If someone has dementia, will things unravel?

Since many have faced problems all their lives, they may be able to handle negative attitudes in their care now. Some may have a network of family, friends and

social supports. Some may have no support. How can we better support them?

Dr. Flanagan had suggestions that answer these questions.

- Do not assume that someone can be identified as gay.
- Respect someone's identity.
- Listen.
- Continue to self educate.
- Remember their history.
- Many are living with unpaid caregivers, friends or family.
- There are supports for them and she listed them:
  - Egale Canada has a web series, The Rainbow Table. <https://egale.ca>
  - Not Another Second: LGBT Seniors share their stories on YouTube: [notanothersecond.com](http://notanothersecond.com)
  - To Survive on This shore is a photograph and interview series. [tosurviveonthishshore.com](http://tosurviveonthishshore.com)

- Pride Toronto Guide features the Toronto Senior Pride Network. [seniorpridenetwork.com](http://seniorpridenetwork.com)
- The Ontario Centre for Learning and Innovation has a toolkit to educate seniors' homes on inclusivity. [clri-ltc.ca](http://clri-ltc.ca)

Other countries have seniors' homes dedicated to the community. In Canada that is not the case, some seniors prefer inclusivity, others want separate living with like-minded people.

\*2SLGBTQIA stands for 2 Spirited (indigenous term), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Androgynous and Asexual.



## FAST

*Shared By Susan Leppington*

**T**he Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada warns us about experiencing a stroke.

Stroke is a medical emergency. If you experience any of these signs call 9-1-1. Do not drive to a hospital. An ambulance will get you to the best hospital for stroke care.

**F**ace is it drooping?  
**A**rms can you raise both?  
**S**peech is it slurred or jumbled?  
**T**ime to call 9-1-1 right away.

Act **FAST** because the quicker you act, the more of the person you save.

To learn more about stroke and the other signs visit [heartandstroke.ca/stroke/signs-of-stroke/fast-signs-of-stroke-are-there-other-signs](http://heartandstroke.ca/stroke/signs-of-stroke/fast-signs-of-stroke-are-there-other-signs).

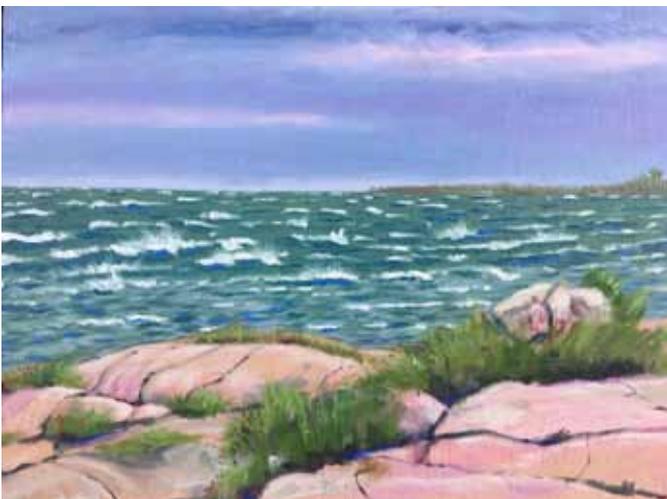
# Produce Great Pumpkins, the Pies Will Come Later

*Water Colour Painting by Ann Evans*



## Poker Lake

*A 12" X 16" Plein Air Oil Painting by George Keltika*



## Nutrition to Optimize Mental Health

*By Chris Prefontaine*

October is Mental Health Awareness Month and while most of us are aware of the relationship between physical health and nutrition but did you know that what you eat also affects your mental health? Our brain, like our other organs needs good quality nutrition to stay healthy and what we eat can impact our overall mental health and wellness.

Join registered dietitians Christina Iaboni and Leigh Merotto on October 27th at 1:30 p.m. for a virtual seminar

on how to learn about the top nutrients that support brain health, the dietary patterns that support mental health and healthy aging, and the role of digestive health in mental well-being.

This one hour seminar will be held on Zoom followed by a 15 minute question period. Participants will also be provided with a mental health grocery guide, summary sheet and healthy snack list after the session. Please register by sending an email of intent with your name, email address and phone number to Chris Prefontaine at [7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com](mailto:7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com) by October 20, 2021. The link to the Zoom event will be sent to you after the 20th.



*Zoom Trivia - February 16, 2021*

## St. Vincent

*By Angela Stewart*

Several explosive volcanic blasts rocked the Caribbean island of St. Vincent starting on April 9, 2021 and lasted for days. This catastrophic event created devastating destruction to the island.

Many people were told to evacuate the area surrounding the volcano prior to the blasts. Tens of thousands of people were displaced, many of whom sheltered in government buildings.

Sharon Gusz, RTOERO member and volunteer extraordinaire sent an urgent email out to her team of milk bag weavers (RTOERO members and friends who weave empty milk bags into sleeping mats).



These volunteers managed to gather 100 mats that were immediately sent to St. Vincent. In addition, 20 baby quilts were included along with some children's dresses.



Another 200 mats were shipped in May and July. Sharon thanked her team of weavers, sewers and drivers for swinging into action so quickly. What a group!

If you are interested in joining this amazing group of volunteers, please email Sharon at [sharongusz@gmail.com](mailto:sharongusz@gmail.com).

She is already working with the parish priest where they weave the mats to set up future dates for 2021-2022.

## RTOERO Webinar Report

By Elaine Adam

**O**n May 13, the Foundation hosted a webinar entitled *Virtual Connection and Loneliness during COVID-19 Among Older Adults Living in the Community*. There were three presenters, the Foundation's Dr. Paula Rochon, Dr. Rachel Savage and Sophia De Nicolo.

Dr. Rochon is the Foundation's Chair of Geriatrics, at the University of Toronto's medical school, senior researcher at Women's College Hospital (WCH) Research Institute and the leading geriatric researcher in Canada.

Dr. Savage is epidemiologist at WCH and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) and Ms. De Nicolo is a Health Studies student involved in the research and data organization. Other student researchers were trained in the process and have moved on to designing their own studies.

They presented the results of the longitudinal study they began a year ago, reported on page 30 in the January issue of The 34th

Story. There was a review of the questions and findings listed in the earlier article.

What the researchers have learned over the past year is that people felt that virtual contact is beneficial, that it maintains connections and routines, and that it is not a replacement for in-person contact. Those who didn't use virtual contact kept busy with exercise, phone calls, email, TV, games and reading but they missed daily human interaction.

They also learned that some study participants had difficulty in accessing the internet due to geography, cost or a lack of knowledge on how to use it. They wanted to stay connected and wanted to learn more about community services, physical and mental health.

RTOERO should consider ideas to help people keep in touch, such as tip sheets with ideas to stay connected and linking members up with each other. People have been deeply affected in numerous ways, women different from men. Technology is beneficial but not a replacement for human contact.

The research findings allow for

concrete action, for social support to be organized for those living alone. Mental health ideas from the World Health Organization (WHO) include maintaining routines, exercise, staying connected with friends, family and neighbours, and limiting news consumption.

This study is part of a larger Canadian study that has been published in the British Medical Journal this spring. It may be accessed online. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com>.

## Johnson's New "My Insurance" Website

*By Susan Leppington*

Johnson insurance has launched a new "My Insurance" website for submitting your benefits claims online. This new claims site will permit a faster reimbursement process, will provide more details about both your benefits and claims, while offering help throughout on how to complete the process.

You'll need to register to access this new portal but if you've submitted Johnson claims online

before through the Members Only site it's quite easy. If you don't have a Members Only login there will be help on the site to create one.

Once on the claims site, select Group benefits – Submit a Claim from the dashboard (menu of services). If you require assistance registering for My Insurance or navigating the claims portal you can contact Johnson Insurance by email at [digitalsupport@johnson.ca](mailto:digitalsupport@johnson.ca) or by telephone at 1-833-749-1324.

## Zoom Yoga

*By Angela Stewart*

Many of us enjoyed yoga classes with Christina in the spring and we were asked if we could set up more classes for the fall. Of course we can!

Classes will take place every Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. during the months of October and November. If there is interest we can look into a Winter session in the new year.

The cost per class will be \$15 per person, and this will be based on a minimum number of participants. If we don't have enough members sign up, we will need to cancel. The best part of this set up is the flexibility. If you can't make a particular class, a recording of it will be sent to you. Only the instructor will be on the recording.

We are offering a chance for you to practice a gentle yoga class from the comfort of your home. Classes will come to you via Zoom, which you can access on any device. This is a perfect opportunity for you to work on maintaining a healthy lifestyle that will focus on deep breathing, stretching, and creating sense of calm.

Our instructor will be Christina DeFranco. She is a 200-hour certified yoga instructor, currently enrolled in additional courses, who enjoys teaching to us mature folk. Christina has extensive training in anatomy and is skilled at modifying moves to either a more gentle option or a more advanced option. Her class will be for all levels and all abilities. For more information,

feel free to visit her website at [christinadefrancoyoga.com](http://christinadefrancoyoga.com).

If you are interested, you can register at: [calendly.com/christinadefranco/rto](https://calendly.com/christinadefranco/rto)  
You will receive an initial email upon registration, and a reminder email one hour prior to the class.

I look forward to "seeing" you in class.



## The Hybrid Model

*By Elaine Adam*

**Y**ork Communities for Public Education held a virtual Town Hall on May 20 and the topic was the hybrid model of education. This model places a camera in a fully functioning classroom of in-person students so a student or students may attend virtually from home at the same time.

The panel of four students was moderated by parent Shameel Shakel and opened with a Grade Seven student's poem

about the problems that were encountered this school year. The first panelist, a Grade Twelve student, commented on the need for social interaction, the in-school structure of classes and schedules, and the importance of extracurricular activities that allow her to grow. When learning virtually, she felt disengaged with learning and a feeling of depression as world issues overwhelmed her with no outlet to connect with others. She said that students must constantly advocate for themselves. She watched her niece in Grade Two struggle and miss out on the normal activities like recess with friends. There should have stronger supports in place a year ago. She felt that the government needs to put students' needs first.

The second speaker, a Grade Seven student, stated that the focus on saving money is not the best education for kids. Her eyes were dry and strained with so much screen time. There were WiFi issues. Recess didn't allow for physical activity or socializing. Her sibling in Grade One needed hands-on help, which was hard for her parents, who were working from home. She

said lower class sizes are needed next year, that hybrid is chaos. The virtual students will feel alienated, teachers can't do both, they need to learn about their students and this is not possible through a computer. Students need continuity and to connect with their peers.

The third speaker, in Grade Nine, experienced no connection with high school, teachers or students. There was no feeling of school culture, and no one ever asked how she was doing. There were problems when everyone was at home in her house, the emphasis was on quiet so she had to mute much of the time. Cameras were off so there was no way for the teacher to know if a student was actually in attendance.

She wanted Music as an option and rented an instrument but it was a waste of time. Phys. Ed. class consisted of students being told to do some physical activity and keep a record of what they did. She wants a return to in-class safe learning with students, teachers, extracurricular activities, - the whole high school experience. Specialized programs like Science labs, hands-on tech

classes, Music, Phys. Ed. and Drama suffer.

The fourth speaker, another Grade Seven student, missed pen and paper. She felt less alive and didn't take care of herself. She was shy and online made her feel worse. Break out rooms didn't work, no one would talk until the teacher checked in. Students were late for class and missed content.

The Google Meet program didn't indicate when time was up. There was no microphone so everything had to be typed, family could be talking in the background so she was always muted. She has fallen asleep due to lack of stimulation and has missed assignments, the teacher had no way of knowing if someone didn't understand something. Students' questions were posted on Chat and it was public and permanent, and the teacher would take a few days to be able to answer.

The speakers all agreed that the hybrid model hurts everyone and left a lot of questions unanswered. Would the teacher have to remain in the same place all class because of the camera? Would out-of-classroom activities

be curtailed because of the online learners? There is no socializing for those learners and it erodes mental health.

Enrollment in French Immersion has dropped because there is so much emphasis on oral work and interaction in class, it is difficult to learn a second language sitting at a computer at home.

The panel was asked about what the hybrid model provided: typing skills improved, they didn't need to wear masks, they could just google the answer without working on the question, there was no need to study for tests or learn time management, and they could text their friends when ever they wanted.

The fear was that the online students would get higher marks because they could be cheating. The Town Hall Meeting ended with a Grade Twelve student performing a wonderful rendition of Elton John's song, "It's A Little Bit Funny".

As of this writing, the York Region Public Board is planning to provide the hybrid model in September.

## Portrait of a Colourful Lab

*By Melissa Sherman*

This painting which was completed during COVID-19 is of a friend's pup. Melissa has found much solace in her own dog through this pandemic. It is 36" by 36" and was painted with acrylics.



## Here's Lookin' at Ya!

*A 12" X 12" Oil Painting By Donna Greenstein*

It is on a gallery wrapped canvas.



*Zoom Breakout Room  
Trivia Team 2021*

## Distinguished Member Awards 2021

*By Regine Baker*

Each year the District 34 executive chooses one or two members who are not currently serving on the board to receive a Distinguished Member Award. These individuals are members who have demonstrated dedication and commitment and have given long-time, outstanding service to the district.

This year, the recipients of the Distinguished Member Award are Evelyn Lawrence and Lynn Hitsman. These two volunteers will each receive a plaque at our next in-person spring luncheon.

### Introducing Evelyn Lawrence!



Evelyn Lawrence retired from the York Region District School Board in 1996 following a distinguished career as a teacher, local federation president, vice principal and principal.

She joined RTOERO District 34 immediately and came out to several activities. At the annual meeting in 1998 she agreed to stand as Second Vice President for the district. From then, she was hooked. She spent the next four years serving as Second VP, First VP, President and Past President.

In 2001, she partnered with John Kippen as Membership Coordinator and then took on that role alone the following year. She continued looking after that portfolio until she decided to step down in 2020, staying a year longer than planned to mentor her successor.

Evelyn also took on the responsibility of watch-dogging our District Constitution, Policies and Procedures, making sure that they coincided with those of RTOERO and that they stayed relevant to the way we conduct

our local organization.

Evelyn offered her time and energy in many additional ways as well. She organized several very popular outings to garden centres that often including guest speakers; she often assisted with luncheons and receptions; she answered countless questions at our Open House sessions on the advantages of being a member of RTOERO and at executive meetings she offered fresh ideas and wise council.

We hope Evelyn will remain a vibrant member of District 34 for many years to come.

### Introducing Lynn Hitsman!



When Lynn retired from teaching with the York Region District School Board in 2002, she immediately joined RTOERO District 34. Having been very active as local federation president and executive officer, she knew the value and fellowship of gathering socially with colleagues.

Because she was known to be both reliable and willing, Lynn was asked to stand for the position of Secretary on the District 34 executive. She remained in this role until 2012 and also took on the responsibility of looking after the archives for the group.

In 2012, Lynn was encouraged to run for District President, a role she held for two years. After two years as Past President and two as Constitution Chair, she was again elected President from 2018 to 2020.

Lynn was responsible for organizing many activities for our members. Twice she organized a full day outing to Ripley's Aquarium with a narrated tour of historic Toronto and a stop

at the Distillery District for the Christmas Market. Both times these were sold out events. She arranged seminars on estate planning and wills that were very popular. With Evelyn Lawrence, Lynn began the on-going program of awarding 25 Year RTOERO Membership Certificates to members of District 34. She hosted the Hava Java in Markham nearly every month for several years. She represented District 34 at many RTOERO Senate and Annual Meetings both as a delegate and as an observer.

Lynn is a very distinguished member of District 34 York Region.

## Greetings For Our Isolated Friends

*By Dolores Zezima*

In the spring of 2020 when we were all in lockdown, I started creating and sending greeting cards for an American organization called “Letters Against Isolation”. This group is associated with a number of Canadian Seniors’ residences, long term care facilities and agencies. On those days

when I needed to get out of the house, I would take drives through York Region and I noticed that there are a number of homes and facilities right here in my neighbourhood whose residents might be able to benefit from receiving a note or letter.

This spring, I called and reached out to a number of them and was thrilled to find out that my humble offer would be accepted with great enthusiasm.

The cards I write and create are varied in size, style and content. A lot depends on supplies and my mood.



Some are drawings, some are paper crafts and others are simple watercolours. The messages can range from a poem or quote to a short letter talking about my day to day activities. I have even written a few bilingual ones in Italian and French with their English translations. So far, I have sent out over 500 cards.



It is my hope that the recipients will know they are not alone and that someone is thinking of them. I send my cards to Sherwood Court in Maple, King City Lodge and Marian House in Richmond Hill.



Another connection that I made was with CHATS who distributes the cards via Meals on Wheels as well as their Adult Day Programs.

The program leaders are very generous with their compliments and appreciation, but I must confess, that I feel I am the beneficiary.

It has really been a gift to reach out and provide the recipients with a little sunshine.



If you are interested in joining the formal group “Letters Against Isolation” please register at: [lettersagainstisolation.com/group-events](http://lettersagainstisolation.com/group-events)

You might prefer to find a home or organization within your own community and share some of your talents with them. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas at [dzezima27@icloud.com](mailto:dzezima27@icloud.com)



## Stay Gold

*A 3'X 4' Painting By Dawn Stanojev*

Inspired by the Scout Tract Trails of York Durham



## On the Edge

*A 4'X 2' Painting By Dawn Stanojev*

Inspired by a hike along the Bruce Trail. Both paintings are done in cold wax and oil paint applied in layers with no paint brushes.



## Personal Support Workers and Alternative Solutions

By Elaine Adam

**R**TOERO's political action arm, *Vibrant Voices*, hosted a webinar on geriatric health care on March 17, 2021. The topics were Personal Support Workers and Alternative Solutions to LTC Homes.

Anita Plunkett, PSW educator and advocate for twenty three school boards in eastern Ontario, spoke on personal support workers, their educational paths and the current situation in Ontario. Her approach is that "it takes a village" and a community to care for an older adult: a continuum is needed.

To achieve this, we need to combat ageism by changing attitudes, removing the stigma of getting older, and valuing those who work with older people namely PSW's, practical and registered nurses.

The largest group, PSW's, receives education through school boards, private and community

colleges where five percent of training is spent on gerontology.

Forty percent of PSW graduates leave the field within two years, due to the overwhelming workload. Care is task oriented rather than person focused and the ratio of worker to senior is high and doesn't allow for social interaction and relationship building, which is what seniors need. Mental health issues develop among the workers due to the demands of the job, burnout, lack of leadership and poor pay.

Education must use a holistic approach, including physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development. This will help to address the problem of rising dementia among seniors. The Ontario government is now spending money on educating more PSW's but more must be done to encourage them to remain in the profession.

Private personal care workers make even less money than those in LTC homes. As the LTC workers move on, the private support workers leave and move into LTC care homes, creating

a domino effect. It would be cheaper and more efficient to put money into salaries so the stampede out of the profession doesn't continue. Otherwise, the government is constantly refreshing a profession that cannot hold on to its workers.

A Specialist High Skills Major is now being offered in twenty three school boards in eastern Ontario but the government should be encouraged to increase this across the province. This is part of a new community of care model. Other areas to be addressed are to include gerontology as a specialty in every field of health, employ intergenerational approaches, focus on prevention of problems and promotion of positive, effective policies.

The Alzheimer's Society, Elder Abuse Ontario and Centres for Research, Learning and Innovation in Long Term Care are lobbying governments and ministries, and emphasize the need to create leadership opportunities for front line workers.

The second speaker, Grace Welch, is a member of the

Council for Aging Ontario, a group that advocates for long term care and their family councils. She emphasized the need for people to plan "Smart Aging": where to age. This involves making choices before a crisis arises; giving consideration to the type of housing, downsizing, social isolation, and what will allow independence and quality of life.

To stay at home, the four A's must be considered: affordability, accessibility, appropriateness and availability. It includes service delivery and home care, and essentials such as lawn care, snow removal, washroom and laundry access, groceries and transportation.

There are other housing options, such as the "Golden Girls" and intergenerational co-housing, where students who need housing can rent from a senior who has the room ([homesharecanada.org](http://homesharecanada.org)).

Radicalresthomes is a housing program whose residents are intergenerational and who live in houses and apartments and share all household duties. ([radicalresthomes.com](http://radicalresthomes.com))

Universities and colleges receive grants to provide buildings that combine student housing with seniors units. Loyalist College in Belleville, Queen's in Kingston and Cannadore College in North Bay are involved in this initiative.

The federal government's National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) funding will provide six new buildings across the province. ([nserc.gc.ca](http://nserc.gc.ca))

There are naturally occurring retirement communities where seniors rent in the same building, and live independently but with shared common areas and social activities. Outside services and help can be coordinated.

Oasis in Kingston is an example of this model. The idea behind Oasis is to build a community of members who are tenants of the building. There are formal and informal social events, exercise programs, guest speakers, skill sharing and projects to support the greater community. ([oasis-aging-in-place.com](http://oasis-aging-in-place.com))

Campuses of Care provide a range of housing options as

people age, including assisted living, affordable housing, retirement homes, life leases and long term care. ([advantageontario.ca](http://advantageontario.ca))

The traditional models of retirement homes and long term care are well known. Retirement homes are expensive and large, and many services are extra. Long term care homes are no one's choice. The political will is needed to transform them. Buildings need to be small with a focus on quality of life for each resident. Support workers are essential and become "family" for those who do not have family. These workers must be allowed to act as caring family members, not as cleaners or maintenance workers.

Lillevang, Denmark is a long term care development that houses seniors with dementia and mobility issues in small eight person "family" homes on a large campus with a community centre that offers a variety of activities and events. It is person-centred and the residents have freedom of movement. Representatives from many countries have visited to learn about the system.

People should plan for the future and accept the fact that there will eventually be changes to health and mobility. Talk to experts and family. Advocate for a National Seniors Strategy. Contact politicians. Help to combat agism.

More studies are not needed. Now is time for action. Improved wages and working conditions must be implemented now or personal support workers will not last in the profession. And that can happen if governments have the political will.

RTOERO networks with the Canadian Health Coalition, the Institute for Long Term care and the National Institution on Aging.

This webinar was recorded and is available on the Vibrant Voices RTOERO website. Go to [rtoero.org](http://rtoero.org)



## Save the Date

*By Craig Lee*

I really wish I could help you plan some of your cultural activities for the next few months but COVID restrictions make this impossible. Local cultural groups are trying to plan for the future but their hands are tied behind their backs. Here is what's happening with a few of our local groups.



During the lockdowns, Dr. Jessica Kun, the Artistic Director has conducted wonderful virtual performances called “Holiday Dreams” and “A Tribute to the Movies”. She states in her blog, “the orchestra plans to play in person for you as soon as we can”. At present, the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts is closed.

## Marquee Theatrical Productions

The Newmarket Theatre has recently been renovated and also has a new name. It is now called *New Roads Performing Arts Centre*. Marquee was scheduled to present the musical “Elf” in December of this year but the theatre is closed and the show has been cancelled. As a side note, Marquee has been offering drama classes during Covid-19 restrictions. They have creatively offered children and youth opportunities to develop acting skills during these past 18 months.

### Newmarket Stage Company

During the lockdowns, NSC entertained its audiences with two radio shows on Zoom - “Arsenic and Old Lace” and “Switchboard Switcharoo” (an *Our Miss Brooks* show). Tentative plans have been made to open their season with “Opal’s Husband” during the last three weekends of November at the Royal Canadian Legion in Newmarket. This will be with social distancing and 50% capacity. Check out their website for details.

## Theatre Aurora

“Kitchen Witches” will be performed at their theatre on October 28-30 and November 4-6. Social distancing will be in effect and theatre capacity will also be at 50%. For more details visit their website.



The Curtain Club presented a number of virtual performances which included, “Story of an Hour”, “Enid and Pearl Have Tea”, and “Chocolate”. For their 66th season two shows are scheduled. “Tempting Providence” will run in March 2022 and “I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change” will run in May 2022. Social distancing will be observed and the theatre will be at 50% capacity.

### Mackenzie High School

The Musical “Anastasia” was scheduled for December at the RHCPA. But at present the theatre is closed. Guidelines for singing and playing instruments in the school setting have not yet been forwarded to schools. Past

musicals from this school for the arts include “The Wizard of Oz” and “Les Miserables”.

The following **Markham Little Theatre** quote sums up the feelings of York Region’s cultural groups.



“Like every other theatre company, and virtually every other cultural group we’re just guessing and hoping that we will be able to perform soon. We are still here, doing what we can in these crazy times. We’re working hard behind the scenes to make sure, when it’s time, that we’ll be ready to get back doing what we love. We miss you all, audience, supporters, and volunteers, hope you are keeping safe and are as unaffected as possible by 2020’s challenges, and hope to see you as soon as possible.”

All these cultural groups are anxious to perform. At this time RTOERO cannot offer our members tickets to any performances. Perhaps this will change when the next 34th Story is published. Fingers crossed.

## Live at Home Longer

*By Dave Szollosy*

The District 34 executive has approved a project called the “Live at Home Longer” Initiative designed to develop some tools that would find useful in assisting District 34 members and their families in accessing services that would support those wishing to continue living independently in their homes. The tools will identify services in local communities to make accessibility as easy as possible.

Services to be identified may include, but not limited to:

- meals on wheels;
- prescription delivery services;
- home nursing (and explanation of extended health benefits,);
- alarm services;
- community social workers programs at Your Region Mental Health; and
- church/mosque/synagogue projects.

Currently the executive is collecting information on the services available throughout York Region. If you have any suggestions of services that should be included in such an inventory, please contribute your ideas to [daveszol@rogers.com](mailto:daveszol@rogers.com).

The executive is aiming for distribution of the finished project by the end of the year.

## Our Earth, Our Responsibility: Take Action

*By Elaine Adam*

**R**TOERO's Political Advocacy Committee has focused on three areas: Seniors Strategy, Geriatric Health Care and the Environment through its Vibrant Voices program.

On April 29, Vibrant Voices hosted a webinar on the environment which featured three speakers, Katie Bannister, Dr. Kelly Bannister and Lisa Mintz.

Katie Bannister is a seventeen year old climate activist and community organizer in British Columbia and spoke on the

need for intergenerational collaboration to address climate change. She feels that it is important to dismantle age-based stereotypes and assumptions as a step to empowering youth, so that they feel their voices are heard and that their skill sets matter.

Seniors can use their power and privilege to create opportunities for youth to represent themselves and their perspectives. She has worked with seniors groups with great success.

Dr. Kelly Bannister, Katie's mother, is an ethnobiologist, botanist and ethics coordinator at the University of Victoria. She spoke about relational ethics for environmental responsibility. Ethics dictate right and wrong, which leads to establishing a belief system and a formal code of conduct.

She gave Indigenous ethics as an example. Their system is relational, all creatures must be respected and are interconnected.

She referenced John Borrows' "Laws Indigenous Ethics". We must look at what ethics are shaping and guiding our sense of environmental preservation.

Lisa Mintz is a bird watcher and Quebecer who has worked to protect the urban environment. She is a member of Urba/Nature Education (UNE), dedicated to outdoor and environmental education in Montreal, and of Sauvons La Falaise, a group that has worked to protect the eco-territory of Saint-Jacques escarpment in urban Montreal. Fifty percent of birds in North America are now gone and it is important to save this area as a valuable bird habitat.

Lisa outlined how the group was able to accomplish their goal, as a guide for all of us to consider getting involved in a local issue.

1. Find a local problem that you feel strongly about.
2. Approach to city councilors for help.
3. Start a FaceBook group or page.
4. Write a petition.
5. Have a meeting and start a group.
6. Go to a council meeting with a deputation/presentation.
7. Have events, such as protests,

letter-writing, walks.

8. Contact like-minded organizations for support.
9. Get the media involved.

The Ontario Teachers Pension Plan (OTPP) has a policy on responsible investing, Environmental Social and Governance (ESG). You can read about it on their website.

Vibrant Voices has three more webinars scheduled for the fall:

September 15

Andre Picard

Building an elder care system that actually cares

October 13

Dr. Diana Beresford-Kroeger

Saving the Forest...Saving Us

November 3

Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy

and Isobel Mackenzie

Paths to Wellness for Older

Persons



## Water Spirits

*An Acrylic and Ink painting on a 6" x 8" Canvas Board*

*By Rhonda Starr*



## Oak Ridges Moraine Fall Webinars

*By Ann Evans*

**T**raditionally planning and leading the District 34 monthly walks have been a great pleasure of mine. Our group enjoys the great outdoors through all weather both cold and warm. These outings have been a boost to our health and

to our spirits as we have great visits during our treks as well as afterwards when we socialize at a local coffee shop.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our outings as mandated by the RTOERO National Office in response to COVID-19. But all is not lost - there will be a series of webinars coming up in the next few months that we can enjoy virtually and get to learn about local geography along with some

trees, birds and bees. Hopefully, as things improve in Ontario, we will be able to resume our walks. I look forward to that time and to walking with many of you again!

### Fall Webinars

The OakRidges Moraine Conservation Plan was established in 2002. It provides direction on land use and resource management for the land and water located within the moraine.

As part of the Greenbelt, the Oak Ridges Moraine is an environmentally sensitive, geological landform in south central Ontario that stretches 160 kilometers from the Trent River in the east to the Niagara Escarpment in the west, covering approximately 470,000 acres.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust has organised the following webinars that will undoubtedly be a learning opportunity for us.

Date: September 23, 2021

Time: 7 p.m.

Topic: Let it Bee: Native Bees and How to Support Them

Presenter: Sheila Colla

Sheila is an assistant professor in the faculty of Environmental and Urban Change at York University. You may know honey bees, but do you know the bees native to your area? Learn how to identify and support your native bees from a local, native pollinator expert.

Date: October 19, 2021

Time: 1 p.m.

Tree Talk: Southern Ontario Tree ID and Tree Health

Presenter: Aileen Barclay

In this presentation, we will learn about common trees in your area and how to keep them and the environment healthy (even during a gypsy moth invasion)!

Date: November 2, 2021

Time: 7 p.m.

Topic: Winter Birds: Birding's Not Just for Summer!

Presenter: Kristen Martyn

Kristen is an avid birder and an owner at Wild Birds Unlimited. She will present information on different winter bird species and how to spot them and get you outdoors on even the greyest days!

Date: December, exact date TBD

Topic: Life in the Cold Lane:  
How Animals Survive Winter's  
Deep Freeze

Presenter: Michael Runtz

Michael is a professor in the Science Department at Carleton University. He is a naturalist, nature photographer and natural history author. He is a crowd favourite and will teach us all about the interesting and surprising ways local animals make it through the coldest winters.

Register for these free webinars by visiting  
[oakridgesmoraine.org/events](http://oakridgesmoraine.org/events)



OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ  
LAND TRUST

## Women and Health Report

*By Susan Leppington*

Our June session on Women and Heart Health was a great success.

It's true what they say...men and women are different. That's certainly accurate when it comes to heart health as we heard from

Dr. Olivia Greenspan during our District 34 webinar in late June.

Dr. Greenspan was engaging and informative. She discussed the signs and symptoms of heart disease in women and provided multiple ways that we could take responsibility for our health through diet and exercise.

The participants came away with a better understanding of cardiac health in women and their feedback to the session was overwhelming positive. Thanks to Dr. Greenspan and to all who attended.

[oliviagreenspan.ca](http://oliviagreenspan.ca)



## Welcome New Members

By Lori MacDonald-Blundon

Since our last newsletter was printed, the national office has informed us that the following have become members of RTOERO and have indicated their wish to be affiliated with *District 34 – York Region*. Information which is received after we go to print will be included in the next newsletter.



On behalf of the Executive and all of the members of RTO ERO District 34, I extend a warm welcome to these new Members within our ranks:

Cecile Allan  
 Sandra Arbuck  
 Robert Arril  
 George Auerbach  
 Ellin Bessner  
 Katherine Billard  
 Denise Boileau  
 Phyllis Capo  
 Lori Chiarot  
 Jennifer Cole-Quinn  
 Dawn Connor  
 Florence Convery  
 Cheryl Cowl  
 Shelley Davy  
 Elizabeth DeGasperis  
 Cheryl Einhorn  
 Eugenia Eliopoulos-Sena

Marianne Fedrigoni  
 Carolyn Filion  
 Caryn Friedman  
 Annie Gerber  
 Sandra Giles Byrne  
 Deborah Goldman  
 Leslie-Anne Holmeshaw  
 Louise Iaboni  
 Theresa Irving  
 JoAnne Johnsen  
 Helen Jordan  
 Cynthia Kleiner  
 Joseph Lee  
 Murray Lloyd  
 Ida Lung  
 Susan McCallum  
 Marjorie McCaul  
 Anna Maria Miraglia  
 Anil Mody  
 Pina Morale  
 Santo Nucifora  
 Paul Phillips  
 Irene Preston  
 Julie Richardson  
 Janice Rose  
 Ghada Sadaka  
 Michele Sankar  
 Karen Marie Sasaki

Arlene Scheer  
 Giuseppe Servidio  
 Rose Sultz  
 Judith Sutherland  
 Sandra Thomas  
 Carole Trueman  
 Lucy Vetta  
 Wendy Wain  
 Judy Walker  
 Brian Walker  
 Joan Wighton  
 Anna Zicchino

## In Memoriam

**W**ith sorrow we have learned of the passing of the following members of District 34. To their families we extend our heartfelt sympathy.

Theresa Ackrill  
 Jim Breen  
 Margarita Carcamo-Bruch  
 Elizabeth Conner  
 Olive Cox  
 Catherine Evans  
 Joan Fakas Crosina  
 Geoffrey Fellowes  
 Betty-Ann Ferguson  
 Jane Forrester  
 James Gainer

Sheila Gainer  
 Harry Gerber  
 Cheryle Gertner  
 Wanda Goltz  
 Sadruddin Govani  
 Marthe Graveline  
 Antonia Harding  
 Zoe Heal  
 Albert Hughson  
 Christine Lee  
 Sylvia Lowry  
 Mary MacIntosh  
 Thomas McCaul  
 Margherita Minicucci  
 Joseph Morale  
 Vincenza Pallotta  
 Doreen Philip  
 Bruce Preston  
 Virginia Rogers  
 Wolfgang Rothe  
 Norman Rumble  
 Annette Saunders  
 Judy Shuhendler  
 Francina Stenhouse  
 Robert Trueman  
 Mary Winstall  
 Douglas Wright  
 Nicandro Zicchino



## Cold Weather Pet Safety

*Shared By Chris Prefontaine*

Well, we may still be in the month of September but that cold weather will be here before you know it. Here are some tips to keep your pets safe during cold weather.

**Know the limits:** Just like people, pets' cold tolerance can vary from pet to pet based on their coat, body fat stores, activity level, and health. Be aware of your pet's tolerance for cold weather, and adjust accordingly.

You will might need to shorten your dog's walks in very cold weather to protect you both from weather-associated health risks. Short-haired pets feel the cold faster because they have less protection, and short-legged pets may become cold faster because their bellies and bodies are more likely to come into contact with snow-covered ground.

**Stay inside:** It's a common belief that dogs and cats are more resistant than people to cold weather because of their fur, but it's untrue. Like people, cats and dogs are susceptible to frostbite

and hypothermia and should be kept inside. Longer-haired and thick-coated dog breeds are more tolerant of cold weather; but no pet should be left outside for long periods in below-freezing weather.

**Play dress-up:** If your dog has a short coat or seems bothered by the cold weather, consider a sweater or dog coat.

**Provide shelter:** Keeping any pet outside for long periods of time is not recommended, but if you are unable to keep your pet inside during cold weather, provide him/her with a warm, solid shelter against wind. Make sure that they have unlimited access to fresh, non-frozen water. The floor of the shelter should be off of the ground and the bedding should be thick, dry and changed regularly to provide a warm, dry environment. The door to the shelter should be positioned away from prevailing winds. Space heaters and heat lamps should be avoided because of the risk of burns or fire.

**Be prepared:** Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather, blizzards and power outages. Prepare a disaster

emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.

Reprinted with permission from K9 Angels Feb. 25, 2021

## Understanding Financial Elder Abuse

*This is a summary of an article from the Ontario Securities Commission from their website [getsmarteraboutmoney.ca](https://www.osc.gov.on.ca). Read the full article for additional tips and information.*

### What is financial elder abuse?

**F**inancial elder abuse is one of the most common forms of elder abuse. It can take many forms – from financial exploitation to criminal fraud.

Some examples include:

- A door-to-door salesperson persuading an older adult to buy energy-efficient roofing because it will pay for itself over 20 years.

- A friendly seniors centre volunteer who offers to help seniors manage their banking – only to drain the accounts.
- A scammer who extorts money from a 75-year old pretending to be a relative in trouble abroad or someone from the tax department.
- A financial advisor who recommends unnecessary trades to increase their fees.
- A child who abuses their power of attorney to finance their lifestyle.
- A caregiver who gets their client to loan them a large amount of money.

### How to tell if someone may be a victim.

Victims often don't realize or don't want to consider that they've been victimized. When they are aware, they may be too embarrassed to report it or even share their situation with close family members. Some of the signs that someone you know is at risk for financial abuse include:

- Out-of-character withdrawals or transfers of funds from bank or investment accounts by an older account holder.

- Sudden or large withdrawals or transfers of funds from bank or investment accounts by an attorney or someone claiming to act for the older account holder.
- Changes to living arrangements, such as someone unexpectedly moving in and potentially living there rent-free, or the sudden sale of their home.
- Efforts by a third party to limit contact with family, friends and advisors.
- Refusal by a power of attorney to make the grantor available to confirm instructions.
- Arrival on the scene of a new romantic interest who insists on taking control of their new partner's finances.

### **Signs you've been a target of financial abuse**

- Feeling pressured to give or invest money and too-good-to-be-true investment opportunities.
- Being forced to sign unfamiliar legal or financial documents, or pressured to change a will or give power of attorney.
- Cheques being cashed without your permission or unexpected

withdrawals from your accounts.

- Unexplained disappearances of possessions and valuables.
- New people coming into your life who take too much interest in your finances.

Abusers and criminals count on their victims' silence – the sooner a light is shone on their activities, the less harm they can inflict. If you think you may be a victim, share your concerns with someone you trust who is not closely related to the abuser.

### **What to do**

- If an older person tells you someone is taking advantage of them, take their claims seriously, ask questions and offer support.
- If you or someone you know may be a victim of financial elder abuse, contact the appropriate authorities, including local police, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre or Seniors Safety Line at 1-866-299-1011.
- Notify the appropriate financial institutions.

## Find Us on The Web

Use the QR Code reader on your smart phone to find our website. Scan the code below to get to our website.



## Advertising Events in *The 34th Story*

The only events that are advertised in *The 34th Story* or via email communications are those that have been authorized by the executive. From time to time, our Email Communications Representative receives a request from a member to advertise an event that has not been sent to the executive for approval. Please do not send these to Angela Stewart as it is not her job to alert the executive of these requests made by other members. Please contact the president or one of the vice-presidents, if you believe that you have an event that would be of general interest to members or would supply some benefit that would be in the best interest of our District 34 members.

## PLANNING A TRIP

Before planning a trip out of the province or outside of Canada, it is wise to call Johnson Insurance to check on your RTO ERO health insurance coverage.

Changes in your health or in your prescriptions may alter your travel coverage. If an emergency should arise while you are away contact Global Excel Management Inc. within 48 hours of the emergency, or before medical attention is administered when the situation is non life-threatening. Contact with GEM will ensure that your care is top priority and that the medical expenses for this unforeseen health condition are effectively monitored.

Toll free in Canada/USA:  
1-877-346-1467

Toll free in Mexico:  
01-800-062-4728

Worldwide Collect Call:  
819-780-0647

Johnson Inc.  
RTO ERO Health Benefit  
Plan Administrator

**Service** 1-877-406-9007  
416-920-7248

**Claims** 1-800-638-4753  
905-764-4888

**Website**  
[www.johnson.ca](http://www.johnson.ca)



*34th Story Website*

**Check our website at**

**[www.our34thstory.com](http://www.our34thstory.com)**

- For District 34 news,
- For additional photographs of events,
- For links to interesting websites,
- For information about your committees,
- For the District 34 constitution and policies

## Changing Your Name, Address or Phone

The District 34 membership information comes from the Provincial Office. Please contact them about any changes.

### RTO ERO PROVINCIAL OFFICE

416-962-9463  
1-800-361-9888  
FAX 416-962-1061  
Office Hours  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Monday to Friday  
[www.rto-ero.org](http://www.rto-ero.org)

### DISTRICT 34 MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Lori MacDonald-Blundon  
[District34Membership@outlook.com](mailto:District34Membership@outlook.com)  
Questions regarding membership and newsletter mailings may be directed to Lori as well.

### DISTRICT 34 EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

[34thstoryreminders@gmail.com](mailto:34thstoryreminders@gmail.com)  
For change of email address only, NOT residence address changes.

# Newsletter Submissions

Articles are required for consideration for inclusion in future issues. Please keep articles to 500 words or less. A picture is a nice touch. Do you have:

- A memorable teaching experience,
- Special memories of a colleague or student,
- A good book to recommend,
- An account of an unusual holiday,
- An important question,
- Suggestions for the editor,
- Suggestions for district trips or social activities,
- Information you would like to see in the newsletter or
- An issue you would like to raise?

**Email the editor -  
Chris Prefontaine  
7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com**

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINES**  
November 10 for January  
February 10 for April  
July 10 for September

**RETURN UNDELIVERABLE  
CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:  
432 Cunningham Dr.  
Maple, ON L6A 2G6**

