



34th STORY

District 34 - York Region

Vol. 35 No. 1 - January 2023



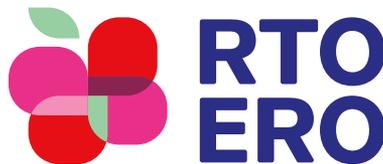
On a Winter Walk

A 18" x 24" Acrylic on Canvas by Lesley Patterson

Contents

District 34 Executive and Committee Chair Persons 2022 - 2023	4
For Your 2023 Calendar	5
President’s Message	6
District 34 Distinguished Member Award	7
District 34 September Open House.....	8
Zoom Yoga.....	11
D34 Art Group	11
Newmarket Citizens Band	12
Join Us For a Walk.....	13
Submission of RTOERO Health Insurance Claims	13
Trivia Results!	14
Hava Java on Us.....	14
Room 114.....	15
Grant Money Available	17
Holland River Freeze-up.....	18
Fun Home.....	19
Three Sisters.....	20
Surrender Dorothy	21
Calling All Photographers.....	21
Retirement Planning Resources	22
2023 RTOERO Post Secondary Scholarship	22
RTOERO Fall Art Show	24
Murder at the Howard Johnson’s	26
Don’t Miss Out	26
“You’ll Have a Lot More Respect For Birds”.....	27
Upon Reflection.....	27
Home, I’m Darling.....	28
Correction	28
District 34 Fall Luncheon	29
Cham Shan Temple Tour.....	31
New District 34 Website	31
Kaleidoscope of Imagination	32
Cooking to Fight Inflammation	33
Leaving Ukraine.....	34
Introduction to Cybersecurity	35

Diary of Anne Frank	37
Saved by an Angel	37
The Millionaire: A Musical Murder Mystery.....	38
Innocence Lost.....	39
Hydrangeas	39
Curiosity.....	40
Welcome New Members	41
Why We Need Pharmacare.....	42
Creatures Great and Small	44
Sending Cheques to Event Organizers.....	45
Volunteering With Markham Little Theatre	46
“Sometimes The Most Productive Thing To Do Is Relax.”	48
Make Tax Time More Manageable in Retirement	49
In Memoriam	50
The Milk Bag Project.....	50
Meet RTOERO Member Sal Amenta.....	51
The Addams Family	57
Twist.....	58
Save the Date!	58
Bees Making Honey.....	58
Winter Walk.....	59
Tempting Winter Berries	59
Acknowledgement/Waiver/Release.....	60
Registration for RTOERO District 34 Events.....	61
Find Us on The Web	62
Changing Your Name, Address or Phone	63



**District 34 York Region
Executive and
Committee Chair
Persons
2022 - 2023**

PRESIDENT

Bob Sandiford.....289-231-7300
bob.sandiford@sympatico.ca

PAST PRESIDENT

Jose Fernandes.....416-618-8869
jose.fernandes@rogers.com

**FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT AND
POLITICAL ADVOCACY REP.**

Dave Szollosy.....905-722-1088
daveszol@rogers.com

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

Paul Devlin.....416-949-6810
11pdevlin@gmail.com

PROJECT SERVICE TO OTHERS REP.

Regine Baker.....416-293-3514
reginebaker@rogers.com

SECRETARY AND

EMAIL COMMUNICATION REP.

Angela Stewart.....905-471-3706
34thstoryreminders@gmail.com

TREASURER

Dan Reynolds
treasurer34@districts.rtoero.ca

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Lori MacDonald-Blundon
district34membership@outlook.com

EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Ann Evans.....905-830-0407
annlesleyevans1945@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Craig Lee.....905-884-4957
c.m.lee@sympatico.ca

BENEFITS REP.

Susan Leppington.....905-235-4225
susanleppington@rogers.com

GOODWILL REP.

Betty Tobin.....905-884-8958
bettytobin75@hotmail.com

RECRUITMENT CO-CONVENOR

John Pickett.....647-273-0790
john.pickett@rogers.com

RECRUITMENT CO-CONVENOR

Cindy Ranieri.....905-889-7305
cindy_ranieri@hotmail.com

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND
WEBMASTER**

Chris Prefontaine.....905-471-4624
7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com

FOUNDATION REP.

Elaine Adam.....905-898-6050
feats@rogers.com

SOCIAL CO-CONVENOR

Ernie Polsoni.....905-773-5814
ernpol@yahoo.ca

SOCIAL CO-CONVENOR

Susan Phillips.....905-859-4583
susanphillips@gmail.com

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHER

Grant Dale.....905-508-8164
gdale@sympatico.ca

For Your 2023 Calendar

Zoom Yoga

Tuesday, January 10
Tuesday, February 7
Tuesday, March 7
Tuesday, April 4
Tuesday, May 2
Tuesday, June 6

Join Us For a Walk

Thursday, January 12
Wednesday, February 8
Tuesday, March 1

Hava Java

Tuesday, January 17
Thursday, February 16
Wednesday, March 15
Thursday, April 13
Tuesday, May 16
Wednesday, June 14

Fun House

Friday, January 27
Or
Sunday, January 29

Surrender Dorothy

Wednesday, February 1

Murder at The Howard Johnson's

Saturday, February 11

Home, I'm Darling

February 15 to 18

Kaleidoscope of Imagination

Sunday, February 18

Cooking to Fight Inflammation

Wednesday, February 22

Diary of Anne Frank

Friday, March 3
Or
Sunday, March 5

The Millionaire

March 17 to 26

Innocence Lost

Wednesday, March 29

Creatures Great and Small

Sunday, April 8

The Addams Family

Sunday, April 23

Twist

April 26 to 29



Bob Sandiford, President
President's Message

It is hard to believe we are already heading into the “most wonderful time of the year,” so Seasons Greetings! Reflecting on the fall, it has been extremely busy for the executive as we worked together rebooting all the activities that have been on hold since COVID. We were finally able to come together and have our Open House, enjoying the company of friends new and old. At this event we also met and celebrated our cover girl from last issue, Mary Scott, who is 100 years young.

We have had monthly Hava Java coffee meetings in three different locations across the region, soon to be four, with one opening up in the north. Ann Evans hosted the

annual Art Show at Newmarket's Old Town Hall where the creative skills of our members which are truly impressive were showcased.

Yoga online, continues to be a favourite on the first Tuesday of the month. Our theater offerings have been well attended and many are taking advantage of the reduced ticket prices. We have had excursions to local attractions such as Cham Shan Temple Tour and Olive Oil tasting. Recently, a large group of members gathered at Villa Risi Ristorante to enjoy lunch and trivia. Our walks also continue, and participants are enjoying their walk and talks.

The Fall Luncheon was extremely well attended, and participants enjoyed not only the food at Meadowbrook, but catching up with friends during their meals.

Our executive is dedicated to providing you fun and interesting activities in your retirement. We have migrated to a new website at district34.rtoero.ca and we encourage you to check out our new online presence. Thank you to Grant Dale who was our webmaster for many years. We truly appreciate all of the time

and energy that he dedicated to maintaining our previous site. Grant will remain on the board as out official Event Photographer.

We are working on members being able to pay for activities online with credit cards; when this is established we will inform all of the members. Our executive has been busy attending workshops and meetings to better understand the RTOERO system and ensure that your voices are represented in the national organization. Currently we are planning information sessions to share with new or prospective members what RTOERO has to offer in retirement.

Our executive will continue to look for activities that will appeal to the wide interests of our members. I would like to thank the entire executive for working so hard on your behalf. We enjoy organizing events and representing your interests with the RTOERO insurance plan at the national table.

On behalf of all of us we wish for you a safe and enjoyable winter.

District 34 Distinguished Member Award

By Paul Devlin

The District 34 Distinguished Member Award is given to a member not currently serving on the District 34 Executive Council, in recognition of their outstanding and/or long-term contributions to the work of RTOERO at the District level.

Each year up to two members will be honoured with this award and be invited to attend the District 34 May Luncheon at no personal expense, and receive a plaque and recognition by their colleagues.

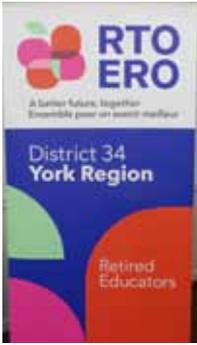
To be eligible for this award a member must be nominated by a fellow District 34 member. The nominator will submit an outline of the nominee's contributions to District 34 Second Vice-President, Paul Devlin, by March 31, 2023. The District 34 Executive Council will evaluate all nominations and determine the award recipient(s).

Send all nominations to:
11pdevlin@gmail.com.

District 34 September Open House

Photography By Cindy Ranieri and Chris Prefontaine

On September 22, District 34 hosted our annual open house at Meadowbrook Golf and Country Club. We had a great turn-out and it was wonderful seeing everyone socialize and mingle with new and old friends. Thanks to Paul Francis who wrote a song for District 34 and had us sing along with him.







Zoom Yoga

By Angela Stewart



Enjoy a free yoga class in the comfort of your home. Our instructor offers a class for all levels and all abilities. For more information, feel free to visit her website at rootedtrewellnessstudio.com

The sessions will take place the first Tuesday of the month, running from January to June at 7 p.m.

Dates:

Tuesday, January 10 (note, this is the second Tuesday of the month),
 Tuesday, February 7,
 Tuesday, March 7,
 Tuesday, April 4,
 Tuesday, May 2, and
 Tuesday, June 6.

Use the following link to sign up for one or more classes:
calendly.com/christinadefranco/rto-yoga

D34 Art Group

By Ann Evans

A talented mix of RTOERO members has gathered together a few times and formed an art group. When together, we chat about our endeavours and our current projects. We have even gathered to participate in a couple of Plein Air activities.

Unfortunately, the proposed fall 2022 Plein Air excursion did not take place, but hopefully in the future we will try again.

I would like to invite you to join us at a local café during the winter months from January to March when we can again discuss our current pursuits and future artistic plans. I will send out an email to interested parties with a proposed place, date, and time. To ensure you are included in the get together, please let me know by email if you would like to join us.



Newmarket Citizens Band

Photography By Greg King



Two of our members, Craig and Mary Lee play in the Newmarket Citizens' Band. They have been members of the band for a combined total of 76 years! Craig plays the French horn and Mary the flute. The band, one of the oldest community bands in Canada, celebrated its 150 Anniversary this year with a concert at the New Roads Performing Arts Centre.

To honour the band the Town of Newmarket is naming a future street to be called Citizens' Band Way. The band looks forward to continued participation in the social and cultural life of the town and surrounding municipalities as they embark on their next 150 years!



Join Us For a Walk

By Ann Evans

Dress warmly and come outside to enjoy Canada's Winter Wonderland. It's no time to be cooped up! There is always plenty to talk and laugh about. We can warm up afterwards at a coffee shop and continue the conversation.

Walks in the winter will begin at 10 a.m. The weather and trail conditions at this time of year can be somewhat unpredictable, so a brisk walk around the well maintained paths of Fairy Lake seems appropriate.

Parking is at the south main entrance of Fairly Lake, on Water Street, located just east of Main Street.

Dates:

Thursday, Jan. 12

Wednesday, Feb. 8

Tuesday, March, 21

Come alone or bring a friend. In case of very inclement weather please call me at 905-830-0407 to ensure the walk is still happening.

Submission of RTOERO Health Insurance Claims

By Susan Leppington

Starting January 1, 2023 insured members will be required to submit their claims within six months of the date that the service was provided.

For example, if you have a massage on March 1 you will have six months to submit your claim (i.e. until August 31). This change compresses the previous time limit to get reimbursed for the covered expense.

Expenses incurred before December 31, 2022 must be submitted by June 30, 2023.

To submit your claims easily go to rtoero.ca/insurance/claims. Or have your practitioner, pharmacist, optician or dentist send them directly; or send your receipts by mail to Johnson's. If you have any questions, please contact insurance@rtoero.ca or call 1-800-361-9888.

Trivia Results!

By Angela Stewart

Many thanks to Elaine Adam and her wonderful husband Fred Stoneman for a very successful and fun luncheon and quiz event. They planned, researched, prepared and delivered a fun afternoon of trivia. Lunch was delicious, and the “one hint per table” was very much appreciated.

Sixty eight people attended this popular event, so it was a tough crowd. Every team came in with a respectable score. The photo shows the winning team made up of Teacher-Librarians. T-Ls know a little bit about a lot of things, and this year the right questions were asked and they won the gold.



Here are a couple of questions if you want to test yourselves:

- how many prime ministers were in office during the 1970s and 1980s, and what were their names?
- who sang “School’s Out for Summer”?
- fill in the blanks “Bud the spud from the _____ going down the highway smiling”.

Hava Java on Us

By Regine Baker

The price of everything, especially food, has risen alarmingly in the past few months. This gives even more incentive to take advantage of a genuine free offer.

Members are invited to come out once a month to meet with each other and shoot the breeze while enjoying a cup of coffee or tea along with a donut, muffin, danish, scone, etc. compliments of District 34. Your spouses, partners or a friend are also welcome.

Since this is one of our costliest activities, we ask that members limit themselves to one regular or speciality coffee or tea plus one treat. Those who want to

have a second coffee, more treats or breakfast are asked to pay for these items themselves. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

Dates:

Tuesday, January 17
 Thursday, February 16
 Wednesday, March 15
 Thursday, April 13
 Tuesday, May 16

Time: 10 a.m. to Noon at the North and South locations. Due to Covid restrictions the Central location's times are 10 to 11 a.m. and 11 a.m. to noon.

Locations:**South:**

The Old Curiosity Tea Shop
 91 Main Street
 Markham, ON (Parking on Main Street, behind the tea shop or in the lot on the corner of Robinson and Main Street)

Central:

Cream and Sugar Café
 8910 Yonge Street
 Richmond Hill, ON (west side of Yonge Street at Beresford Drive, parking in front)

North:

Tim Hortons
 Corner of Yonge and Millard Streets, Newmarket, ON

Just in!!!

We are introducing an additional location in the far north of the region.

Farther North:

Black River Coffee
 126 High Street
 Sutton, ON (parking on street)

Room 114

By Christine Ford

My beloved high school, Aurora High, hosted its Fiftieth Anniversary Open House on October 14, 2022. Banners, balloons, buttons, giant cookies and smiling current students greeted alumni as we entered those big front doors from the glowing fall sunshine.

I'm one of those people who loved high school. My best friend, Erica, and my beau, Mike, did not. Despite attending the same school at the same time, my experience was wholly different from theirs. I was the keener, the joiner on committees, in clubs, but mostly spending my time in rehearsal. I loved school.

Mike and I, along with former classmates, friends, acquaintances and assorted alumni strolled through the hallowed halls, which, aside from some paint and more accessible ramps, still mostly resembled the place I attended from 1984 to 1989. Mine was the first cohort not to have Grade 13; rather our courses were for Ontario Academic Credits (O.A.C.s) to be earned in our fifth year of secondary school.

We visited the Tech Wing at the south end of the building, where Mike and many of my friends were most comfortable. Even though I never took a shop class, I was quite familiar with that hallway. Endearingly, it still smelled the same; industrial-strength hand-cleaner, exhaust fumes and wood.

It was the Music Room downstairs where I was compelled to visit, though. We passed through the tri-levelled Cafetorium, lamenting that the kitchen was closed, denying us the savoury memory of fries and gravy. Through the tall doors, we entered the music hall.

Surprising myself, I got choked up when I went into the old music room, now used mostly for storage and some practising.



I wasn't expecting the emotion. It made me a bit sad that there was a huge "new" band room (which as a conductor, I envy!). I realised that I spent more time in that room than anywhere else in the school for five years; playing, singing, laughing, even crying, listening and talking with people I treasure to this day. The delight and camaraderie which I relished as a teenager are now shadows in a secondary space.

The biggest joys of my teaching career were inspired by the biggest joys of my school days - practising and performing. While I wasn't the best musician, I certainly tried my enthusiastic best and gave my students everything I could. I wanted to provide my students with the same kind of opportunities and experiences from which I

benefitted; bands, ensembles, choirs, plays, musicals, and community performances. I hope that my former students felt even some of the pleasure I did when I was in their shoes; not to glorify my teaching, but to have that warmth and exhilaration.

Mr. Davidson, a.k.a. Mr D. (rest his cool jazzy soul), Ms. Pavey and Ms. Mele each gave me examples to follow in their teaching, conducting and involvement in extra-curriculars in that hallowed room. I'm grateful for the lessons in music, in life and in friendship which flowed there.

Solum Optimum
Nothing But Our Best



Grant Money Available

By Regine Baker

Through the Community Grant program RTOERO enables each District to choose a local charity to receive up to \$2,500.

Rather than as a simple donation, this money is for a specific project or use that the charity is pursuing or would like to pursue.

District 34 York Region is inviting any member who is involved with a local charity to submit the name and location of the charity and a brief summary (100 words or less) of the specific project or use along with the timelines involved. As well as merit, submissions will be considered on viability and practicality.

Submissions should be sent to Regine Baker, Project Service to Others Rep at reginebaker@rogers.com by Friday, April 21, 2023. At our May meeting the District 34 Executive Board will select the one to be forwarded to RTOERO for final approval. All applicants will be notified of the decision.

Holland River Freeze-up

A 32" x 24" Oil on Canvas by George Keltika



Fun Home

By Craig Lee

Theatre Aurora

A musical:

Music by Jeanine Tesori

Book and Lyrics by Lisa Kron

When her father dies unexpectedly, graphic novelist Alison dives deep into her past to tell the story of the volatile, brilliant, one-of-a-kind man whose temperament and secrets defined her family and her life.

Moving between past and present, Alison relives her unique childhood playing at the family's Bechdel Funeral Home, her growing understanding of her own sexuality, and the looming, unanswerable questions about her father's hidden desires. *Fun Home* is a refreshingly honest, wholly original musical about seeing your parents through grown-up eyes.

Dates:

Friday, January 27, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

or

Sunday, January 29, 2023

Time: 2 p.m.

Location:

150 Henderson Drive

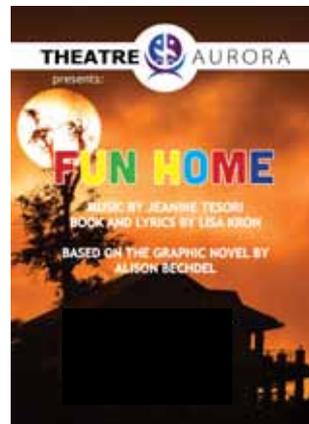
Aurora ON (south end of Aurora west off Yonge St.)

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by Friday January 13, 2023

Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up at the box office on the day of the performance. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.



Three Sisters

A Wall-hanging Sculpture By John Blaise

This unique piece consists of wild grape vines interwoven with sculpted 6" x 6" manufactured wooden posts. It is part of a series of works exploring potential new meanings arising from the focused juxtaposition of natural and manufactured materials.



Surrender Dorothy

By Craig Lee

A Curtain Club Production

Ally, a widow in her 50's, begins a relationship online and persuades her friends to join her in the world of internet dating. A hilarious and touching story about not only how to take risks but also how to live and love again.

Date: February 1, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

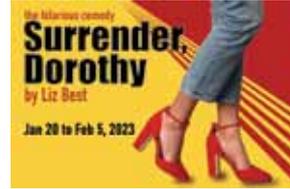
Location:

Curtain Club Theatre
400 Newkirk Rd.
Richmond Hill, ON
(corner of Newkirk Rd. and Elgin Mill Rd E.)

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by January 18, 2023. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up on the night of the performance at RTO table in the lobby from 7:30 on. An acknowledgement will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.



Calling All Photographers

By Angela Stewart

District 34 is in the process of launching a new website, and we are looking for photographs for our home page banner.

Since our district is made up of nine different municipalities, we would like to see each area represented throughout the year. The current photo is of Georgina and was taken by Lauretta Amundsen.

Our goal is to change the photos every month. If you are interested in submitting an original photograph, please send it to Angela at 34storyreminders@gmail.com.

We would need a note in the body of the email stating the name of the municipality, the name of the photographer, and a quick statement giving us permission to publish the photo on our website. Please note that the photos need to be 1440 x 577 in size. You will receive bragging rights as well as credit in an upcoming newsletter for your submission.

Retirement Planning Resources

By RTOERO

RTOERO recently updated the website's resource section to make it easier to find resources and articles on specific topics. Now, they are all in one place. The new curated areas highlight popular articles, with related most-recent content featured below. There are six themes to check out:

- Retirement planning
- Enjoy retirement
- Insurance
- Healthy living
- Equity and inclusion
- Money matters

Find them all here: rtoero.ca/resources.

2023 RTOERO Post Secondary Scholarship

By Paul Devlin

RTOERO believes in the power of our community to secure a better future, and we are committed to helping secure better futures for students, for each other, and for seniors in Canada. One of the ways we work towards achieving this goal is through our post-secondary scholarship program, established with reference to our strategic goal: to improve the lives of members and seniors.

This year RTOERO is awarding 20 scholarships valued at \$3,000 each to post-secondary (college or university) students enrolled in programs that lead to careers in either seniors' health and well-being; education; environmental stewardship; or that reflect a strong commitment to diversity, equity and/or inclusion.

RTOERO members are encouraged to recommend students in their lives, including family members, who meet the criteria.

Eligibility:

- The applicant must be studying in a college or university program that leads to a career in either seniors health and well-being; education; environmental stewardship; or that reflect a strong commitment to diversity, equity and/or inclusion. This includes fields such as: Health sciences; medicine; nursing; personal care; geriatric health care; research into healthy active living for seniors; architects, designers of age-friendly spaces, critical race studies and teaching careers in education.
- Students must be enrolled in their programs at the time of the application deadline (January 13, 2023).
- In addition to the completed application, the applicant must provide official Confirmation of Enrollment issued by the registrar from their post-secondary institution, in PDF format.
- The applicant must be recommended by an RTOERO member.
- Successful applicants may be awarded the RTOERO scholarship only once.
- RTOERO members are not themselves eligible to be awarded the scholarship.
- Students are to fill out the application themselves, not the RTOERO member.

Please note that applications can be accessed via the “apply” button at rtoero.ca/giving-back/scholarships/.

Note that the deadline to apply is midnight, January 13, 2023.

If you have any questions please contact Anna-Rita Lunghi (alunghi@rtoero.ca) or Jessica Martin (jmartin@rtoero.ca).



RTOERO Fall Art Show

By Chris Prefontaine; Photography By Greg King

Fall Art Show 2022

We are pleased to say that the RTOERO/Town of Newmarket Art Show was a huge success. Twenty-eight artists contributed over 50 pieces in various mediums, including wood carvings, punchneedle embroidery, sculptures, artistic fabric creations and of course acrylic, watercolour and oil paintings. I am truly impressed with the creativity and outstanding talent demonstrated by our RTOERO members!





Murder at the Howard Johnson's

By Craig Lee

Newmarket Stage Company

Is all fair in love? Even murder? That's the question posed by this light and funny suspense comedy about a love triangle in a Howard Johnson Motor Inn. The play presents a love triangle involving a woman, her lover, and her husband in three scenes.

In the first scene, the wife and her lover plot to murder the husband. In the next scene, the wife and her husband are plotting to murder the lover, followed by the husband and the lover plotting to murder the wife.

Date: February 11, 2023

Time: 2 p.m.

Cost: \$15

Location:

Royal Canadian Legion
707 Srigley Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 1X4

Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:

Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Please place your order by January 27, 2023. Tickets may be picked up at the box office table on the day of the performance. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.

Don't Miss Out

By Angela Stewart

RTOERO – District 34 publishes a newsletter three times a year and it is full of many fun and interesting events.

We know that retirement is a busy time and it's hard to keep track of everything, so don't miss out on reminders, last minute events, and special notices.

If you would like to keep informed of all the wonderful events that District 34 offers, in the form of a monthly email, please contact Angela at: 34thstoryreminders@gmail.com.

**“You’ll Have a Lot More Respect For
Birds After You’ve Tried Making a Nest.”
-Cynthia Lewis**

A 5” x 5” Watercolour Painting by Ann Evans



Upon Reflection

An 8” x 10” Acrylic by June Buick



Home, I'm Darling

By Angela Stewart

A Markham Little Theatre Production

Judy has Johnny's slippers waiting for him when he arrives home from work. Her kitchen is spotless, the laundry is folded, the ironing's done, and dinner is ready. It's the perfect image of 1950's bliss. The problem? The 21st century keeps knocking on her door, and it demands to be dealt with.

Home, I'm Darling, by Laura Wade, is a dark comedy about a desperate quest to see the world through rose-coloured glasses.



Home, I'm Darling
by Laura Wade
Feb 15-18, 2023

Dates: February 15-18, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

Location:

Flato Markham Theatre
171 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, ON (corner of Hwy #7
and Warden Ave.)

Cost: \$15

Please note that District 34 is subsidizing this event. In order to get your discounted price, email Angela Stewart at 34thstoryreminders@gmail.com.

Correction

By Chris Prefontaine

Please note that this sunflower painting which appeared on page 36 of the September 2022 Issue of *The 34th Story* was painted by Mai-Britt Edgar not June Buick.



District 34 Fall Luncheon

Photography By Cindy Ranieri

The RTOERO District 34 Fall Luncheon was held at the Meadowbrook Golf and Country Club on November 20, 2022. As usual, it was great to see old and new friends mingle and enjoy a great meal together.





Cham Shan Temple Tour

By Craig Lee

On September 15, we had a tour of the Cham Shan temple in Thornhill. Our tour guide Lily was very gracious and welcoming. She introduced us to a number of Buddhas, gave us a brief history of this temple, had a monk lead us in a yoga session, showed us a model of a new massive temple being built near Peterborough and introduced us to Avalokiteshvara a deity with one thousand arms and eyes.



New District 34 Website

By Chris Prefontaine

In an effort to standardize the look and feel of all their district websites across Canada, (there are 51 districts) the RTOERO national office has requested that we move our resources from the “our34th Story” URL to our new “home” at district34.rtoero.ca.

We have made the switch over to the new site and I hope that you like it. When you visit us, our President’s Message as well as other news will come up as soon as you open the page, and you will be able to find our usual list of events at the top under EVENTS. This new website will also give you information about District 34 as well as our Insurance plans and other national programs. Thank you to Grant Dale who maintained our original home for so many years!

Kaleidoscope of Imagination

By Craig Lee

Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra

The RHPO has returned to presenting live performances once again after the COVID hiatus. After nearly three years of silence in the concert hall, The Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra is delighted to perform again. Their music reflects hope, imagination, dreams, the fusion of nationalities, cultures and ethnicities, and a connection with literature, art and dance, to form a celebration of the manifestation of our collective culture. A preconcert talk will be given 45 minutes prior to the performance offering valuable insight into the music being performed and discovery about music, composers and musicians.

Kaleidoscope of Imagination is magical. Aside from having the power to escape reality, imagination ignites passion, creativity, innovation, and is responsible for theories and inventions that pervade our

very existence. *Kaleidoscope of Imagination* shares music that describes and reminds us of amazing things that are the result of the imagination of those who have gone beyond what seems possible. Drawing music from the “legit” catalogue, film scores, and original compositions, this delightful program will spark dreams and inspiration and perhaps give everyone a reason to believe in magic.

Date: February 18, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

Location:

Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
10268 Yonge Street
Richmond Hill, ON

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by Friday February 3, 2023. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form. Tickets may be picked up on the day of the performance at the box office table.

Cooking to Fight Inflammation

By Chris Prefontaine

One of the most powerful ways to fight inflammation is to get into the kitchen and eat a healthy diet. While inflammation can be good at times, chronic inflammation is a risk factor for disease.

Join registered dietitian Christina Iaboni, for a one-hour virtual cooking class and education session where she will review the basics of an anti-inflammatory diet and prepare three recipes that are high in anti-inflammatory foods.

No worry about the possibility of driving in the snow! This class will avoid germs and masks as it will be held on Zoom. Recipes and handouts will be provided before the session so you can cook along with Christina.

Date:

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Time: 1 p.m.

Cost: This free event has been subsidized by District 34.

Please register by sending an email of intent with your name, email address and phone number to Chris Prefontaine at 7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com by Sunday, February 19, 2023. A minimum of 20 participants will be required. The link to the Zoom event will be sent to you after the 19th.

-Christina specializes in digestive health, plant-based eating and wellness. She has a nutrition communications business focusing on teaching people how to eat healthy and affordable meals.

Christina works to facilitate wellness workshops where she can share her passion of helping others improve their health by eating nutritious food. Check out her website: christinaiaboni.com.

Leaving Ukraine

A 16" x 20" Acrylic Painting By Joan Natoli



Introduction to Cybersecurity

By Paul Devlin

Recently, I participated in an RTOERO Webinar, “Introduction to Cyber Security.” Jonathan Bullock, an expert in cyber security with 15 years as an IT specialist, was the lead presenter. He was supported by Charles Tabone, RTOERO’s Director of Information Technology.

Cybersecurity is a growing concern for seniors as the number of people falling victim to “scammers” continues to rise. Too many people have the attitude that this will never happen to them and ignore the consequences. Cybersecurity is everyone’s business because scammers are very smart. Scammers target different demographic groups, but seniors have proven to be a group targeted more than others. It is estimated that in 2000, \$75 billion was stolen from retirees worldwide.

Malware is a term that is often referenced in articles about scamming. It is an umbrella term for any type of malicious software.

This includes:

- Ransomware
- Worms
- Trojans
- Spyware
- Viruses

You have probably experienced a technology support scam if you received a phone call from Microsoft or Apple. These companies never initiate these calls. Have you ever received a call from Canadian Border Services, Revenue Canada, or a call alerting you that you have won a contest? These are all scam calls that try to have you turn over personal information. The same method is used in text phishing or email phishing scams. Never respond to these types of contact. Instead, call the company website and seek clarification.

The most feared hacking groups are from Russia, China, and Iran. We don’t have extradition treaties with those countries, so the government can’t do anything about it. Protect yourself. The most secure advice for anyone is to not let anyone know your password(s). Do not reuse your passwords under any circumstance. However, most people can’t be bothered to have

several different passwords. Use a password manager to generate a password with the characters required by a website. Then use a password that is very easy for you to remember to get into your password manager.

LastPass is one example of a free password manager that stores encrypted passwords online. The standard version of LastPass comes with a web interface, but also includes plugins for various web browsers and apps for many smartphones. The built-in password generator creates long randomized passwords that protect against hacking.

How do you go about creating a secure password? Don't try to be too complicated or too short. Use three random words that are easy to remember. A password of 16-24 characters is suggested. Pick a good password and you never need to change it unless there is a breach. If you own Apple devices make sure to use Apple password storage for each device.

When browsing on the internet always try to use an open-source browser. Chrome and Firefox are good examples, as is Safari, if using an Apple product.

To protect your data, look for software security programs. Apple and Microsoft have very good built-in malware protection but is recommended that individuals acquire added security. For example, Sophos Home detects and cleans up viruses, trojans, worms and spyware, as well as adware and other potentially unwanted applications. It stops hackers/scammers from accessing your webcam or microphone to block spying and predatory acts and stops attacks before they impact your systems.

Charles Tabone provided details about RTOERO's cybersecurity. The entire system is backed-up in the Cloud and there has never been a breach. Two staff members are dedicated to monitor internet security. He assured all webinar participants that more sessions will be held to further explore cybersecurity issues.

Visit district34.rtoero.ca/questions-and-answers-at-the-cybersecurity-webinar for a list of the questions and answers from our members at that webinar.

Diary of Anne Frank

By Craig Lee

Theatre Aurora

The memoirs of this young Jewish girl, forced to hide for nearly two years to escape Nazi persecution, are an essential part of how we remember one of the darkest periods of our human history.

Dates and Times:

Friday, March 3 at 8 p.m.

Or

Sunday, March 5 at 2 p.m.

Location:

Theatre Aurora
150 Henderson Drive
Aurora, ON (south end of Aurora west off Yonge St.)

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by Friday February 10, 2023. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up at the box office on the day of the performance. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.

Saved by an Angel

A 6" x 6" Punchneedle

Embroidery Creation

By Janice Hopkins

Janice created this design for a friend whose much-loved dog Angel had passed. Angel was a rescue dog whose devotion leaves us wondering if pets like her are the rescued or if they are the rescuers.



The Millionaire: A Musical Murder Mystery

By Jane Reynolds

The Millionaire is an exciting and original musical murder mystery performed by the North Toronto Players. The story opens at the home of the recently deceased millionaire, Jacques Reynard, where his family, friends, business partners and hangers-on have arrived for an after-funeral reception and reading of the will.

Be prepared for many startling revelations as events unfold with music by Arthur Sullivan, Beethoven, Bach, Orff and others.

Available Dates and Times:
(All dates are in March)

Friday the 17th, Saturday the 18th, Friday the 24th, or Saturday the 25th

Time: 8 p.m.

Sunday the 19th, Saturday the 25th, or Sunday the 26th

Time: 2 p.m.

Location:

The Papermill Theatre
Todmorden Mills,
67 Pottery Road
Toronto, ON
(Exit the Don Valley Parkway S.
at the Bloor cut-off, veering right
for Bayview N. and turning right
on to Pottery Rd.)

Cost: \$25 (children under 14
admitted free)

Please place your order by
February 17th, 2023. Make your
cheque out to
RTOERO District 34 and send
with your registration form
(p. 61) to:
Jane Reynolds
76 Harrison Avenue
Aurora, ON L4G 1E3

Acknowledgements will
be emailed upon receipt of
registration forms. Tickets may
be picked up on the day of the
performance at the theatre box
office.



Innocence Lost

By Craig Lee

**A Curtain Club Production
About Steven Truscott**

In 1959, 12 year old Lynne Harper was found dead in a farm woodlot near Clinton, Ontario. A few months later her classmate, 14 year old Steven Truscott, was convicted of the murder in a case that was later considered one of Canada's most notorious wrongful convictions.

Date:

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

Location:

Curtain Club Theatre
400 Newkirk Road
Richmond Hill, ON (corner of
Newkirk Rd. and Elgin Mills Rd.)

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by March 15, 2023. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up on the night of the performance at the RTO table in the lobby from 7:15 on. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.



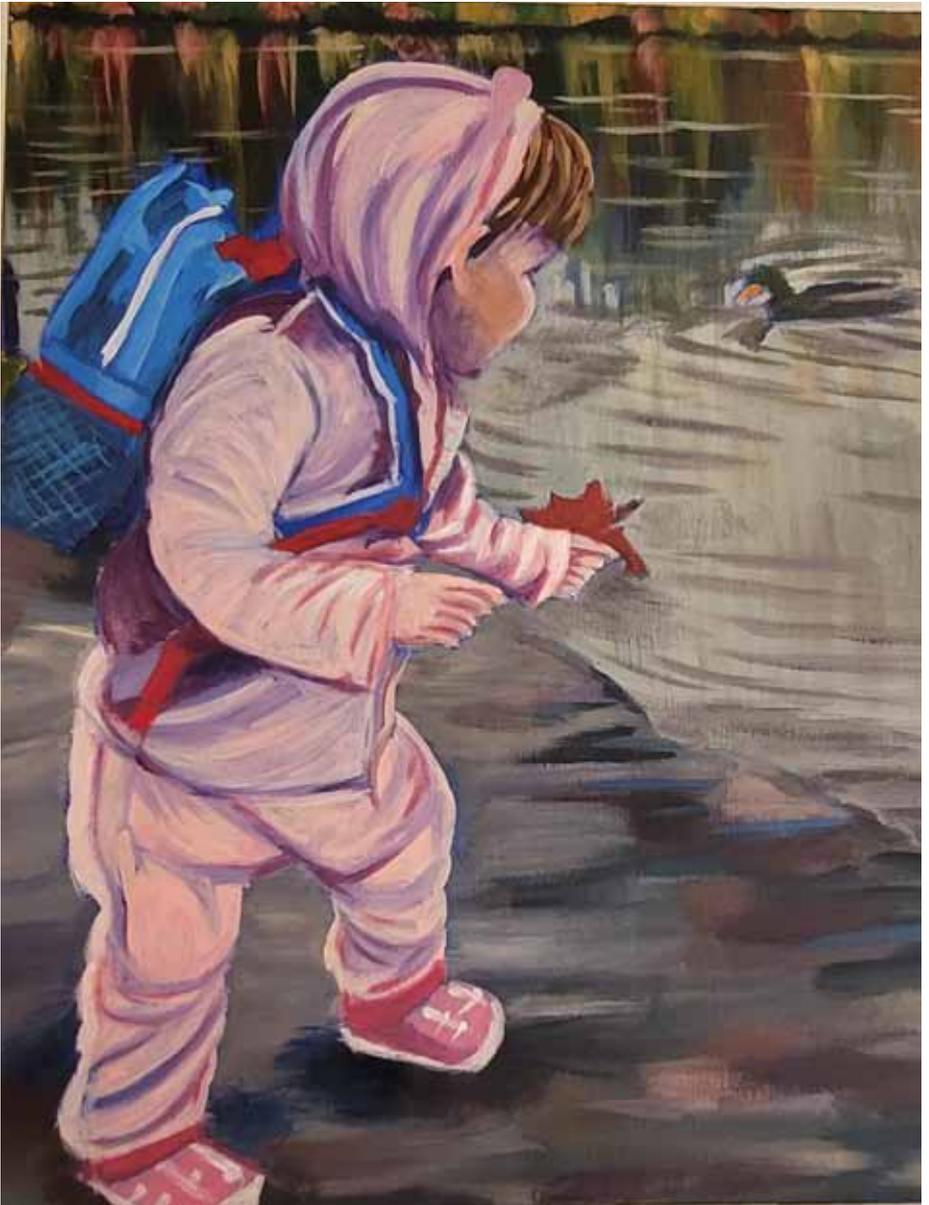
Hydrangeas

*A 22" x 31" Acrylic Painting on a
Vintage Window*
By Mai-Britt Edgar



Curiosity

An 16" x 20" Acrylic Painting on Canvas By Lesley Paterson



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 RTOERO District 34, I extend a warm welcome to these new Members within our ranks:

Carolyn Alexan
 Rachelle Beckman
 Marsha Blain
 Anna Blarowska
 Cathy Bottecchia
 Robert Boyd
 Michelle Chitiz
 Juliet Cryns
 Pasquali Cubellis
 Lyn Devlin
 Joanne Ford
 Elizabeth Fraser
 Paula Gold
 Pietro Ingraldi
 Ellen Jacobson
 Narinderjit Kainth
 Ewa Kofman

Catherine Lyons
 Belinda McRoberts
 James McRoberts
 Angela Moreland
 Amitta Morzaria
 Carmela Nardozi
 Ruth Perratt
 Christine Phillips
 Lori Richards
 Dean Sherman
 Virginia Smereka
 Kim Spiller
 Tamar Stein
 Helena Sterling
 Claudia Suhanic
 Olga Van der Lee
 Nicole Vetter
 Marci Vexler
 George Wiedemeyer



Why We Need Pharmacare

Shared By Paul Devlin

The government agency tasked with regulating pharmaceutical prices, the Patented Medicines Price Review Board (PMPRB), has done a poor job keeping a lid on drug price inflation. Canada's drug prices might be lower than the U.S., but they are much higher than all other wealthy countries. A 2015 10-country UBC Faculty of Medicine study found that on average, Canadians paid 60 per cent to 105 per cent more for prescription drugs than other countries, all of which had universal public drug insurance.

All countries except Canada offered universal coverage of outpatient prescription drugs. In the five countries with universal, single-payer coverage of prescription drugs, the average per-person cost was \$77. In the four countries with universal social insurance for prescription drugs, average costs were \$99, and in Canada, which has a mixed system of private and public financing, the average costs were \$158.

Higher costs of drugs and the mix of therapies chosen accounted for most of the cost differences between countries.

“The volume of therapy purchased in Canada was about the same as that in the comparator countries; however, Canadians spent an estimated \$2.3 billion more than they would have if these primary care treatments had had the same average cost per day in Canada as in the nine comparator countries combined,” writes lead author Steven Morgan, a Professor in the School of Population and Public Health.

Costs have been soaring, with severe consequences for low-income people's access to medications. Nearly a quarter of Canadians (23 per cent) tried to make a prescription last longer by splitting doses or not filling a prescription in the past year because of cost, according to a 2020 Angus Reid poll.

The Canadian government has been quite concerned about the interests of Big Pharma, especially since the start of the pandemic. Under intense lobbying from the industry,

Prime Minister Trudeau has axed reforms that would have brought prices in Canada more in line with other European countries:

- a gift of billions to Big Pharma and
- has repeatedly delayed implementing pharmacare.

At the WTO, Canada quietly sided with rich countries to block efforts to suspend patents on vaccines and other publicly funded COVID-19 tools.

In a United States National Library of Medicine study of corporate profitability from 2000 to 2018, pharmaceutical giants like Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson were found to have “significantly higher annual profit margins than S&P 500 companies” across a range of measures. The most conservative estimates of profit margins for pharma were 13.8 per cent versus 7.7 per cent for non-pharmaceutical companies, though other estimates pegged pharma’s profit margins as high as 28 per cent. Only the largest Big Tech corporations, such as Apple, Google and Microsoft, came close to Big Pharma’s profitability.

One chartered accountant says that in accounting and finance, excess profit is defined as profit over and above a “normal” return on capital invested in the company - a return that is commonly associated with the risk of the investment.

Since the pandemic hit, pharma profits are higher than ever. According to public recording requirements, the top 10 most profitable pharmaceutical corporations in 2021 had profit margins in the 20 to 27 per cent range, well above the average level of S&P 500 corporations. The most eye-popping returns were for pharmaceutical companies that produced vaccines and antiviral treatments. Several companies enjoyed a big windfall from selling COVID- 19 products.

From 2000 to 2021, the profitability of large pharmaceutical companies was significantly greater than other large, public companies. Data on the profitability of large pharmaceutical companies may be relevant to formulating evidence-based policies to make medicines more affordable.

In Canada, more than 50% of R&D costs, and nearly all the basic scientific research that underlies it, comes from public sources. Yet it is the large pharmaceutical companies that reap the profits.

The Liberal-NDP supply-and-confidence agreement has put Trudeau's shelved pharmacare plans back on the political agenda, but it is far from a done deal. As debates around the shape of pharmacare to come heat up, the question is whether it will be our pharmacare, or Big Pharma's. We can expect to see much more scare mongering from Big Pharma's paid defenders. In the coming months and years, they will try to frighten us into thinking that any limits imposed on their price-gouging will bring the sky down on our heads.

Canadians have successfully organized against private medicine before - that's why we have Medicare. A pharmacare program that centres the needs of the people, rather than the demands of Big Pharma, is eminently winnable.

Reprinted with permission.

For more information visit: canadians.org/analysis/with-pharmacare-legislation-coming-financial-post-asks-canadians-to-pity-big-pharma

And sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/06/170612094055.htm



Creatures Great and Small

By Craig Lee

Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra

Animals, mythology and nature continue to serve as inspiration for composers throughout history. *Creatures Great and Small* presents symphonic interpretations of fantastic beasts and the rich fauna across the globe with music across the ages.

From land to sea and a glimpse into imagination, audiences of all ages will enjoy a menagerie of music that conjures the characteristics of creatures in nature's realm and beyond.

Date: Saturday April 8, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

Location:

Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
10268 Yonge St.
Richmond Hill, ON

Cost: \$15.00

Please place your order by Friday March 24, 2023. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up at the box office a week before the concert or on the day of the performance. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.



Sending Cheques to Event Organizers

By Chris Prefontaine

There seems to be some confusion with regard to writing cheques to pay for District 34 events. Please see below for an example. If a cheque is NOT made out properly it will need to be returned to the member and then re-issued.

		0025
	DATE	Signing Date
PAY TO THE ORDER OF	RTOERO District 34	\$ \$ Price \$
	The written amount	DOLLARS
MEMO	Name of Event	Your Signature
		AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE
⑆ 789123456 ⑆ 123789456123 ⑆ 0025		

Please do NOT make the cheque payable to the organizer!

Volunteering With Markham Little Theatre

By Angela Stewart

When I signed my permanent contract with YRDSB and bought my house, I felt settled, and knew it was a good time to commit to volunteering with a local group. Live theatre had always been a passion so I contacted Markham Little Theatre (MLT) and asked if they needed help. And they did!

My first position with MLT was as an usher. We were to dress in black and white, and were given a speech from the house manager about safety. Armed with a stack of programs I made my way up to the balcony to open the doors and greet the patrons. Little did I know that the box seats were numbered backwards, at least to my way of thinking, and I placed everyone in the wrong spot. Thankfully we were able to sort everyone out before the play began.

The director of the next play asked if I would work on costumes. I didn't know anything about fashion or material or measuring for sizes, but was

willing to give it a go. It was a very complex play with eight actors and multiple costume changes, and some of the costumes were quite bizarre. I learned a lot on that production, from how to dye a sweater in a tea bath to how to find specific items of clothing for the best price to how to help an actor change their complete outfit in mere seconds. Yes, costume changes are rehearsed.

I was hooked after only two productions and began to attend the company's monthly meetings. The members were fun and friendly and very welcoming. Soon I was attending social events and making lifelong friends. Then, I started joining committees, sitting on the board, and running special events. Working with a community theatre group is a very fulfilling experience.

There is a position for everyone, from working on a committee (play-reading, fundraising) to helping with a specific department (archives, publicity, set construction) to working on a production (directing, stage managing, lighting, sound). Of course, there is always acting.

Auditions are held throughout the year and most take the form of a cold reading with others who are auditioning.

I have been on stage a couple of times, but my favourite place is back stage making sure the show runs smoothly.



To me, acting is far too nerve-wracking and I admire the people I work with who are so good on stage. I think teaching and putting on shows in the school gym made me feel comfortable working as a stage manager or running lights or gathering props. During my time with Markham Little Theatre I have learned a lot, and I know I have a lot more to learn. Thankfully we have a great group of people who are happy to mentor you in whatever position appeals to you.



If you are interested in volunteering with a theatre group, you will be very welcome. Just contact any of the companies that are listed in our newsletters. Markham Little Theatre would be happy to have you, and can be reached at info@markhamlittletheatre.ca

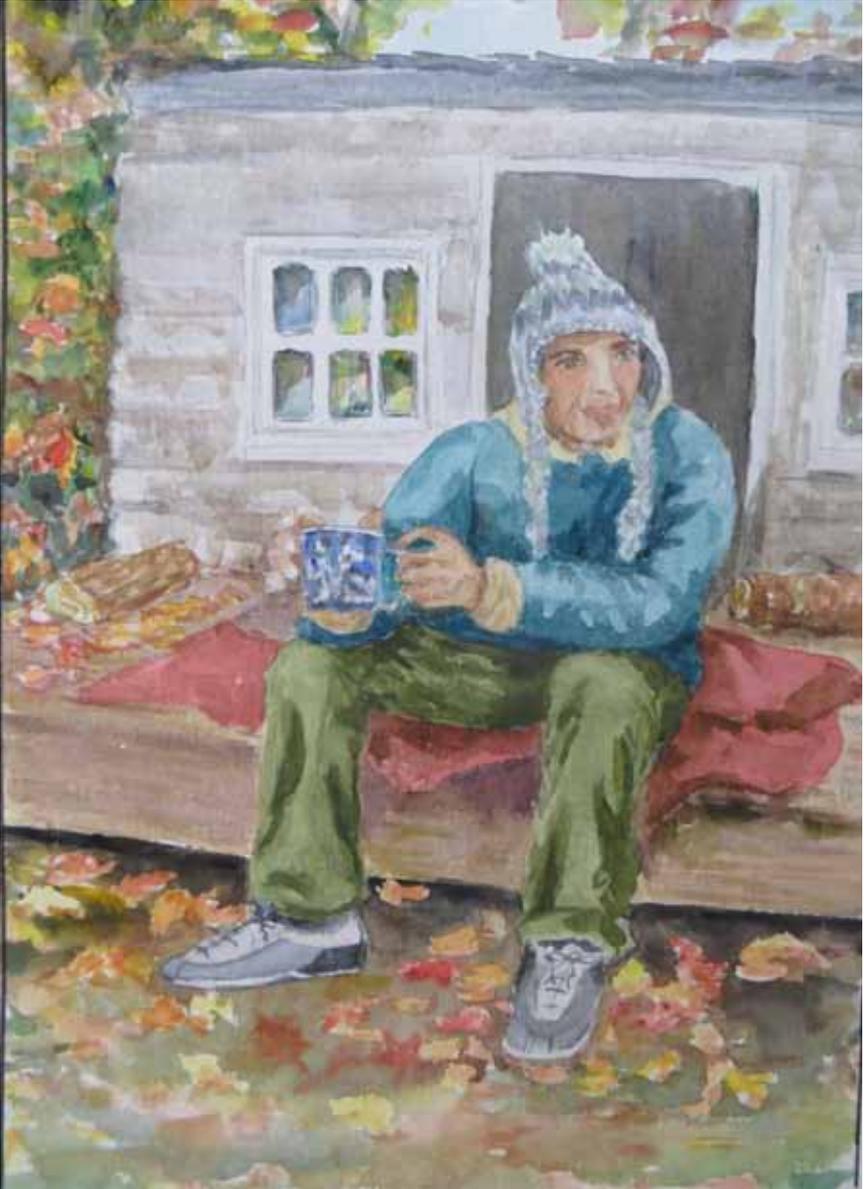
Or you can contact me at 34thstoryreminders@gmail.com

I would be happy to answer any questions or give you a tour of our fabulous rehearsal space.

* So how do you spend your free time? If you think our members would be interested and might also like to give it a try, please write up an article like Angela has and send it to 7chris.prefontaine@gmail.com for consideration.

“Sometimes The Most Productive Thing To Do Is Relax.” - Mark Black

A Watercolour Painting By Ann Evans



Make Tax Time More Manageable in Retirement

By RTOERO

Each year, RTOERO works with financial experts to prepare a tax tips publication for members (rtoero.ca/resources/tax-tips). While the resource isn't a replacement for personalized advice from your accountant or tax advisor, it provides:

- background information on different tax topics;
- points to consider for the current tax year; and
- ideas for future planning.

Reviewing updates to tax legislation, like what's covered in RTOERO's tax tips publication, is one way to help make tax time more manageable. Here are more suggestions.

- Keep track of your expenses through the year – You might consider keeping a spreadsheet with things like medical expenses, renovation costs and public transit costs since they could be eligible for a tax credit.

- Save your receipts in a single place – Your organization will be useful each year, but also if you're ever audited.
- Consider setting up your charitable giving as recurring monthly gifts – When you give to charities as a monthly donor, you'll receive one tax receipt for each charity you donate to covering all of your donations for the year.
- Know your income thresholds – Make sure you're aware if there's a maximum number of days you're able to work without impacting your pension.
- Consider adjusting your deductions – You can adjust the amount of tax taken from retirement income sources to prevent a large bill at tax time.

These tips are adapted from RTOERO's blog post: rtoero.ca/how-to-make-tax-time-more-manageable-in-retirement.



In Memoriam

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

Robert Austin
 Margaret Bertrim
 Amy Browne
 Hazel Campbell
 Sylvia Carroll
 Bernice Davidson
 Geneva Dupuis
 Freda Egner
 Marion Foord
 William Fraser
 Monika Gray
 Dorothy Hammond
 Carole Hudak
 Vita Ingraldi
 Elinor Irwin
 Nathan Isaacs
 Joan Lawson
 John Lyons
 Jane Manning
 Judith McIntyre-Smith
 William Perratt
 William Plaus
 Carla Sage
 Helen Sanderson

Elizabeth Schilbach
 Eileen Shankman
 Edward Smereka
 Virginia Smith
 Sidney Soban
 Sheila Tacon
 Rose Tipold
 Steven Toth
 Paul Wharton
 Shirley Wiedemeyer
 Marjorie Williamson



The Milk Bag Project

By Angela Stewart

The milk bag weaving group of retired educators and friends, led by RTOERO member Sharon Gusz, continues to meet on the first Tuesday of each month. Below is a list of meeting dates. Note the change of date for January and the change of time for January, February and March. If you would like to help, please email Sharon at sharongusz@gmail.com.

Email reminders will be sent out monthly to interested individuals. You are welcome to drop by for any amount of time and to come and go as you wish.

Dates for 2023

- Tuesday, January 10
1 to 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, February 7
1 to 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 7
1 to 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 4
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 2
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, June 6
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Meet RTOERO Member Sal Amenta

By Paul Devlin

The Portrait of an Artist

Newspaper editors in the GTA are very familiar with the name Salvatore (Sal) Amenta. You may have seen Sal's name while perusing the Letter To the Editor sections in a variety of daily and weekly publications. He is known for his

insightful comments on a broad range of topics.

You may even know him from his years playing the accordion at Frankie Tomatto's restaurant in Markham, or at various District 34 celebrations.



Some may know him as an accomplished visual artist and art historian. Sal has been retired for 21 years, but he has remained very active and is a fervent advocate for social change.

Sal was born in Canicattini Bagni, province of Siracusa, Sicily in 1945. He likes to say that it was the place where Plato taught and that is why he has had a life-long interest in the study of Philosophy.

He and his family immigrated to Canada in 1952. They originally settled in Cabbagetown before making their way to the east end of Toronto. Sal attended several

elementary schools, including St. Martin's, St. Brigid's, Second Public, Oak Park junior and finally East York Collegiate.

In 1964 Sal enrolled at the Ontario College of Art. A good friend went to the University of Guelph and regaled him with stories of studying philosophy especially Descartes and existentialism. This piqued his interest which led to him working with the administration of OCA and Guelph to develop an Articulation Program that allowed OCA students to transfer credits from OCA to Guelph. This would also allow students to qualify to teach visual art.



Sal graduated from the Ontario College of Art in 1969 as the Gold Medalist. A dedicated student, he managed to graduate with a B.A. in Philosophy from Guelph and an M.A. in Art Education from Sir George Williams - both in 1970! His thesis included an art exhibition

and an example of sculpture in changing fields of colour in three dimensions.

Sal's teaching career was inspired by my many good teachers, especially Allen Good who was his art teacher at East York Collegiate. Mr. Good was the one who encouraged Sal to attend the College of Art after high school. His words of encouragement and support have remained a constant in Sal's career.

Sal credits his teachers who served as mentors. He says his favourite teachers were those with the strongest opinions, teachers that encouraged other students to voice their own opinions and ideas. Sal believes these teachers and his love of philosophical debate inspired him to become a teacher. "If it hadn't been for them, I would've been a wealthy artist", he joked. "There were other things more important than making money, so I dedicated myself to teaching."

Throughout his teaching career, Sal stressed that "it is important to hear from people with whom you disagree". He used that philosophy to teach his students constructive debating.

Sal married Kathy (Vano) who was also a teacher in 1976. Living with their son, John Paul (JP) in Unionville, the family moved to Stouffville in 2002. At that time, Sal made the decision to retire early; he and Kathy sold their house and cottage, seeking a calmer life in the country.

Sal chose to retire early to assist his son, who has an intellectual disability, to find work after graduating from high school, and to tackle his own bucket list. This included the move to the country, learning stained glass, writing, travelling and ballroom dancing.



Kathy joined Sal in retirement in 2007 after over 30 years of teaching and being an extraordinary teacher-librarian at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. It was a huge school, but

she knew every student by name! Kathy also played a leadership role in “Reading for the Love of It” for many years.

In retirement Sal and Kathy began pursuing their travel dreams of cruising and ballroom dancing, with JP in tow. Sal then began a weekly eight year gig at Frankie Tomatto’s in 2012, (after bringing along his accordion on a lark for a family reunion).



JP is a car freak who loves to drive and tends to “his” 2001 Custom Buick Century with great care as it was inherited from his dearly departed grandfather. He worked almost 10 years for YRP’s Community Safety Village. At almost 40, JP is dedicated to helping his parents take care of their wooded property, and they “love him to bits!”

I first met Sal when he began his secondary teaching career in 1982 at Fr. Bressani Catholic High School in the York Catholic District School Board. I quickly learned that he was a voracious reader and not afraid to voice his opinion on several issues. His students found him most intriguing not just because of his artistic abilities, but because he challenged them to believe in themselves.

Switching to the Toronto Catholic District School Board, Sal taught Visual Art and English for over 20 years. First, he taught at Francis Lieberman C.H.S. and then moved to the new Pope John Paul II C.H.S. Paul fondly recalls two principals who encouraged him and supported his efforts to engage students, Jean Paul Patenaude and Paul Howard.

One example of Sal's advocacy was his struggle to have teaching experience from college/university recognized by school boards. Eventually, he saw the insertion of a prior teaching experience clause in the collective agreement. When the so-called "Sal Amenta Clause" was adopted, the salaries

of some teachers doubled overnight! Hundreds of teachers immediately benefited from this development. He resolved to pay it forward for other teachers which led to him dedicating 17 years to his local OECTA Executive.

After serving as OECTA president, he went to the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies as its Liberal Arts Coordinator, then to the Faculty of Education at UofT as a curriculum instructor (Man in Society) and Philosophy of Education. After that, Sal returned to the classroom at Senator O'Connor C.H.S to teach English, World Religions and eventually Co-op Education full-time until finally retiring from the board in 2001. Sal loved all his teaching assignments but cites his time teaching perspective teachers as his favourite.

Before retiring from 30 years of teaching in university and high school, Sal was Dean and Acting President of Prime Tech Institute. He previously served as Coordinator of Liberal Studies at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies,

and seconded instructor at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Education. From 1970 to 1980, Sal taught Visual Arts at the UofT Scarborough College, while earning his PhD in Educational Theory at OISE. During that period, he became a founding director of the Scarborough Arts Council, and later of Columbus Centre, a vibrant community centre where people enjoy the richness of Italian culture within a Canadian setting.

Since his earliest university years, Sal has consistently authored letters to the editor. He tells me his commitment to sharing his opinions through letters is simply because he loves to write. Sal admits to having written hundreds of letters. His topics are varied and even though he claims he writes about whatever catches his attention, there is a definite tendency for his communication to focus on advocacy for social issues.

It is not just his love of writing that motivates him. Indeed, it is a craft he has polished over the decades, but it's his dedication in being involved within the community.

"A critical part of living in a democracy is for people to share their ideas openly and critically and not just accept whatever biases we have," he explained. "It is the only way we can really learn from each other." It is a belief he shared with his students over the years, encouraging them to voice their opinions and to challenge others without resorting to personal attacks.

Sal's son JP happens to be high-functioning. Families with more severely challenged children are in dire need of more support.

"We were blessed that JP had fabulous teachers and excellent programs and he did very well throughout school," Sal states.

"Parents are the most passionate and full-time advocates of children with disabilities," says Sal. While there are many day programs, employment support programs, counselling and group homes, he noted, "There is never enough support because there is never enough money."

Advocating for his son led to fighting for families supporting special needs children, then for aging seniors, and then to

becoming a founding member of Seniors for Social Action Ontario (SSAO). Its goal is to persuade government to offer alternatives to institutionalized eldercare at home and in the community because seniors do NOT want to end up in nursing homes. In the process Sal has written many letters and editorials on related subjects to newspapers.

While showing support for his son and people with disabilities, Sal became involved with Community Living as a family advocate and as a founding member of The Family Support Network. The Community Living movement was started 60 years ago by families who wanted more for their disabled children than just keeping them at home.

Sal is proud of his many accomplishments: earning four degrees after thinking he would never graduate from high school; establishing the cultural programs at the Columbus Centre; his OECTA involvement; receiving the OECTA Provincial Communication Award; playing in a dance band; jurying art shows and having his own art in exhibits and collections. However, his

proudest moments are those spent with Kathy and JP.



He is as busy as ever in his retirement, doing things for which there was never enough time while teaching. He loves entertaining people with his electronic piano accordion. He has over a thousand eclectic tunes in his repertoire! Sal and Kathy love cruising and ballroom dancing, although Sal says he is a perpetual beginner in Argentine Tango!

Sal's advice for retirees is to adopt a personal cause and pursue it with passion. His doctoral thesis showed that life is all about reaching out for the possible, but the joy comes not from the achievement itself, however rewarding, but in connecting with others along the way.

The Addams Family

By Craig Lee

Marquee Theatrical Productions

The Addams Family, a comical feast that embraces the wackiness in every family, features an original story and it's every father's nightmare: Wednesday Addams, the ultimate princess of darkness, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet, smart young man from a respectable family – a man her parents have never met. And if that wasn't upsetting enough, Wednesday confides in her father and begs him not to tell her mother.

Now, Gomez Addams must do something he's never done before - keep a secret from his beloved wife, Morticia. Everything will change for the whole family on the fateful night they host a dinner for Wednesday's "normal" boyfriend and his parents.

Date: Sunday, April 23, 2023

Time: 1 p.m.
(note the early start time)

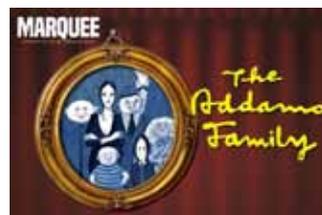
Location:

New Roads Performing Arts Centre (Newmarket Theatre).
505 Pickering Crescent
Newmarket, ON
The theatre is attached to Newmarket High School on the north side of Mulock Drive between Bayview and Leslie.

Cost: \$15

Please place your order by Friday, March 31. Make your cheque out to *RTOERO District 34* and send it along with your completed registration form (p. 61) to:
Craig Lee
21 Lippincott Court
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 7M5

Tickets may be picked up on the day of the performance at the New Roads Theatre or a week prior to the show at the Old Town Hall Box Office (Botsford St.) Monday to Friday, Noon to 4 p.m. Acknowledgements will be emailed upon receiving the registration form.



Twist

By Angela Stewart

A Markham Little Theatre Production

A mild-mannered accountant finds a sensational way to make a fortune. He plans to write a kiss-and-tell biography about his venomous wife, the nation's favourite soap opera actress. He soon realizes that his book will sell even better if she is murdered before it's published!

Twist is a hilarious spoof on the thriller genre, sure to take audiences on a wide ride of suspense and excitement.

Dates: April 26 - 29, 2023

Time: 8 p.m.

Location:

Flato Markham Theatre
171 Town Centre Boulevard,
Markham, ON (corner of Hwy. 7
and Warden Ave.)

Cost: \$15

Please note that District 34 is subsidizing this event. In order to get your discounted price, email Angela Stewart at 34thstoryreminders@gmail.com.

Save the Date!

By Paul Devlin

Baseball is Back!

The young and surging Blue Jays will be playing host to the powerful Houston Astros on Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Plan to come out to the ballgame with other District 34 members on that date. The cost will be \$35. Watch for the event announcement in the April 2023 issue of *The 34th Story!*

Bees Making Honey

Stringart on Live-Edge Wood

By Karen Watson



Winter Walk

A 24" x 24" Cold Wax and Oil Painting By Dawn Stanojev



Tempting Winter Berries

A 12" x 12" Watercolour on Canvas By Kate Greenway



Acknowledgement/Waiver/Release

This form is only required for bus trips.

The participants in _____
 ____ (the “Event”) acknowledge and agree that RTOERO, including District 34, will not be responsible for any loss, injury or damage of any nature, including death, howsoever arising in connection with this trip/excursion/event. Participants in the Event are therefore hereby advised to carry their own insurance in connection therewith. By signing below and in consideration of the participant’s attendance at the Event, the participant hereby releases and forever discharges RTOERO District 34 and their respective directors, officers, members, agents, employees and volunteers (collectively, the “Releasees”) from any and all actions, causes of action, claims and demands (collectively, the “Claims”) from any loss, injury or damage of any nature, including death, which has arisen or may arise from the participant’s attendance at the Event, unless such loss, injury or damage has arisen as a result of the sole negligence of one or more of the Releasees. Any claim arising out of the participant’s attendance at the Event will be governed by the laws of Ontario, Canada and the participant consents to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Ontario, Canada in any such action.

Participant’s printed name	Signature	Date
----------------------------	-----------	------

Participant’s printed name	Signature	Date
----------------------------	-----------	------

Participant’s printed name	Signature	Date
----------------------------	-----------	------

Participant’s printed name	Signature	Date
----------------------------	-----------	------

Please print participants’ names and dates. Send along with the registration form to the event organizer.

Registration for RTOERO District 34 York Region Events

Please print this form. Note that your picture may be taken at this event and used in *The 34th Story* newsletter.

Name of Event: _____

Date of Event: _____ Cost per person: _____

Registration Deadline Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Telephone of Primary Contact: _____

Email: _____

Bus Pick-up: (if included in the price of the event); (check only one):

Newmarket Location Richmond Hill Location

Meal choice (if applicable): _____

Enclosed is a cheque made out to ***RTOERO District 34*** for
\$ _____ for _____ person/people at \$ _____ each.

Send your completed registration form with your payment to the
address given in the event description.

**Please use a separate registration form and cheque for each event
request.**

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 RTOERO 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.
RTOERO Health Benefit
Plan Administrator

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

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

Website
johnson.ca



34th Story Website

Check our website at
District34.rtoero.ca

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

Changing Your Name, Address or Phone

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

RTOERO NATIONAL 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
rtoero.ca/

DISTRICT 34 MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Lori MacDonald-Blundon
District34Membership@
outlook.com
Questions regarding
membership and newsletter
mailings may be directed to
Lori as well.

DISTRICT 34 EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

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 Drive
Maple, ON L6A 2G6**

