



Goodwill is the greatest!

On November 29th, 2023, despite inclement weather, seven of our Goodwill Captains were able to meet at the Walker House in Southampton for our annual Christmas luncheon. A delicious lunch, much camaraderie and an opportunity to share our experiences as Captains was appreciated by all those who attended.

Our list of RTOERO Goodwill clients for Bruce Grey continues to grow and is now over 250 members. We mourned the passing of 30 of our Goodwill clients in 2023. Our ten Goodwill Captains do an outstanding job remembering our members who are 85 years of age and over with cards for their birthdays, at Christmas, in sympathy and during illness. As these members move from their former homes to other locations such as retirement and nursing homes, it can indeed be a challenge keeping track of their whereabouts and we do appreciate their family members letting us know when this occurs.

If you know of any Bruce Grey RTOERO member who could use a thinking of you card, please reach out to one of our Goodwill Captains: Mary Jane MacArthur – Owen Sound and Walkerton area, Lynda Monck – Meaford and Thornbury area, Marilyn Emke – Hanover area, Brigita Jogi – Markdale area, Audrey MacDonald – Kincardine and Ripley area, Jan Kerr – Southampton area, Beth Hotchkiss – Port Elgin area, Sheila Mudge – Chesley area, Rosemary McCann – Owen Sound area and Roberta Davidson – North and South Bruce Peninsula. Their dedication to remembering our most senior members is greatly appreciated.



Mary Jane MacArthur - Goodwill Chair



The Goodwill Captains who attended the Christmas luncheon at the Walker House on November 29th.

L to R: Roberta Davidson, Sheila Mudge, Mary Jane MacArthur, Marilyn Emke, Lynda Monck, Jan Kerr, Beth Hotchkiss.

Absent: Audrey MacDonald, Brigita Jogi, Rosemary McCann

Did you know?
If you are enrolled in the RTOERO health insurance plan you will no longer pay a yearly fee to belong to RTOERO!



The Bruce Grey Dufferin SCWWs' calendar for February can be found on District 10's Facebook page.



We should be proud of our accomplishments.

Greetings and Happy New Year Fellow RTOERO Members! I would like to begin by thanking each and every one of YOU for your support and encouragement of District 10, Bruce Grey Unit, and Dufferin Unit, initiatives and events. Your Executives volunteer their time and energy to provide opportunities through social and educational events that will enhance happy, healthy lifestyles, and as well, reach out to and partner with organizations in our local communities whose goals align with our own RTOERO Strategic Goals.

One of the many ways that we connect with our communities is through the RTOERO Community Grant program. These grants are designed to encourage all 51 Districts across our national organization, to support and partner with local organizations that support our strategic goals of improving the lives of members and seniors; being the trusted voice for the broader education communities; and broadening our membership base. Since the inception of this grant 24 years ago, RTOERO has donated close to \$2 million for nearly 600 projects.

Over the years, starting in 1999, District 10 has been a successful recipient of 19 Community Grants, including the most recent four consecutive years. The success of the grant depends on the project itself, but also the person, or persons, who volunteer to write the grant application. All of our 19 successful projects are listed on the RTOERO District 10 website, check them out; we are very proud of their success in supporting local initiatives.

At a luncheon in early December, I was pleased to have Donna Henderson, your District 10 1st Vice and Sharron Colter, your District 10 2nd Vice and Community Grant Rep, join me in the presentation of an RTOERO 2023 Community Grant to representatives of the Bruce Men's Shed; Peter Roeser graciously received a cheque in the amount of \$4000.

Men's Sheds provide a safe and friendly environment where men can work on meaningful projects, working at their own pace, in their own time, and in the company of other men. It's a place where they can learn or teach new skills and find new opportunities and interests while making new friends. The Bruce Men's Shed offers men an alternate way to reach out to avoid 'isolation' while giving back to the community.



(from left to right) RTOERO executive members: Donna Henderson, Sharron Coulter, Lynda Monck. The Bruce Men's Shed Leadership Team: Peter Roeser - Financial & Web-Master Coordinator, Terry Dovaston - Graphic Artist, and members Gerry Tilmans and Don Colter.

With 2023 now in our rearview mirrors, we look ahead to planning events and opportunities within District 10, Bruce Grey Dufferin, for our members and prospective members to enjoy each other's company, perhaps get more involved, and learn more through the excellent range of webinars provided by RTOERO.

I extend, on behalf of District 10 Executive, warmest wishes for a happy and healthy year ahead.

Lynda Monck RTOERO District 10 President



District 10 Unit 101 Executive

L to R

- Laurie James, Frank Emptage, Laurie Bell, Jan Kerr, Brigita Jogi, Lynda Monck, Sharron Coulter, Elizabeth Dunning, Mary Jane MacArthur, Sheila Mudge, Don Sankey Absent - Jan Chamberlain



RTOERO

A better future,
together
Ensemble pour
un avenir meilleur

Better lives for Canada's education
community retirees
Une vie meilleure pour les retraités du
secteur de l'éducation au Canada

DISTRICT 10

WINTER 2024



Top reasons to join RTOERO



Did you know? Share this information with anyone who may be retiring in the next few years. Membership is free for anyone who is still working.

RTOERO welcomes members from the broader education community – including early years professionals, teachers and those working in schools, school boards and post-secondary.

FREE

1. Free membership until you retire
2. Free retirement planning workshops

INSURANCE

3. Available to any member 50+
4. Largest non-profit health insurance in Canada
5. Insurance plan is owned, designed and managed by us
6. Guaranteed acceptance within 60 days
7. Group plan = security for all members
8. No cost difference based on age
9. Comprehensive affordable coverage
10. Great coverage available across Canada
11. 93-day travel coverage included
12. In-depth, user-friendly insurance guide

DISCOUNTS AND PERKS

14. Preferred partner discounts on products for hearing and vision care
15. Exclusive travel discounts
16. Save up to 40% on home/car insurance

MEMBER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

17. Bilingual service and francophone districts
18. Events, clubs and activities in your community hosted by your peers
19. Exclusive group and solo travel, tours and discounts
20. Friendly walk-in service at RTOERO office
21. Fast response time
22. Retirement planning resources
23. Goodwill program
24. Support for healthy, active living

POLITICAL ADVOCACY

25. Pension support and advocacy
26. Government advocacy on key senior's issues
27. Vibrant Voices advocacy campaign

COMMUNITY SERVICE/GIVING BACK

28. Volunteer and leadership opportunities
29. Annual community grant program
30. Scholarships for students sponsored by RTOERO

RESEARCH

31. RTOERO Foundation funds research on healthy aging.
32. Awareness campaign - social isolation

PUBLICATIONS

33. Renaissance – award-winning quarterly magazine
34. Monthly e-newsletters
35. Tax Tips - help for members during tax season
36. Pocket Planner calendar

ONLINE COMMUNITY

37. Connect and engage with RTOERO and other members via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn
38. Blogs and vlogs
39. Comprehensive resources at rtoero.ca/resources

DISTRICT 10 EXECUTIVE

Past President,

Malcolm Beddoe jbm.ux76@yahoo.ca 519-369-2012

President, Bruce Grey Past President

Lynda Monck lynda.monck@gmail.com 519-376-8031

**First Vice President, Charitable Foundation,
Political Advocacy, Dufferin Unit President**

Donna Henderson donmayhen@hotmail.com
519-942-0917

Second Vice President, Bruce Grey Unit President

Sharron Colter dshcolter@eastlink.ca 519-793-3473

Secretary & Travel Coordinator

Jan Chamberlain shop_a_holic@rogers.com
519-371-3559

Treasurer, Dufferin Goodwill

Pat Kalapaca patmikekal@gmail.com 519-928-5396

Health & Insurance

Brigita Jogi meo.krkn@gmail.com 519-986-2805

Membership

Sheila Mudge smudged@brucetelecom.com
519-363-5556

Goodwill

Mary Jane MacArthur maryjanequinn50@gmail.com
226-664-0673

Newsletter Editor

Laurie James lauriejames@bmts.com 519-371-0063

Website

Cindy Matthews cindymatthews1957@gmail.com
519-635-3764

We helped six food banks!

Happy New Year to the members as joy, peace, good health and wellness is wished for everyone. The District 10 Unit 101 Executive meets monthly at the Grey Roots Museum and Archives Boardroom or via zoom during the winter weather.

Members are invited to join us at an executive meeting to listen to the discussion and become more involved in planning activities. Volunteers are welcome to share the work with executive members. Refer to the article about "Benefits of Volunteering" credited to St. John Ambulance, also in this copy of The Slate.



The recent Christmas Luncheon at the Best Western, Inn on the Bay in Owen Sound was well attended. Read about this celebration in other articles in this issue of The Slate. The executive welcomes ideas and suggestions from the members for the future. Contact me, your RTOERO Unit One President at 519-793-3473 or dshcolter@eastlink.ca with any questions or suggestions.

I am proud to report that food security was a focus for charitable donations sent to six organizations in December to

assist with the need for food. The combined funds in the amount of \$3500 from District 10 and Bruce Grey Unit 101 were distributed. \$400.00 each were sent to the Kincardine, Meaford, Flesherton and Tobermory Foodbanks and "Light on Main" in Hanover, and \$1500 to the new group Bruce Grey Food Share, a distribution hub to other food banks. As indicated on the thank you notes received from the groups, food security in their communities is a challenge and the RTOERO donations were needed and appreciated.

Sharron Colter - Unit 101 President



Luncheon Celebration

RTOERO Bruce-Grey Unit held a Christmas Luncheon on Wednesday, December 6 at the Inn on the Bay in Owen Sound. Our Unit subsidized a third of the cost of the occasion for members, as well as the entire cost for our nine guests. It was unfortunate that some members were unable to attend, as our Unit was still responsible to pay for their meals.

A delicious buffet-style meal, followed by live entertainment, by the Brown's Time Machine, provided an opportunity for old friends to reconnect and new connections to be forged. The occasion permitted the Unit to recognise the dedicated service of Lynda Monck, retiring as Unit President. Several of our oldest members in attendance were recognized and presented with poinsettias, in appreciation of their many years of support of our Bruce-Grey Unit social events. A generous donation from RTOERO District 10 was presented to representatives from the Bruce Men's Shed. Thank you to everyone who worked to make this such a joyful celebration.

Elizabeth Dunning - Treasurer

Beware of buy-and-sell scams on Facebook

Facebook Marketplace and other buy-and-sell sites can be great places to get a deal, but sadly, there's also the risk of scams. Scams on Facebook Marketplace include:



Phishing – Phishing are scams that get you to provide personal information without realizing it. It happens through links to fake websites, messages, or emails asking you to provide verification codes or account information.

Buyer scam – Someone claiming they didn't receive the item from you, not paying, or reporting the transaction as fraud after they received the item.

Seller scam – Someone tries to sell items without delivering the item. This can include asking you to send a deposit for a high-value item.

Listing scam – a listing is fake or dishonest or lures the buyer off Facebook to complete the transaction.

Scams on buy-and-sell sites could happen to anyone. There are some general tips you can follow to avoid falling victim:

- If something seems too good to be true, it likely is.
- Review the seller's profile and Facebook account to assess whether they're real. See other things they're selling and ratings they've received.
- If you aren't sure if it might be a scam, ask someone else for another opinion or avoid the transaction.
- If selling an item, don't let them leave with the item before funds are received.
- Don't share your financial information.
- Don't send deposits before verifying the item. Go see it. For high value items, such as a luxury handbag, you can also ask for proof of purchase or certificate of authenticity.
- If you feel something may be a scam, you can report it to Facebook. If you are scammed, you can also report it to Facebook.

Dufferin supports members and seniors!

Dufferin Unit, in the spirit of Christmas, made several donations to worthwhile organizations during the holidays and remembered our members with Christmas greetings. During the year June Maycock, our Card writer, sent out at least 100 birthday cards to those members who are 80 years or over. Pat Kalapaca, Dufferin's Unit Goodwill rep, mailed 42 personal Christmas cards as well as 245 email greetings to our members at Christmas. Many positive responses to this gesture were received.

We received \$1500 from District 10 RTOERO to be used for donations benefiting seniors. The Dufferin Executive added another \$1500 to this amount so that three food banks in Shelburne, Grand Valley and Orangeville could each receive \$1000 to benefit seniors' food insecurity.

In addition, the Executive decided to assist isolated seniors by supporting social programs for them. As a result, \$500 was given to the Mel Lloyd Horizon's program in Shelburne and \$500 to the Bythia Seniors' Centre in Orangeville. In Grand Valley two seniors' programs were supported with a donation of \$250 each - the Fireside Club and the Grand Valley Library. The only stipulation was that the donations were to go to seniors' social programs. All the recipients were thrilled with the generosity of Dufferin Unit 102 and District 10

Donna Henderson - District 10 Unit 102 President



Information will be in the Spring issue of The Slate.

Shake, Rattle & Roll June 12th

It's a 50's Rock n' Roll Party!

A Rock and Roll flashback to the 50s and 60s with the most memorable songs from music's most exciting era. From Elvis and Jerry Lee to Connie Francis and Bill Haley.

Featuring a special guest appearance by the great Jeff Scott as Eddy Cochran!

Political Advocacy at work.

Many local organizations and clubs rely on donations from various government granting bodies. One active funding stream is the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** which is often accessed by community festivals. One program that supports seniors is the GAINS program. The **Guaranteed Annual Income System** began in 2023 and continues until July of 2024. Funding for the **Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)** supports vulnerable people in our community by providing housing and other supports to individuals at risk of homelessness. People experiencing a mental health crisis can now be directed to **Mobile Crisis Response Teams** which include a police officer and a mental health worker who will work together to respond to a person in crisis.

Recently, an announcement was made by the Provincial Conservative government that some Service Ontario sites will be closing and you will need to get health card and driver license renewals completed at a kiosk set up in your local Staples store.

On the lighter side, to remove the backlogs in municipal offices you can now fill out email forms online in order to get a quick Marriage License. A pilot site will be set up in Caledon.

I cannot stress enough, that if there is a situation or concern that you feel strongly about please phone, write or meet with the elected officials or people of influence in your area to ask questions or request an interview. Probe all political parties with your inquiries. Be the 'squeaky wheel'.

Here are some starting points for discussions:

- *National Pharmacare
- *Investment in home health-care programs to minimize the number of seniors living in long term care
- *Evaluation and support of 'at home' healthcare needs for the elderly
- *A national plan for long-term care homes with consistent standards covering facilities, staffing and resident programs along with a robust evaluation
- *Detection of social isolation among older persons and pertinent solutions
- *An awareness campaign to alert the public to seniors' mental health issues
- *Community awareness of the indicators of any type of abuse towards seniors

Donna Henderson - District Political Action Rep



You are not alone...

You are not alone! But, you may know someone who is alone, and lonely, and perhaps even isolated. How do you determine the differences?

Some people are loners, preferring to be on their own, participating where and when they like. However, some people are not only lonely, but isolated, socially isolated and not by choice.

With age, especially with advanced age, come a variety of risk factors which can lead to social isolation: no family in proximity, reduced mobility due to health or lack of transportation, reluctance to ask for help, whether through pride or reticence.

Social isolation can be deadly! Social connectedness is vital to health and well-being. Connected people cope better with health conditions, both physical and mental. Isolation can put seniors at physical risk and elder abuse.



How can you help? RTO/ERO Foundation funds aging-related research and initiatives to promote social connection among older adults. Check out their web-site, or learn more at www.embrace-aging.ca

What other resources are available? Alzheimer.ca has lots to offer. If you're brave and have time, call 211 for referrals to local organizations that can help.

Don't need this yet? Do you know of someone in your area who may be at risk of social isolation? Offer them a ride to church, the library, or the community centre. Going to the grocery store? Offer to give your neighbour a ride. Then help carry in the groceries.

Technology such as Skype and Facetime may keep elders in touch with family and friends but it's no substitute for the human touch. Be part of the solution, however small. You too will feel better.

Brigitta Jogi - Health & Insurance Rep

You can help the Elder Law Project.

As your Unit 101 political advocate, I am pleased to introduce you to the Elder Law Project. Angela Yenssen is a lawyer with the Grey Bruce Community Legal Clinic, who has initiated this valuable resource, with the help of a successful grant application to the Law Foundation of Ontario. Angela has an inquiry she would like your help to answer, "What questions have you wanted to ask a lawyer but did not have the opportunity to ask?" Just give her a call or send her an e-mail. Let's use the Vibrant Voices of RTOERO GreyBruce to help Angela build elder law capacity locally.

Frank Emptage - Political Advocacy Rep Unit 101

Law Foundation of Ontario Funds Elder Law Project in Grey-Bruce

The [Law Foundation of Ontario](#) has provided funding to the Grey-Bruce Community Legal Clinic for a two year project to build elder law capacity in Grey and Bruce Counties. The term "elder law" refers to legal issues that frequently impact older adults.

The following topics are some examples of "elder law" issues.

- Wills
- Powers of attorney
- Sharing bank accounts
- Preventing and stopping elder abuse
- Advance care planning/living wills
- Medical assistance in dying
- Legal rules for discharging patients from hospital
- Eligibility for government pensions for seniors
- Aging and driving
- Legal rights in different types of seniors' housing

The Legal Clinic has a full-time lawyer dedicated to elder law work from December 2023 to November 2025 thanks to the

Law Foundation's funding. Angela Yenssen is the elder law lawyer. Angela will be engaging in several activities to build elder law knowledge in Grey-Bruce.

- Providing education sessions to older adults, other members of the public, and professionals who work with seniors about elder law topics
- Developing print and online tools and resources about elder law topics
- Collaborating with other members of the legal community to increase elder law services available in Grey-Bruce
- Engaging with Indigenous communities to identify and support the unique legal needs of older Indigenous people

The need for elder law information and services in Grey-Bruce is increasing due to the high number of older adults who live in our counties. The population in Grey-Bruce is much older than the average age in Ontario and Canada as outlined in [data from the 2021 census consolidated by Grey Bruce Public Health](#).

Contact Angela Yenssen if you would like more information about this project or a specific elder law topic or would like to schedule a presentation for a group about an elder law issue. Angela's phone number is 519-370-2200, ext. 33. Her email address is angela.yenssen@gbclc.clcj.ca.

You can also gather information about elder law topics from the elder law page on the Legal Clinic's website: <https://www.gblegalclinic.com/elder-law-project/>. Elder law information and tools will be posted there as they are developed by the Legal Clinic.



Have you ever thought about volunteering?

Discover the benefits and learn how to find the right opportunity and match for you. According to St. John Ambulance Canada the benefits are:

1. Volunteering connects you to others. Allowing yourself to connect to your community can make it a better place.
2. Volunteering is good for your mind and body. It provides many benefits to both your mental and physical health and wellbeing.
3. Volunteering can advance your career and experiences. It can help you learn new information, have new experiences and network with likeminded people.
4. Volunteering can bring fun and fulfilment to your life. It is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and develop new passions.
5. Volunteering gives you an opportunity to find an activity that matches your interests and skill set.

Adapted from St. John Ambulance Newsletter January 2024

We are an aging population.

At the moment, Canadians 65 and older account for 18.6% of the population. Statistics Canada predicts this will rise to 20% during 2024. It's time for a complete overhaul of the healthcare system, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

The Ministry of Health released: "*Your Health: a Plan for connective and Convenient Care*", which is a plan to provide Ontarians with the right care, in the right place by connecting them to more convenient options closer to home, shortening wait times for key services and growing the healthcare workforce.

The International Longevity Centre Canada reported that the rate of deaths were especially high in privately owned long term care institutions during COVID 19. Best practices will keep older adults with health challenges at home as long as possible until the cost of equipment and

remodelling of their living quarters becomes unaffordable.

Social isolation can trigger mental, emotional and cognitive distress and worsen health problems such as high blood pressure, heart or respiratory disease and diabetes. It may also lead to various forms of elder abuse as seniors become prey to financial, physical and emotional abuse. Be vigilant when visiting senior friends, relatives or neighbours. Listen and pay attention to what they say. You can be the advocate to prevent a difficult, unhealthy situation.

All of this information is from RTOERO Foundation findings.

Donna Henderson - Foundation Rep



Want to find our Facebook page?
Google RTOERODistrict10 Facebook OR
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/RTOERODistrict10-116644709738674/about/>
OR click the 'f' in the top right corner of the District 10 website: <https://district10.rtoero.ca/>

Changed your address or your email?

ALWAYS inform head office of RTO/ERO if you have changed your address or email.



Please contact membership@rto-ero.org
or rtoero.ca or 1-800-361-9888



Please include your RTO/ERO membership number when requesting a change.

District 10 RTO
15 Bielby St
Grand Valley, ON
L9W 5M3

Publication Mail-Poste Publication
Agreement Number 40811090
Postage Paid