

A Message from our President

Spring is springing around us as we move into the year end activities.

I would like to congratulate our Archivist Linda White. A call for historical materials and stories about the network of schools in “old” Elgin has netted a great deal of material. Linda has been very busy collecting and organizing these documents and pictures and hopes to have as complete a set of materials as possible to turn over to the County Archives. RTO appreciates the time, effort and enthusiasm of Linda in this work.

Please visit the RTO Elgin web site at www.elginrto.org. We would appreciate your feed back. Take a tour. I think you will find some interesting material and if there is anything we can do to improve it, let us know. Cynthia Ruthledge has done a great job for Elgin RTO and it is appreciated.

This newsletter is also appreciated. Jack Couckuyt is our newsletter person and it is not an easy job. Just getting people like me to get the material in and then assembling, printing and mailing the letter is a huge job – it is appreciated.

One of the executive that works hard on our behalf is the treasurer. Dennis Collins makes it look easy however the hours that go into the reports and calculations as well as the tracking of people going to our events are enormous. Dennis has been provincially recognized for his expertise

and has been asked to lead workshops to teach others how to do it.

As president, I appreciate the entire executive for its support and help. It has been a particularly busy year for me and the executive members have picked up the duties and jobs I have been unable to get to and provided you with their usual excellence. Its great to be in Elgin and working with the best in the business.

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Ric Murray

BE SURE TO COME TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. SEE THE FORM INSIDE ON PAGE 4.

The Executive for 2005-2006

President: Ric Murray
Past President: Fran Wren
First Vice President: Carolyn Cameron
Second Vice President: Carol Gagen
Secretary: Carole Watson
Treasurer: Dennis Collins
Archives: Linda White
Constitution: Elmer Lepischak
Goodwill: Marg Hulls
Health Services: Frank Exley
Membership Secretary: Ric Murray
Newsletter: Jack Couckuyt
Website: Cynthia Rutledge
Pension Concerns: Dave Giles
Political Action: John Taylor
Telephone: Joanne Namespetra
Travel: Max & Charline Charlton

The 2005 RTO/ERO budget ended with a safe surplus.

The Ministry of Citizenship is requesting nominations for the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. If you are interested, go to www.citizenship.gov.on.ca and click on "Ontario Honours and Awards Secretariat."

Based on material submitted by Ric Murray .

Some Doin's by those Exec you don't always see in the Elginnews.....



Elmer Lepischak has been working on the revision of the Constitution. It's picky and particular work and Elmer is up to the challenge. You get to vote on it at the Annual Meeting.



John Taylor has taken on the political job and has just been at a political action conference.



Marg Hulls works behind the scene constantly to contact ailing members and to bring cheer to those in the hospital.



The First Vice-President is a true "doer of all things" as she does all things that the President (and tradition) lay upon her. And that's alot!

Highlights of the last Provincial Executive Meeting

The two investment firms that look after our Health Premium Stabilization Fund and our Member Services Fund reported a relatively good 2005 with an increase of value ranging from 6.9% to 7.75% on the funds. RTO/ERO now has 37.1 million in the HPSF and 2.33 million in the MSF.

RTO/ERO now has a second travel agency, MERIT, centered in Mississauga. They promise us a dedicated web site by April.

The PE now receives regular Media items via the office which are relevant to our concerns. If any jump out at me, I will send them on to you.

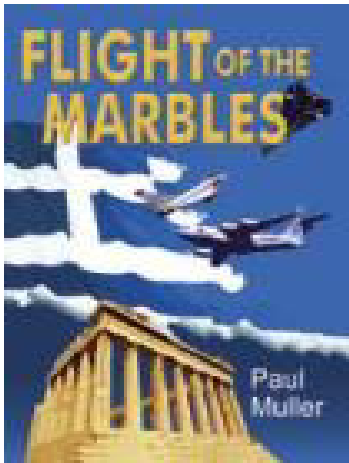
Congratulations to Rick Murray who has been appointed to the provincial Constitution Committee.

The PAC workshop, Feb. 6 promises to be an excellent one with top notch presentations.

Arnold Hull has written the following politicians: Jim Bradley, house leader, on the topic of PSA testing; The Premier, on the issue of eye examinations; and The new Prime Minister.

See Next Newsletter for other Executive Snippets.

The Elgin Marbles take flight.



I don't think that this illustrious breakfast dish has made it to Canada.... yet.

In Praise of Former Cooks

Below is a list of famous (or at least known) dishes created by non cooks. Some of the entries come from District 23 North York Newsletter. Two of the entries are totally fictitious. Can you guess which? The first person to contact the editor with the correct answer will get recognition in the next Newsletter.

Pope Benedict (the Roman Catholic CEO) gave his name to that thing with the muffin and the poached egg.

Madeline de Vercheres (who operated a restaurant in Quebec named Chez Suzette) concocted the crepes we like to gain weight by.

Sir Isaac Newton (Scientist and Mathematician and gatherer of apples) we can thank for those big fig cookies.

The Duke of Wellington gave us those rubber boots (not a dish) and that famous beef thing.

Napoleon Bonaparte (Emperor and hater of tiny dogs) lent his name to that brandy and that cake.

Queen Mary (16th Century Tudor Queen) made her cocktail with tomato juice.

Alexander (a Macedonian with a superiority complex) created that Great Brandy Cocktail.

Alexandra Pavlov (wife of the guy with the salivating dogs) created that meringue and cream cake.

CAN YOU THINK OF ANY OTHERS?

Do you know the story of the Marbles of Lord Elgin? Our namesake was involved in a controversy still raging in the hearts of archaeologists.



An Exclusive Photo taken from the Mars Rover (notice the Rover's wing at bottom) recently.

Basic Units of Measurement

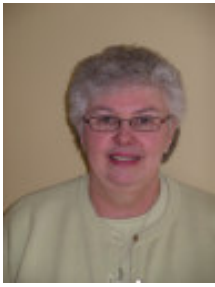
- Ratio of an Igloo's circumference to its diameter: Eskimo Pi
2000 pounds of Chinese soup : Won Ton
1 millionth of a mouthwash: 1 microscope
Time between slipping on a peel and hitting the pavement: 1 bananosecond
Weight an evangelist carries with God: 1 billigram
Time it takes to sail 220 yards at 1 nautical mile per hour : Knot-furlong
365.25 days of drinking low-calorie beer because it's less filling: 1 lite year
16.5 feet in the Twilight Zone: 1 Rod Serling
Half of a large intestine: 1 semicolon

These items all come from District 16 (Toronto) Newsletter January 2006.

Surely we can do better!!! Anyone out there with other basic measurements? Please share.

Out of this World ??





In Remembrance of Things Past

by Linda White

It has been a very rewarding experience collecting articles, pictures and anecdotes from the Elgin County Community regarding one room schools.

Please send any information that you may have for this project. Your input is important for future reference. This material will be stored at the Elgin County Archives.

Editor's note:

(Did you know that Lord Elgin had lots of Marbles which are now stored somewhere in England and that they are still wanted by the Greeks?)

Send the following form , or its likeness, to Dennis Collins at 10138 Lynhurst Park Drive, St. Thomas ON , N5P 2E7, no later than April 24, 2006.

We need to count you and count on you!

Financial Report

Feb. 28, 2006

In reviewing the 2005 Budget Year, RTO – Elgin had combined revenues of \$22, 569 and expenditures in the amount of \$17, 207 (there are some cheques outstanding at year end).

A more detailed report will be presented at the Annual General Meeting (see notice elsewhere in this Newsletter).

In looking to the 2006 budget year, we begin with a balance forward of \$5,528 plus our ongoing investment (GICs) with no expenditures to the date of this report.

Dennis Collins



I am pleased to attend the RTO Annual General Meeting Dinner on Wednesday May 3. Please make the following reservation:

Name(s):.....

Payment for.....dinner(s) is enclosed.

@ \$15.00 per meal for members and \$20.00* for non-members.

* We need to charge more for non-members since we subsidize this meal



There and Back

by Max and
Charline Charlton

Thirty-four travellers are ready to embark on a Baltic cruise on May 31 /06. An information meeting was held on Feb. 27 for those travellers during which Marion Rose of Elgin Travel answered many questions about the upcoming trip. This year's adventure will take us to Copenhagen, Denmark where we will board the ship. The M.S. Amsterdam will be our home as it takes us across the Baltic Sea to Tallinn, Estonia where we spend the day. From there it's St. Petersburg, Russia. After what will be two exhausting days of sight-seeing and history gathering in St. Petersburg we travel to Helsinki, Finland for another day of touring. Stockholm, Sweden is next for a one day stay. (Are you keeping up?) Visbi, Sweden on Gotland island is next for another taste of European antiquity. Next the ship will take us to Warnemunde, Germany for a one day stay from which passengers will be able to take a side trip into Berlin. We then travel back across the Baltic to Aarhus, Denmark for our last day

of touring. From there the ship returns to Copenhagen where we will fly back home. If this sounds like a trip that dreams are made of it's because it is. ALL ABOARD.

Each year we take at least one longer trip to an exciting destination. If you are interested in travelling with us and would like your name added to the list please contact Max Charlton @ 26 Cavanaugh Cr., St. Thomas, Ont. N5R 5Y3 or max.Charlton@sympatico.ca

You should also know that Bob Towers and Joanne Duffy are organizing some short, one day, Theatre trips to Stratford or to the Shaw festival. The next one of these will take place on June 20 to see "Oliver". The day includes the bus trip from St. Thomas to Stratford—the performance—and dinner on the way home Please contact Bob @ 633-6875 or Joanne @ 775-2742.

The Little Mermaid



**The Annual General Meeting
KEYSTONE COMPLEX, SHEDDEN
Wednesday, May 03, 2006
REGISTER AND MINGLE from 9:30 am,
MEETING 10:00 - 11:00
SPEAKER (Brian Kenney) AT 11:00.
DINNER AT 12:00 Entertainment with Desert**

You must pre-register. See Form on Previous Page.....

CHRISTMAS DINNER AT THE "CLUB"

Tony Stacpoole, Wally Ewaskiw and Marion Thompson didn't believe I would take this picture



Ron Bradt admiring the Pointsettias

Howard Branscombe (still that same great smile, Howard) and Keith Steven engage in the battle of the sweaters.



Don and Rose Fick. Talk to Don about Chestnuts.



David Dykeman, Music Director of East Elgin Secondary School, leads the Senior Band.

Bill Thornton and Mike Hamilton have a stare down. I think Bill won.





**Health Services
and Insurance
Report**
by Frank Exley

HEALTH SERVICES & INSURANCE REPORT

For those who carry RTO/ERO Health Insurance Benefits, most are aware of the changes made for this year. Anyone thinking of obtaining RTO/ERO health insurance may be interested in some of these changes. For the first time since the year 2000 increases were made in premiums. Most retirees find these rates very acceptable when compared with other plans.

Changes in coverage include the following. Up to \$1900 for drugs annually. A lifetime maximum for the Extended Health Care plan for Out-of-province of \$1,000,000 per trip. Dental claims will now be based on the 2006 Fee Guide.

For those seeking more information about the Semi-Private Hospital plan, the Extended Health Care plan or the Dental plan, this information is available from any member of our committee or by calling the toll-free number for Johnson Insurance at 1-877-406-9007.

I received an interesting call this week from someone wishing to join RTO/ERO. As with many, retirees find the health premiums offered by RTO/ERO more

attractive than those offered by many of the school boards and once most retirees reach 65, school boards usually do not continue to offer health benefits to their retirees.

Amongst the over 54,000 RTO/EROMembers there are presently 4000 associate members. This particular caller fit into one of the newer categories of associate membership available - a retired non-educator who was an employee of an Ontario School Board and in receipt of a pension. This category thus allows any retired employee of a school board receiving a pension to join RTO/ERO as an associate member for an annual fee. If you know of anyone that fits this category and is not presently a member of RTO/ERO, have them call any member of our executive or the toll-free number for RTO/ERO at 1-800-361-9888 for more information.

Frank Exley, Chair 633-2636

Fax: 633-0305

E-mail: fcexley@gmail.com (new)

Committee members:

Patrick Morgan - 631-1853

Barbara Campbell - 768-1582

Jack Empey - 773-3796

Editor's Note:

Please recall that there is an RTO/ERO "Members Only" website. You can access your insurance information, request changes and view other RTO/ERO voluntary insurance plans available to you via this secure website. To obtain a confidential user ID and password go to www.johnson.ca and click on "Members Only".

**From information in the District 24
(Scarborough/East York) Newsletter
of March 2006.**

In Memoriam*

We wish to remember these recently departed colleagues. We are grateful for their service, their comradeship and their spirit and we shall honour their memory. To their families and friends we extend our sympathy and our thoughts.

***Hazel Brooks, Eleanor Johnson, Doris MacNaughton,
Margaret Morse, Bessel VandenHazel, Wilma Fleming
David Fisher, J.J. Burger, Leona Clarke, Marion Spenser***

* We print here only those names since our last In Memoriam. For a more complete list, please see our Website at www.elginrto.org

Did you know:

The website at Health Canada (www.healthcanada.gc.ca) has over 50,000 pages of plain language, easy to find facts and figures to help make more informed decisions about your health. It covers hundreds of topics from disease and food and nutrition to legislation and policy, all broken down by subject. A great place to visit!!

What you lookin' at? I got here first!



If you are not sure that material in an article you read or viewed on the internet is myth or truth, you can check it by going on-line to

www.truthorfiction.com or
www.urbanlegendsabout.com.

And that's the truth!

The Rotary Music Festival Scholarship

For a number of years, District 41 RTO has been proud to participate in the St. Thomas Rotary Music Festival Scholarship. Through the work of Shirley and Ray Broadbent, we have donated funds every year to help young people in their musical pursuits.

The Music Festival (MF) Scholarships are used to award MF participants meeting given criteria the funds for enhancing their music education. This is usually applied to music lesson expenses.

There are a number of ways for you to participate. All donations will of course receive a tax receipt and recognition in the way you specify. If you are interested in donating to this worthwhile cause, please contact the Broadbents at 631 3020, or by mail to the Music Festival, PO box 20042, St Thomas ON N5P 4H4 or email thebroadbents@sympatico.ca.

The Phone Committee is another one of those behind-the-scenes movers*****

The RTO telephone committee is made up of thirty-six volunteers who call a list of members twice a year -before the Christmas dinner meeting and also before the annual meeting in the spring as a reminder of these meetings. We would welcome more volunteers as then each person would have a fewer number of calls to make.

WE NEED TWO VOLUNTEERS FOR THE WESTERN END OF ELGIN.

*If you can help please call
Jo-Anne Namespetra at 633-5982.*

You and your committee are appreciated, Joanne!!