



**RTO
ERO**

DISTRICT 8 LONDON / MIDDLESEX

News at 8

THE RETIRED TEACHERS OF ONTARIO / LES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS RETRAITES DE

SUMMER ISSUE

JUNE 2021



Here's to a COVID-free summer!

Happiness is found in the simplest of things

Happiness is found in gratitude,

in a kept promise,

in a good conversation,

in love,

in friendship,

in an achieved goal,

in a fond memory,

in all the simple magnificence of life

~ Dr. Steve Maraboli

NEWS AT 8

Date of Issue: June 2021

News at 8 is the official newsletter of the Retired Teachers of Ontario / les Enseignantes et Enseignants Retraités de l'Ontario, District 8 London-Middlesex, published for distribution to its members and provides content on topics of interest to its membership.

The views expressed in submitted articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the District Executive.

Publication of an advertisement or a request for volunteers from an organization does not constitute an endorsement of any product, service, or organization.

Photographs taken at any of our meetings or other activities may be included in our Newsletter or on our website.

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**London,
Middlesex**

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Phone: **1-800-361-9888**

Did you know social work and psychology services are covered under the extended health plan?

Many of us are dealing with challenges right now. It could be that you've recently transitioned to retirement and are coping with different emotions. Perhaps you're feeling greater personal or relationship stress or loneliness related to the pandemic. Whatever you're feeling, you're not alone. You may find talk therapy to be very helpful.

If you are a member of the RTOERO extended health care plan, you have coverage for social work, psychology or psychotherapy services. You don't need a doctor's referral to make an appointment. Most therapists are offering services remotely.

Mental health fact: It's possible to have a mental illness, but managing it can lead to positive mental health. We can also experience poor mental health but not have any symptoms of a mental illness. Mental health is a continuum, so it's always a good idea to learn new ways to care for our mental health.

OUR WEBSITE IS OUR MOST UP-TO-DATE LINE OF COMMUNICATION

rto-ero-londonmiddlesex.ca

President's Message



*It is the month of June,
The month of leaves and
roses,
When pleasant sights salute
the eyes,
And pleasant scents the noses.*

-N.P. Willis (1807-67)

Summer is finally here, and what strange weather it has brought with it this year. I guess that is fitting, considering how things have been going with everything in flux and up in the air due to COVID. Hopefully, most of you have already received your first inoculation and are going to receive your second shortly, if not already. Fingers crossed that we will proceed to stages 2 and 3 of the Provincial reopening plans quickly so that things can return to normal, or the “new” normal, whatever that may turn out to be. Meanwhile, at least we can take every opportunity to enjoy the summer with outdoor activities and small gatherings with friends and family, both local and around the province. To those of you with cottages--this is certainly the year to enjoy them to their fullest! Personally, I am looking forward to going up north to the lake for our annual family vacation.

Due to logistics, your executive has had to make some difficult decisions regarding upcoming functions that are impacted by COVID restrictions. As a result, the *To Hell with the Bell* and *Fall Lunch* meetings have had to be cancelled. We are still hopeful that we may be able to meet for the *Poinsettia Lunch* in November and will keep you apprised as things develop.

Our webmaster and Newsletter editors have been hard at work compiling and posting a wealth of information and activities for you to pursue. I hope that you take the time to avail yourself of these. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the executive if you have any suggestions for activities or events that others might enjoy. We need your ideas! We would also like to hear what you have been doing to pass the time. Are you outside gardening (like me), birdwatching, walking or cycling, catching up on your reading, doing puzzles (like my mother), learning how to use some technology (I still haven't figured out everything on my cell phone or all the ins and outs of Facebook/messenger!) or have you taken up a new hobby or activity? Inquiring minds want to know! Please share your experiences with the rest of us—you might just inspire someone else!

On a positive note, Columbia has reopened; and we have a new, timely invitation for you and friends/family to peruse their offerings. Hopefully you will find something you have been looking for--in your size!

As always, please keep in touch, take care of yourselves, stay safe, be well and be kind. Enjoy the little things and small moments—and, most of all, be happy!

Rosemarie Szalich, President

District 8, RTOERO

Welcome New Members!

Congratulations on joining District 8 Retired Teachers of Ontario! In “normal” times, we would be inviting you, along with your partner or friend, to be our guests at our fall lunch meeting. However, we will have to wait until the COVID pandemic is under control before we have face-to-face meetings. In the meantime, keep reading your District 8 newsletter to keep up to date on District 8 RTOERO events.

We usually publish the names of our new members in our newsletters. If you do not wish your name to be published in the newsletter, please email President Rosemarie Szalich at president08@districts.rtoero.ca.

Looking forward to better times ahead. Enjoy your retirement, and keep well!

Entertaining Seniors

Fun for them and me, too!

As a former teacher and an interactive Disc Jockey for over 30 years, I picked up some good people skills and performance expertise that became invaluable to me when my younger performance days became too much for my ageing prowess. It became time to change gears by applying my musical and interactive talents to a more SENIOR performance orientation.



Many Seniors in Retirement Facilities are interested in the music genres from the '30s to the '60s, and any DJ who has a library of this material can play those period tunes directly to his audience for only listening purposes. But the whole point of doing a significant job is to make sure that your performance is beyond the norm; instead, the meaningful effort should be to entertain with the goal of bringing together the music, the fun and the participation in purposeful, creative party sessions.

My new business is named **Seniors' Moments**, and it involves all of the following components that I developed and assembled for my party-goers at events that I host. Here is a short list of the "Particip-ACTION" topics that I present:

1. Their Music in audio only (1920s – 1970s)
2. Their Music in video format (1930s – 1970s). Yes, the real artists singing on video!
3. Karaoke (over 400 tunes from 1920s – 1960s) done in single and choral formats
4. Casino Parties (up to 18 games of chance, music background, betting chips, an auction on a prize table). Period background music accompaniment option.
5. Seniors' Olympics with music option (teams - mildly competitive, games/activities)
6. Trivia Events with music (several ways to handle this choice)
7. Power Point Action Games (Celebrity Find, 7's, Shopping Game, Hangman, Elimination Games, Slang from the Past, music-related Crossword Puzzles, etc.)
8. Numerous Theme Party options.

There are even more enticements that offer the Facility Directors lots of choice in planning some exciting and creative events for their residents.

I'm still doing what I've loved to do for over 30 years and (a prayer) for as long as I can!

Doug Scott

CEO of DJ@Work and Seniors' Moments

STRATFORD FESTIVAL

The Stratford Festival is transforming, for this summer, into an outdoor festival offering a season of six plays and five cabarets reflecting on the theme of Metamorphosis, with performances held under beautiful canopies that will hark back to the Festival's founding under a tent back in 1953.

The 2021 season includes two Shakespeare plays, *Romeo and Juliet* – called simply *R + J* for this production – and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; two plays from the 2020 playbill, Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women* and Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters*; and two new plays, one about race and royalty, *Serving Elizabeth* by Marcia Johnson, and one, a musical, about the playwright to whom the Festival is dedicated, *I Am William*, with text by Rébecca Déraspe and music by Chloé Lacasse and Benoit Landry.

As large-scale musicals are not possible under COVID restrictions, the Festival will present a series of five cabarets with a blend of musical theatre and other repertoire. Created and presented by some of the country's most talented musical artists, these cabarets, presented in the Festival Theatre canopy, offer an opportunity to experience powerful performances in an incredibly intimate, but safe, space.

Check the Stratford Festival website for more information:
<https://www.stratfordfestival.ca/landingpages/2021Season>

BLYTH FESTIVAL, HURON COUNTY PLAYHOUSE, PORT STANLEY FESTIVAL THEATRE & PETROLIA PLAYHOUSE

All of these venues have posted a "Stay Tuned... Watch our Website".

TRAVEL IN A COVID AND POST-COVID WORLD

We are getting so close to resuming our explorations in other areas of the world, but where to start?

<https://www.skyscanner.ca/travel-restrictions>

This website provides frequently updated COVID-19 travel information for travellers. Their world map has 2 destinations with LOW RESTRICTIONS. You can visit these areas but will likely need proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test. Ninety countries have moderate restrictions which will likely require proof of vaccination and quarantine upon return. Sixty-five countries currently are classified as having major restrictions, and travel is not advised to these countries. Ninety countries, including Canada, are labelled as Restrictions Unknown and advise travellers to check with the individual country for information regarding travel.



UPDATE FROM KENYA

by Lorraine Jardine

Much has changed since Kate Fletcher left her home in Pittsburgh in 2005 to establish an orphanage for girls in Karen, Kenya, a suburb of Nairobi. Two years later, as previously reported, I volunteered for a month at Hekima Place, this family setting for girls who were orphaned due to AIDS/HIV. Others from the London area have followed, many of whom are retired teachers, like myself. Upon our positive reports, the Edith Benson Chapter of IODE became our partner, facilitating the sponsorship and processing of Canadian donations and providing tax receipts.

In the early years, younger girls lived with house-mothers on the property, while those of school age were bused to school. They were eager to learn, as girls from poor families didn't often have the chance to complete elementary school due to the cost of fees and uniforms. Since high schools accepted students based on their marks, the older girls attended several different boarding schools, while Hekima Place supported them with food, clothing and educational needs.

Hekima Place has continued to evolve; and as it thrived, vulnerable girls were often sent to it by Kenyan government agencies. In 2009-10, rather than rent property, a fund-raising campaign allowed the building of their own campus in the Ngong Hills of Kiserian, just south of Nairobi. They continue working to be self-sustaining by growing vegetables, having livestock and creating a bore hole to supply clean water for themselves and their neighbours.

Local schools were overcrowded, and corporal punishment was common; so the Board of Directors, using generous donations from the US and Canada, decided to build their own school for the girls and the surrounding community. This past January, Hekima Hills Learning Center opened and is already at full capacity of 133 students in Pre-K through 3rd grade. Next year, they will add 4th- and 5th- grade students from the waiting list of families in the area.

Presently, as in our schools, the girls have been learning online from time to time, according to their COVID numbers. The government had mandated that those who had relatives were to return to them. When the girls were learning remotely and living apart from Hekima Place, their families still received needed support. The girls have now returned, and school has reopened.

More than 15 years later, Hekima Place has cared for over 124 girls and is proud of its many high school and university graduates. Hekima Place is a truly remarkable place where all have a sense of belonging. By carrying on its mission to care for and educate girls, Hekima Place will continue to empower young women. To learn more, please go to www.hekimaplace.org, or contact administrator@hekimaplace.org.



GET OUTSIDE

EXCLUSIVELY FOR:

Retired Teachers of Ontario - District 8 Members (London-Middlesex)

ITEMS ARE MARKED WITH EMPLOYEE PRICING: 40-50% BELOW RETAIL

**COLUMBIA IS DEDICATED TO THE SAFETY OF OUR EMPLOYEES AND SHOPPERS
CUSTOMERS ARE REQUIRED TO BRING THEIR OWN FACE COVERINGS TO WEAR WHILE SHOPPING**

VALID DATES

07/09/2021 - 08/01/2021

VALID FOR YOU + 4 GUESTS

WHAT TO BRING

- **THIS INVITATION**
- **PHOTO I.D.**
- **PROOF OF AFFILIATION**

*business card | membership card |
company email signature | pay stub |
original email | other form of affiliation*

COVID-19 RESPONSE

- **Mandatory face coverings**
- **Plexiglass dividers at check-in desk and registers**
- **Sanitization of checkouts**
- **Hand sanitizer stations**
- **Limited customer capacity**
- **Social distancing guidelines in place**

***Note: Fitting rooms and washrooms will remain closed at this time**

LOCATION & HOURS

1-1425 Max Brose Dr
London, ON N6N 0A2

MON - FRI: 10A - 9P

SAT: 9:30A - 6P

SUN: 10A - 5P



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Questions? Please email: londonemployeeestore@columbia.com

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Did you know?.....

RTOERO members who are covered by our RTOERO insurance plan will be interested to know that Johnson Insurance that has administered our claims for many years has been purchased by Intact Financial Corporation. As members know, RTOERO Insurance is owned completely by our members and is considered to be one of the best plans of this type in Canada. Having a company as large as Intact under contract to look after our claims processing and paying out our benefits assures us that we will continue to be well looked after. The name Johnson will still be seen on our claims forms. Members should not notice anything different and will continue to receive the same great service that we have come to know and trust.

Teaching Opportunity

Kingsway Academy (affiliated with King's College - UWO)

Private high school—part time or full time, semesters, plus summer school.

110 hrs / course @ \$35 hr. Usually 90 minutes /session every 2nd day. Full time @ \$60,000.

Predominately students from China/Vietnam. Fluent in English; secondary school graduates from their home countries who take one year of Ontario Curriculum before attending University.

Various subject areas available—immediate need for a Spanish teacher.

For further information, contact: Franco Marchese, Headmaster Kingsway Academy, 616.617.2496
marchesefrank@hotmail.com

HERE FOR YOU NOW....HERE FOR YOUR FUTURE

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