



LIVEWIRES

Reorganizing to better serve our members.

In 1978 when the decision was made to divide our District 21 into 2 units, the thinking at that time was that as one of the largest geographic districts, dividing the district would improve communication and improve administration logistics. Each Unit had its own elected executive, was allocated budget based on the number of members in the unit and its chair or president had a guaranteed place at the District executive table. The district and its two units operated under what then known as the 'Bylaws' and a Policy and Procedures Manual. Some of our more senior members will remember that most AGMs

had actual elections where a vote determined who would take office for the following year. Times were different then; suitable pensions, governmental legislation dealing with retired teachers and the general welfare of retired educators were ideas frequently under discussions at our district meetings. Because of these concerns and the work of our predecessors we now enjoy comfortable pensions, affordable health care and count on our RTOERO national organization to protect and improve the quality of life to which we have become accustomed.

So, why reorganize? Read on.

Ad hoc Committee to Study and Propose reorganization of District 21

At the November district executive meeting a committee was formed to study the need for reorganization of our district.

The members are:

Jackie Asselyn

Rosemary Cammaert

Gus Cammaert

Myrtle Carrol

Heather Grant

Luella Heideman

Susan Larkin

Carol Sulpher

Elaine Turner



**RTO
ERO**

A better future,
together
Ensemble pour
un avenir meilleur

District 21
Renfrew

RTOERO HAS MADE MANY CHANGES NATIONALLY AND NOW IT'S OUR TURN!



The proposed organization as described below has not been a hasty decision on the part of the District and Unit Executives. Quiet conversations have taken place over the last few years. These conversations began to be openly discussed and last fall the Unit Executives were invited to take part in a District Executive meeting where a discussion on how we could improve took place. As a result, at that meeting, a motion to dissolve the Units was put forward and passed unanimously.

As a result of that motion 2 things occurred: an Ad Hoc Committee made up of members from the District and both Units was formed and the national Board of Directors were notified, where permission to proceed was granted.

The information in this Livewires is a result of the Ad Hoc Committee's work and approved by the District Executive. The one new focus will be the Community Contact, who does not need to attend meetings but will receive regular updates and be our eyes and ears in the communities across Renfrew County.

At the District general meeting, planned for May 12, 2022, a vote on this proposed reorganization will take place.

When you have finished reading and reviewing the information and have questions, or would like to host a local information meeting please contact me. rcammaert@nrtco.net or 613 628 3072

Rosemary Cammaert, District 21 President

OUR PRESENT STRUCTURE:

The District Executive is responsible for the overall functioning of the district. It is comprised of the following :

Elected positions:

Past President (by default)
President
Vice President
Second Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Unit 21-1 President
Unit 21-2 President

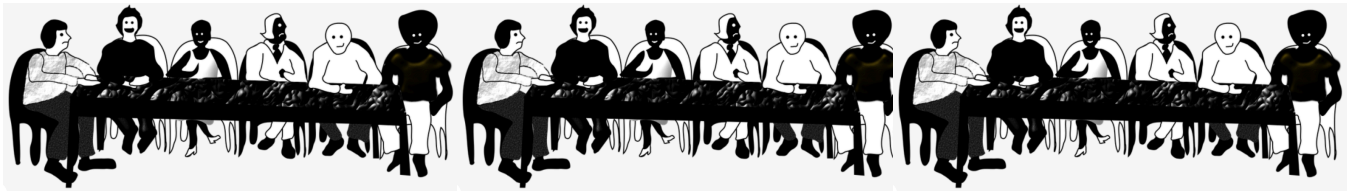
Appointed positions:

Member Services Chair
Marketing / Communication Chair
Benefits / Health Chair
Political Advocacy Chair

The 2 Unit Executives (North and South) are comprised of the same positions as the District Executive, and are responsible for the activities held within their specific geographic unit.

SO, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM??

- Volunteers are not stepping forward for election or appointment to the unit level or district level positions. (This is not a problem unique to RTOERO, but a common dilemma in many organizations.)
- Existing executive members who have been in their positions for many years are experiencing burnout.
- The existing executive members are not representative of our large geographic area. Currently some outlying areas are not adequately represented on an executive.
- The personal situations of some of our members are such that they are not able to volunteer as they would like (ex., personal health, age, family responsibilities).
- A significant number of members volunteer in other organizations, and do not treasure the thought of attending any more meetings than absolutely necessary. A complex problem, to be sure!



IT'S NOT A NEW PROBLEM

You may recall that this problem has been discussed in the past. At a special AGM held in May 2016 a vote was taken about dissolving the units, in order to make way for one streamlined district executive.



The result of the vote was an overwhelming “**NO**”. Members expressed the desire to see local members working on their behalf at the unit level.

How we celebrated at the October 2016 AGM elections when all positions were filled on the district and the 2 unit executives!

Sadly, we saw a return to unfilled positions on all three executives the next year and each year thereafter.

As a result, the district executive in collaboration with the 2 unit executives, has revisited our existing structure once again. As a result, we have unanimously passed a motion to dissolve the two units. This motion has been approved by the RTOERO Board of Directors. We now present to you a plan to positively address the issues.

A PLAN FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Vote to **dissolve Units 21-1 and 21-2** at the May 2022 AGM.

2. **Restructure the District Executive** as follows. (*The district will hold scheduled executive meetings with an annual meeting for our members to enable the district to carry out district business. One District wide social event will be planned each year.*)

Elected District Executive Positions

Past President (by default)

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Appointed Committees of the Executive

Communications/Marketing

Member Services

- Membership
- Community Contact Coordinator
- Good Will Coordinator

Benefits / Health

Political Advocacy

3. **Member Services** will include a **Community Contact** and a **Good Will Representative** in each geographic area (*with the exception of #7 category comprised of members living away*). They will not be required to attend district executive meetings, but will report activities to the Community Contact Coordinator or Good Will Coordinator prior to executive meetings.

Members will be allowed to join the geographic area of their choice and are not restricted to the geographic areas defined on the previous page.



Responsibilities:

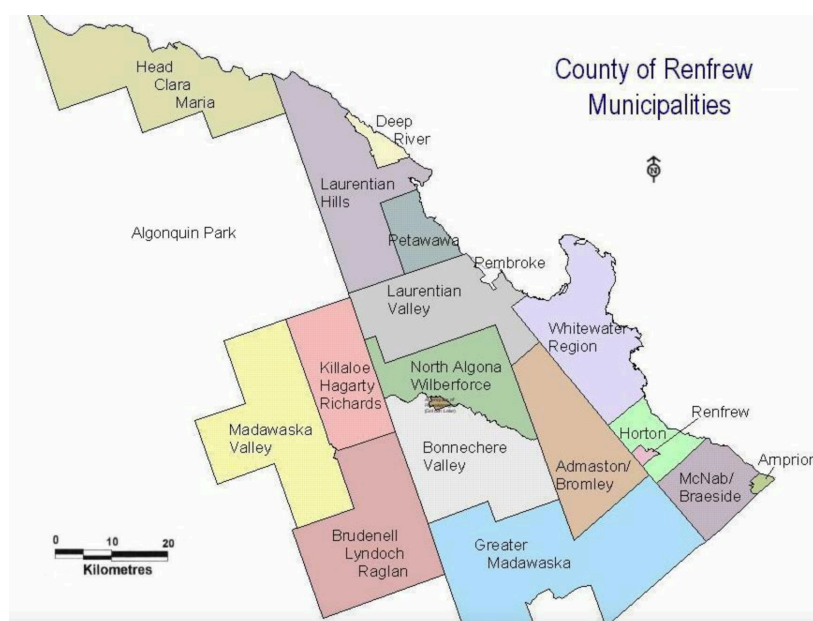
The **Community Contacts** will share their personal contact information to the general membership in their area through the District Newsletter.

The Community Contact is the contact for members who *may wish to create a social activity in their area*. Only members wishing to be informed of activities in their area will receive information of the planned activity. If a member wishes to participate in the social activity, they may contact the organizing member directly. Each community contact will receive regular district updates from the district Community Contact Coordinator.

Good Will Representatives will provide good will measures for members who are ill, celebrating a special event or in Memorials as required.

4. District 21 will be divided into 7 **geographic communities**

- Combermere, Madawaska, Barry's Bay, Palmer Rapids, Wilno, Killaloe
(Approximately 65 members)
- Golden Lake, Eganville, Cormac, Douglas, Cobden Foresters Falls,
Beachburg, Westmeath, Haley Station (Approximately 100 members)
- Pembroke and Quebec (Approximately 230 members)
- Petawawa, Chalk River, Deep River (Approximately 100 members)
- Renfrew, Burnstown, White Lake, Griffith (Approximately 185 members)
- Arnprior, Braeside, McNab, Kinburn, Carp, Pakenham (Approximately 175 members)
- Members living a distance away from District 21 (Approximately 40 members)



A VERY SPECIAL BIRTHDAY



It is with great pleasure and awe that we congratulate our most senior member, Grace Merchand on her birthday this month. Grace was for many years a very active member in District 21 and served with distinction on the executive in various capacities. We wish you health and happiness Grace. It's an honour to know you.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF OUR RTOERO HEALTH PLAN?

Communiqué newsletter is well worth a read!

Communiqué

RTOERO 2022
Health Benefits
Update



The Communiqué newsletter provides members with information and updates to RTOERO's health benefits and travel coverage. This newsletter outlines changes to our plans **effective Jan. 1, 2022**. You will note there is no change to your premiums in 2022.

This newsletter has been mailed to all members who are covered under the RTOERO health plans. We suggest that you keep this document with your *Insurance Plans Booklet*.

You can also find Communiqué on the website.

If you have questions, contact insurance@rtoero.ca or 1-800-361-9888.

ANNUAL MEETING

May 12th is the date set aside for our Annual Meeting.

We are hopeful to have it face to face but depending on the pandemic it may end up being a ZOOM meeting.

2 main purposes:

- **Vote on the restructuring proposal and**
- **Elect the District Executive**

**Peace is not when everyone agrees.
It is when we can respect our disagreements and still play in the sandbox together.**



6 ways to create a happy retirement

Did you know the term ‘happy retirement’ is searched more than 5000 times a month in Canada? If how to create happiness in retirement is on your mind, you’re not alone!

Flourishing in retirement doesn’t always happen by chance. Whether you’re just starting to plan, about to retire or already retired, it’s never too late to take steps to support your happy retirement and overall well-being. With your care

and attention, the prognosis is good! Research suggests that in general, happiness increases with age.

Here are six habits of happy retirees

1) Plan, but expect some uncertainty

Everyone has experienced plans going awry—best-laid plans, right? Life is full of uncertainty, and retirement will be no different. You may have the most detailed plans about what retirement will mean for you, from what you’ll do, to who you will spend it with. But have you considered what you’ll do if those things don’t work out?

One way to protect yourself is to create contingency plans—consider your plans B and C! What will I do if I can’t do an activity the same way anymore? (Hint: you could adapt it or find another activity you want to try). Thinking about these things ahead of time will help you to be prepared if the unexpected happens.

2) Prioritize your health

You may have spent much of your career caring for others—colleagues, students, your family. And sure, your caregiving roles may not stop, but retirement is a chance to replace the time you spent working with some activities and learning to benefit your health and well-being.

Beliefs about aging are an important health factor. Self-directed ageism can impact whether individuals believe they can learn new skills or think a health issue is inevitable versus being something they can affect through behaviour. Research has shown that the association between ageism and health is strongest with self-directed ageism.

3) Nurture relationships

Supportive relationships are critical to overall happiness and well-being. Strong relationships can support stress management, mood, and motivation and even influence positive behaviours, like exercise. Social connection reduces the risk of dementia, heart disease, and mental health issues.

There are likely retirement and seniors’ groups in your community, and volunteering is another great way to meet people. If you’re an RTOERO member (your membership is free until retirement!), you can connect with your local RTOERO District and participate in social activities.

4) Pursue interests

One of the greatest gifts of retirement is all of the time you'll have after devoting so much time to your career. So, what will you do with that time? Many of our members suggest exploring a range of activities. Others say it's a good idea to think about how you want to use your time before you retire—maybe there's a hobby you used to do that you haven't had time for when working? Some of our members suggest starting a new hobby in the year leading up to retirement.

5) Cultivate positive thinking

People who practice positive thinking tend to live longer. Positive thinking is linked to better health outcomes, including lower risk of chronic disease and memory loss, less isolation, faster recovery from injuries and more.

Thinking positively doesn't mean you gloss over or ignore the things that are hard in life. It's important to feel emotions and allow yourself to work through challenges so you can move forward. You might find it helpful to create a list of the healthy activities that help you feel better during or after a tough time. You may also benefit from showing yourself some compassion during challenges—some people are hard on themselves! Try to speak to yourself as you would a dear friend.

6) Give yourself peace of mind

There are things you can control in life and other things you can't. It becomes a lot easier to navigate life's inevitable surprises when you have plans and safety nets in place to help you. Try to take care of necessary financial and administrative tasks as they come up. During retirement, you'll want to make sure your estate plan is kept up-to-date, including having a power of attorney named for emergencies. You may also find it helpful to create an inventory of important documents. Taking care of to-do tasks can prevent them from piling up, helping to reduce stress!



RTOERO District 21
% Hwy. 34177,
Eganville, ON
KoJrTo



43268526