



Now is not the right time to surround yourself with positive people.

The World Health Organization has announced that dogs cannot contract Covid-19. Dogs previously held in quarantine can now be released. To be clear, WHO let the dogs out.

So. I volunteered for the vaccine trials for Covid-19 in downtown Calgary, which apparently were made by a Russian pharmaceutical company.

I received my first shot on Monday and wanted to let everyone know that it's completely safe with no side effects whatsoever, and that I feelshki хорошо я чувствую себя немного странно и я думаю, что вытащил ослиные уши.

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### SPRING AGM

TENTATIVE DATE  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021



## **Some Practical Information from the Head of the Infectious Disease Clinic, University of Maryland**

We may have to live with COVID-19 for months or longer. Let's not deny it or panic. Let's not make our lives useless. Let's learn to live with this fact [and continue safe practices].

Wearing a mask, maintaining a two-metre physical distance and washing hands is the best strategy for your protection.

If you don't have a COVID-19 patient at home, there's no need to disinfect the surfaces at your house [unless you've brought in items that may have been in contact with the virus].

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease. It is associated with drops of infection like the flu [but is much more contagious]. There is little demonstrable risk that COVID-19 is transmitted by food.

The air is clean outside. You can walk through the gardens and parks, [just keep a safe social distance from others that may be outside around you].

It is quite sufficient to use normal soap against COVID-19, not antibacterial soap. This is a virus, not a bacteria.

Immunity is increased by exposure to pathogens, [BUT exposure to this pathogen could kill you. Dr. Alon Vaisman, an infectious diseases and infectious control physician at the University Health Network in Toronto says, "you're not shutting down your immune system by preventing this exposure - you're protecting it."]

- Addendum from the editor: Dr. Kimberly Prather, who recently submitted a perspective paper to the journal, Science, says recent research has shown that COVID-19 can exist in aerosol form in air for hours when produced indoors. That's why there have been so many cases produced in restaurants, churches and other indoor venues, particularly when many people are close together. Masks are very effective in reducing the spread of the virus between people.
- Beware of breakthrough therapeutics. You may have heard about the drug, hydroxychloroquine, that has been aggressively promoted by the American president. This led to the American government hoarding vast quantities of the drug anticipating its use to lessen severe symptoms for chronically ill patients. It turns out research conducted in the aftermath of these actions has shown that not only was it not an effective treatment, it had the potential to cause severe side effects in patients. At the same time it made hydroxychloroquine scarce for patients with other illnesses who needed it for their treatment. A recent report out of Detroit claiming the drug to be effective in treating patients was not published through a peer review process. It has been reported the researchers selected out data that was not favourable to what they had wanted to show.
- Another drug that is getting recent, favourable reviews is the steroid dexamethasone. The research coming out of the U.K. claims that treatment reduced deaths by up to one-third in severely ill hospitalized patients. The drug has already been used to treat a range of other ailments, including arthritis, asthma and some skin conditions. Although Prime Minister Boris Johnson described dexamethasone as the "biggest breakthrough yet" in treating COVID-19, no research at this time has been published in a peer reviewed article.

## LET'S TRY FOR A BETTER NORMAL

The Covid 19 Pandemic has been a difficult time for many and there is a huge and natural desire to return to normal. However, the old normal wasn't all that great for many segments of our society. The pandemic has revealed sharp gaps in the way we look after our seniors and how we undervalue those whose work during the past few weeks has been shown to be essential.

The pain and sacrifice we are going through will be for nought if we don't learn from it and take steps to make life better for everyone, to reduce the disparity between those who have and those who have not. For example, those of us who are lucky enough to have a good defined benefit pension plan need to work to extend this opportunity to all, perhaps through a better CPP.

The pandemic has revealed gaps in our health care system which needs to be updated and include a national pharmacare plan, which will in the long term save money and make us a healthier nation.

Might it cost more? Probably a bit. But if I have to pay an additional quarter for my burger to ensure that the person behind the counter has a living wage and decent working conditions, that is a sacrifice I'm willing to make.



*Thank you so much for your recent Newsletter. I have not previously read the newsletter. I guess that's what comes from working and being retired at the same time.*

*Thank you for the quote from Trudeau. So inspiring in these times.*

*Also I loved the picture of the guy with the donkey on his back. Makes one question what one sees! The picture of Gertrude reminds me of why I accepted a contract this year: no matter how hard my husband tries, he is just not as amusing as a classroom full of kids. I appreciate the advice in the newsletter; makes me feel like my mother is talking to me. Please relay my best wishes to anyone who worked on this.*

*Best wishes,  
Cheryl*

*Hi  
Just dropping a line to say thank you for the humour and upbeat articles in our "liveries". Yes, we are all in this together and happy thoughts and humour do enhance our days. Thanks again to everyone at "liveries".  
Betty Anne Henson*

*An excellent District newsletter. You all have done yourselves proud. Enjoyed Pierre's comment in the light of the cheerleading of today's elected officials, the post script to the do's and don'ts for Covid, the aside that the president was'nt Trump and the free marketing idea. Of course the serious thoughts were appreciated too.*

*Ted*





## **THERE IS MORE TO RTOERO THAN HEALTH INSURANCE** - submitted by Rosemary Cammaert

RTOERO, a non-profit organization, has grown and expanded. Retired public school teachers in Ontario created it 52 years ago. Those involved then had no idea that they were creating an organization that would become as versatile as it is today.

Today's journey began when RTOERO moved into the Governance mode associated with our acceptance under the Canada not for Profit Act. The 2020 Strategic Plan stated RTOERO's mission "to improve the lives of members and seniors" with a goal to be "a bilingual trusted voice on healthy active living in the retirement journey for the broader education community".

RTOERO no longer takes care, only of concerns of Ontario's retired teachers, but also those involved in all areas of public education from early childhood to Universities and Colleges. It now invites ***all*** those who support teachers, enabling them to work in their chosen career - EA's, secretaries, caretakers are all welcome to join RTOERO.

As the fall of 2019, 3 newly created Districts: 49-The Prairies, 50-Atlantic and 51-Echo (Quebec) joined RTOERO allowing RTOERO to become a truly national organization serving members and communities across Canada.

The Political Action Committee became the Political *ADVOCACY* Committee as RTOERO has become, and continues to be, a recognized national partner/voice on all retiree and older adult issues.

The Communication Committee becomes the *MARKETING* and Communication Committee. This has resulted in an updated renewal of the RTOERO Facebook page. Workshops have been given to encouraging all Districts to promote themselves through virtual and print information. With the arrival of Covid 19 there was the arrival of Zoom.

The use of Zoom has updated the communication and sharing between the Board and District Presidents and the office staff! Monthly District President's updates have become normal with sharing between all the District presidents, Board of Directors, Board Chairs and the office staff.

Covid 19 was also responsible for the RPW's having become virtual. They have received positive support and increased involvement by those researching retirement planning.

RTOERO Service to Others (STO) continues to support not for profit community organizations and students in education through grants submitted with the approval of District Executives.

The committee that the majority of members are most aware of would be the Health *BENEFITS* Committee. RTOERO has engaged Johnson Insurance to oversee all our insurance coverage(s). RTOERO has partnered with Vengo (a company that engages businesses interested in providing discounts to members) and Hearing Life to provide benefits to members.

The Membership Services includes overseeing the goodwill and social activities for members. Since Covid 19 became the new normal we have missed the face to face activities we enjoy. Those who serve in these positions continue to search for ways to keep our members engaged.

In the meantime the RTOERO Office Staff continue to be there for us. They are working from home as they continue to assist us and are only a call or email away. They continue work on improving our organization and becoming "the trusted voice in active healthy issues" for retired and elderly in need of change and support.

## ABOUT RTOERO MEMBERSHIP

We have had a number of phone calls from people with respect to the status of their membership in RTOERO. Some had thought they were members only to find that in fact they were not. Others had thought that they were enrolled in our Health Plan only to find that they were members of another Health Plan with a similar name.

Membership in RTOERO is open to all employees in the education community. This includes all school board employees, university and college employees and early childhood educators.

However, membership is not automatic. You actually have to apply.

Once retired you are eligible for Full Membership with access to all benefits provided through RTOERO. The membership fee is \$70.00 paid annually and subject to an annual increase in keeping with the rate of inflation.

Prior to retirement, you are eligible for Active Employee Membership. This gives you access to most benefits provided through RTOERO with the exception of serving at the Provincial level and enrolment in RTOERO Health Plans.

However, if as an Active Member you are 50+ years of age and no longer have health benefits through your employer, you are eligible for enrolment in the RTOERO health plans. Health coverage is not free. Information and premium rates are available through the Provincial Office.

As an Active Member, upon retirement, you will need to contact the Provincial Office and confirm with them as to whether or not you wish to continue your membership as a Full Member and whether or not you wish to enroll in the RTOERO Health Plans.

It is important to note that in order to belong to the RTOERO Health Plans you must be an RTOERO member. However, you can belong to RTOERO without taking advantage of the RTOERO Health Plan.

The RTOERO Provincial Office is closed but all staff are working from home and continue to serve members. E-mail [membership@rtoero.ca](mailto:membership@rtoero.ca) or phone 1-800-361-9888 Leave a message and they will be in touch.



*A MASKED AND WELL SEPARATED DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MEETS FACE TO FACE SEPT. 15*

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## IMPORTANT TRAVEL UPDATE

*(Published by RTOERO on August 13, 2020)*

This is important information for members with RTOERO travel insurance coverage. As you know, for now the global travel advisory from the Canadian government remains in place. That means the government is telling Canadians that public health officials do not consider international travel to be safe. RTOERO will communicate directly with all members as soon as the advisory status changes.

The following answers are based on the questions we are receiving.

**Q. Am I covered for travel within Canada?**

*A. Travel within Canada is covered. Please follow the COVID-19 restrictions issued by the provincial and municipal public health officials for the area(s) you plan to visit.*

**Q. Am I covered for trip cancellation/interruption if I'm travelling in Canada?**

*A. Yes. When travelling in Canada, you remain covered for trip cancellation or interruption as described in pages 72 to 76 in the RTOERO Insurance Plans Booklet.*

**Q. If I become ill with COVID-19 while travelling within Canada, am I covered?**

*A. Yes. Emergency Medical coverage is available as long as you have not experienced any symptoms prior to leaving.*

**Q. If I choose to travel outside of Canada despite the government travel advisory, am I covered for medical emergencies?**

*A. You are covered for medical emergencies, except for claims related to COVID-19, while the government travel advisory is in effect. This is a **new enhancement** to your travel coverage. You will receive additional communication regarding this change shortly.*

**Q. Once the travel advisory is lifted, am I covered if I become ill with COVID-19 while travelling?**

*A. Yes. Emergency Medical coverage is available as long as you have not experienced any symptoms prior to leaving.*

**Q. Am I covered for cancellation of international trips?**

*A. You are not covered for trip cancellation related to COVID-19 for trips booked during the government travel advisory.*

*· For trips booked after the travel advisory is lifted, you will be covered.*

*· For complete details of trip cancellation/interruption coverage, see page 72 to 76 in the RTOERO Insurance Plans Booklet.*

*· If you receive a voucher instead of a refund, you can submit a claim for any unused portion if it expires.*

**Q. While travelling outside Canada, if I come home early, will I be covered for trip interruption?**

*A. You are covered for reasons outlined on page 72 to 76 in the RTOERO Insurance Plans Booklet.*

*· While traveling outside Canada, you are **not** covered for trip interruption related to COVID-19 during the current travel advisory.*

*· For interruptions after the advisory is lifted, you will be covered for reasons related to COVID-19*

**Q. While travelling, will I be covered if my return flight is cancelled?**

*A. The airline and/or travel agency normally provides a voucher or refund in this situation.*



**More information on Travel:**

For the most up-to-date information and if you have any other questions, please contact our Service Administrator at Johnson Insurance, 1-877-406- 9007 or [healthbenefits@johnson.ca](mailto:healthbenefits@johnson.ca), prior to finalizing any travel plans.

**MARY ELIZABETH PLAUNT 1913-2020, A tribute contributed by Unit 212**

I have attached the article which appeared in the Renfrew Mercury yesterday regarding the death of DISTRICT 21 RTOERO MEMBER 106 year old Mary Plaunt. She was a beautiful person who loved being remembered at Christmas time each year with a poinsettia from her colleagues in RTOERO Unit 212. A thank you note was always forthcoming to express this gratitude. She was blessed with a sound mind and amazing memory ... a real delight to visit, as I am sure Rosemary Flood will recall.

Carol Sulpher

**PLAUNT, Mary Elizabeth**  
(1913- 2020)



During her first four years of teaching at Admaston #6 (Northcote) she got to know Cam Plaunt who she married in 1941, after teaching for a further three years for the Toronto Board of Education. During this period she continued to study voice, and added to her professional qualifications, becoming an elementary school music specialist.

In 1941 she joined Cam in New Liskeard, and they embarked upon a happy life in the North, which they both loved. Mary first taught supply, then music in New Liskeard Public School, and eventually moved into regular grade teaching which she enjoyed immensely, becoming a memorable mentor and friend to many former students, and a close friend to many colleagues. She sang in the choir of St Paul's United, was a member of the ORMTA music teachers, curled at the Home Granite club, golfed on the Halleybury and New Liskeard links, and cheered on McKnight's baseball team from the comfort of the family car in the outfield.

Mary and Cam returned to Renfrew in 1989 to a warm welcome from their Renfrew families, and frequent visits from their Montreal family. Cam died in 1996, and Mary eventually moved into Quail Creek Retirement Centre, and then Groves Park Lodge where excellent and attentive staffs enjoyed her company and friendship.

Mary is survived by son Tom and daughter-in-law Anne MacKinnon of Montreal, grandsons Jeremy Plaunt (Kelly Hanson) of Gatineau, and Duncan Plaunt of Montreal, great-grandsons Cedric and Noah Plaunt, sister-in-law Patricia Kasaboski of Renfrew, as well as an extended family of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends, all of whom have been of great support and enjoyment in recent years.

The family wishes to thank the kind staffs of Quail Creek and Groves Park Lodge, Dr. Catherine MacDonald, and the medical staffs of Quail, Groves and Renfrew Victoria Hospital for their excellent care. Special thanks to the congregation of Grace United Church, Admaston for such warm community support. Burial will be private. In the absence of any public service or visitations, memorial donations may be made to Grace United Church, Admaston, 1875 Foy Rd, RR2 Renfrew, ON. K7V 3K2, or to a charity of your choice.

Funeral arrangements are through the Zohr Family Funeral Home, 85 Munroe Ave E, Renfrew, ON K7V 3K2.

After a long and positive life, Mary died, aged 106, in Renfrew on July 29, 2020. She was born on a farm in Admaston Township, Renfrew County to Elizabeth Blair and Duncan Campbell and grew up in a family of six children, augmented by five double-first cousins through adjacent fields.

After an adventurous childhood, she drove eight miles per horse and buggy or cutter to high school at Renfrew's Collegiate Institute, loving the horses and the frequent challenges of the commute. Eventually she excelled in the old position of "Jumping Centre" in an RCI ladies Basketball team which won the Eastern Ontario championship. After RCI, as she was financially unable to follow her first love and become a university-trained dietician, she settled on elementary school teaching after a year's training at Ottawa Normal School.

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**ANNUAL HELP AVAILABLE FOR CHARITIES**

**Aka “RTOERO Service to Others Projects (S.T.O.)”** submitted by Carol Sulpher

Over the years, RTOERO members in District 21 have likely heard of money granted by provincial office to charities in our district. \$2000 to \$4000 have been awarded to such initiatives as the Healthy Babies and Mothers Project in Guatemala, provision of backpacks for needy children, supporting parents in the IPRC/IEP process, community programming at Shaw Woods, and most recently to Elder Abuse Prevention Education. Just how were these needs identified and by whom, you may ask? How was the grant money obtained from provincial office?

The aforementioned examples were projects put forward by District 21 RTOERO members volunteering their time within a charity, and who wanted to see RTOERO grant money awarded to their particular charity of choice.

Applications may be for **local, provincial, national and international projects**, as long as RTOERO members are involved in and participating in the projects. Any member in the district may put forth an application to the District executive using the forms and process that is provided by provincial office. Help is available from the District Executive to assist any individual wishing to complete and put forth an application.

The District executive examines all applications received and is allowed to submit only one application to provincial office each year, in advance of the due date (usually before the end of the end of June each year). A provincial committee examines all applications received from across the province, and announces the successful grants usually by early October. The money is then soon forwarded to the successful Districts, with follow up reports completed by the applicants and sent to provincial office verifying how the project unfolds as the year progresses.

The provincial committee recommends funding for applications which:

- Have not received funding from RTOERO in the past
- The project meets the objectives of RTOERO as including an educational, social and community focus
- There is evidence of involvement of multiple District members
- The expense report submitted is detailed, complete and expenses are supported by quotes from suppliers.

In 2020, District 21 received only one application ... that being for Meilleur Seniors' Residence in Chapeau, Quebec. It was approved by District 21 Executive and submitted to provincial office in advance of the due date. We look forward to a response from provincial office by October 1, 2020.

Any members volunteering their time in a favourite charity or area of need, and who wish to put forth an application for the 2021 year, are encouraged to do so. Assistance is available from District 21 Executive to help you with the process.



I KNOW, I KNOW. THIS IS A BIT LIKE PREACHING TO THE CHOIR BUT IF YOU HAVE FRIENDS WHO ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO GLORIOUS RETIREMENT DO THEM A FAVOUR AND PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO THEM. EVEN IF YOU ARE NOW RETIRED AND HAVE QUESTIONS, SIGN UP TO JOIN ONE OF THESE ONLINE WORKSHOPS. COSTS NOTHING AND A LOT OF GOOD INFORMATION IS PRESENTED.

# Thinking about retirement?

## For anyone who

- Works in schools and school boards, early years, post-secondary
- Wishes to learn about retirement planning
- Wants a workshop tailored to the education community

Free!



## Learn about

- Financial planning
- Health benefits in retirement
- Retirement and lifestyle planning

## Attendees receive

- Retirement planning booklet
- Free RTOERO membership until retirement !

## REGISTER

[rtoero.ca/events](https://rtoero.ca/events)

## QUESTIONS?

[rpw@rtoero.ca](mailto:rpw@rtoero.ca) or 1-800-361-9888

## HOSTED BY





**So long as the memory of certain  
beloved friends lives in my heart,  
I shall say that life is good.**

Helen Keller

*The song is  
ended,  
but the melody  
lingers on.*

Beverly Logan  
Carmel Tallon  
Donald Clements  
Edward Mallon  
Frank Holroyd  
Irene Wagner  
Iva Thacker  
Janet Wilson  
Joan Chapeskie  
John Stunt  
Julia Davidson

Lowell Hawkins  
Lucille Dupuis  
Lydia Jardine  
Margaret McLeish  
Margaret Yolkowskie  
Mary Miller  
Morna McEwen  
Ronald Hoffman  
Ruby Hume  
Rudi Goring  
Vera MacIntyre

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### **GREETING TO NEW MEMBERS OF RTOERO DISTRICT 21**

We welcome new members who have recently joined RTOERO District 21, Renfrew and invite them to become active participants in our activities. As of September 1, our district has a total membership of 848.

**October:** Sharon Jaremko, Jamie Porter, Lucy Langevin

**November:** Shirley Burton

**January:** Darlene Patterson, Neil Farmer

**March:** Kathy Frederick

**April:** Doreen Clements

**May:** Renelle Charron, Catherine Quinn

**June:** M.L. Lucie Sauve

**July:** Jennifer Post

**August:** Marjory Stunt, Doris Goring, Linda MacVicar Cox

## OCTOBER is Social Isolation Awareness Month

### The Cause

Throughout our lives, we thrive on our relationships. Meaningful connections with family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and our communities keep us engaged and socially active. These connections and relationships contribute to our happiness and to better emotional, mental and physical health.

Social isolation can affect anyone, especially retired individuals. Often, after losing a spouse, or experiencing decreased mobility or cognitive decline, seniors can become increasingly isolated from their friends, family and community. With 1 in 5 Canadians over 65 affected by social isolation, there's a good chance we all know someone who lives with isolation and loneliness most days of their

Social isolation can contribute to anxiety and depression and even suicide. Canadians over 65 have a higher suicide rate than any other age group - and men are at greatest risk.



life...maybe every day.

### Our Campaign

This October is Social Isolation Awareness Month; the RTOERO Foundation's signature campaign which is now in its third year. The campaign aims to address the issue of social isolation among Canadian seniors by:

Raising awareness through the sharing of information, facts, tips and action ideas Empowering individuals to recognize and help those who are socially isolated Raising \$100,000 for education and research projects to help isolated seniors

In the coming weeks, you will be sent an invitation to register for the campaign. We hope you will register and will encourage others in your district to do the same.

Campaign registrants will be sent a new challenge via email each Tuesday in October. The challenges are designed to be fun and to demonstrate the simple actions we can take to help others feel included and supported. You'll also learn more about the issue of social isolation by being part of the campaign.

We know RTOERO members understand the value of collective action. By participating in Social Isolation Awareness Month you'll become part of a movement that will shine a light on social isolation and help make huge strides towards assisting lonely seniors.

Keep an eye on your email inbox for registration links which will be sent shortly. If you have any questions about Social Isolation Awareness Month or would like information about how you can get involved, please contact Deanna Byrtus by email at [dbyrtus@rtoero.ca](mailto:dbyrtus@rtoero.ca) or by calling **416-962-9463 ext. 271**.



## THE RISKS OF THE PRESCRIBING CASCADE

A version of this article appeared in print on Sept. 8, 2020, Section D, Page 7 of the New York edition with the headline: Crushed Beneath a Prescribing Cascade.

The problem occurs when drug-induced side effects are viewed as a new ailment and treated with yet another drug that can cause still other side effect. Complicating matters is the large number of drugs some people take. “Older adults frequently take many medications, with two-fifths taking five or more,” In cases of polypharmacy, as this is called, it can be hard to determine which, if any, of the drugs a person is taking is the cause of the current symptom.

Dr. Paula Rochon, geriatrician at Women’s College Hospital recommended that patients or their caregivers should ask the doctor a series of questions, starting with “Am I experiencing a symptom that could be a side effect of a drug I’m taking?” Follow-up questions should include:

Is this new drug being used to treat a side effect?

Is there a safer drug available than the one I’m taking?

Could I take a lower dose of the prescribed drug?

Most important, Dr. Rochon said, patients should ask “Do I need to take this drug at all?”

Dr. Rochon recommended that patients maintain an up-to-date list of when and why they started every new drug, along with its dose and frequency, and show that list to the doctor as well.

## PROTECT YOURSELF BY GETTING YOUR FLU SHOT

Getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and the people around you from getting the flu. The flu shot also lowers your risk of serious complications, such as pneumonia. Protect yourself and your loved ones today with a FREE flu shot, available for all Ontario residents over six months of age.



Renfrew County and District Health offers clinics throughout Renfrew County and District. Please stay tuned to see the upcoming schedule for a clinic in your community!



RTOERO District 21  
% 34177, Hwy. 41,  
Eganville, ON  
KoJ rTo

