

EMBRACE AGING

News from the RTOERO Foundation: Helping you stay connected and engaged

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From the desk of
Joanne Murphy
- Board Chair -
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Hope makes everything possible

“Once you choose **hope**, anything is possible.” These words from Christopher Reeve should serve as a beacon of light while we cope with the vagaries of the pandemic. Reeve led the charge on spinal cord disorder because he believed that a paralysis cure was attainable.

Another young man, Terry Fox, who faced insurmountable obstacles, did not give up hope. Despite losing a leg to osteosarcoma at age 18, he persevered. In 1980, Fox ran the Marathon of Hope to raise money for cancer research.

Rod Stewart was so inspired by the sheer determination of Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope that he recorded the song “Never Give Up on a Dream.” These touching lyrics emphasize how critical it is to hope. That is what gives us the strength to cope each day.

There is little doubt that these are challenging times. We have all become weary with the many worries the pandemic appears to present us with

daily. But, we must remain optimistic and find the good things that we have in life.

Whenever I feel overwhelmed by what is happening, I turn to music as a source of solace and comfort. Music has been a constant companion throughout my life. It has been a source of inspiration whether listening, singing, or playing the piano. Music helps me to pause and reflect on all the positive things in my life.

One particular song that inspires me and helps me feel optimistic about the future is “Bridge Over Troubled Water.” Written during a time of much turmoil worldwide, this Simon and Garfunkel song has a timeless message of encouragement and hope.

Life may seem daunting at present. However, remember that there is a bridge over the troubled water for each one of us. Reflect on what that bridge is in your life – like Terry Fox and Christopher Reeve, perhaps it’s **hope**.

Making the most of an unprecedented year

We asked you to let us know how you've been keeping busy during this time of stay-at-home orders. Thank you so much to those who have shared the creative and rewarding activities they've engaged in during this unprecedented year. Here are some of the highlights from the numerous submissions we received.

I resurrected a catering business I had post-retirement. I selected one item each week for six weeks providing individual, two serving, and four serving dishes. Meals included Shepherd's Pie, Tourtière, and chicken crepes. I had a wonderful response from friends and former customers and found myself cooking 10 to 13 recipes each week.

Jo Anne Jennings, District 39 Peel



I have been writing my weekly column "Heather's Musings" for The Bancroft Times and fill my evenings in front of the TV crocheting blankets for Jabez Blanket Ministry International.

Heather Campbell, District 21 Renfrew



I like to have an activity to keep me busy during idle times. I started doing puzzles which was a new activity for me and ended up getting quite "addicted" for a while. I also ordered some adult "paint by number" canvases which was fun. I eventually had one custom made from a photograph. As my husband quotes..."creativity is the residue of wasted time. But if time spent daydreaming helps us be creative.....is it truly wasted time?"

Diane & Ted Petter, District 10 Bruce Grey Dufferin



I have a good knowledge of Spanish and later, wanting to do something unusual,.....I started Catalan (I must be the only odd character to do this in Ontario!) - and for what reason? I just love Barcelona and the culture is very interesting, although the pronunciation and spelling are incredible challenges, I managed to read three books in Catalan.

Helene Troubetzkoy, District 16 City of Toronto



While I was teaching, weaving textiles was an occasional hobby. When I retired in 2005, I had planned to become a weaver. With the COVID shut-down, weaving and using up a stash of fibers became the focus of my year. Projects completed include a hand-dyed bamboo scarf, wool blanket, and a poncho using yarns I dyed from plants in Peru. It has been an exciting year.

Suzanne Mitchell, District 40 Brant Ontario Handweavers & Spinners Midwest Region



Over the past several years I have learned to design our Rotary Club website and trained others in my Club to manage it and the online newsletter. Recently I've created a training curriculum and now offer virtual instruction on Zoom on how to post a story on a website platform like ClubRunner. I have spent the past three months setting up a company to take what I have learned over the last decade or two as a retired teacher-administrator, website blogger, and designer and morphed it into a business venture: wethe4productionsnetwork.com

John Borst, District 35 Dryden



I have been enjoying fostering cats and their kittens until they are old enough to be adopted.

Rosemary Brisson, District 21 Renfrew

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I retired in 1995 and thought then that I'd like to write my memoirs, but I suffered from a very serious case of procrastination. In 2010 I endured a medical crisis and it took a year of intense therapy to get back to normal. The COVID lockdown provided the perfect time to finally research and write "My Legacy - Learn from the Past, Look to the Future". Not only did I want to share my story with my very large family, but I also wanted to ensure myself that I could still remember and that I could still write.

Arnold Hull, District 41 Elgin

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I have been recycling used greeting cards into new handmade cards - over 200 so far. I posted a sign in our building asking for old used cards. People hate to discard them but are glad to share them for some use. I cut them up and reorganized the pieces on colored cut-up cardboard, and I send them out for specific occasions or just because. It keeps me in touch with people and makes them happy. Then, I get follow-up phone calls. Good for the spirit in this pandemic period!

Aurore Trahan, District 27 Ottawa - Carleton



My late husband was a professional organist as well as a Vocal Music Teacher at North Toronto Collegiate Institute for some 25 years. Those who sold him our 2 manual, full pedalboard Allen organ kindly offered to help me "get rid of it". No thanks, said I. During COVID I've begun some serious practice! I now can play Adagio by Mozart (better known as the Glass Harmonica). Now why this choice? I'll let you in on a little secret ... it is played only on the manuals! My feet just look at that big full pedalboard and insist NO WAY! However, I hope to convince them to rise to the occasion during the next few COVID months.

Joan Beaton, District 16 City of Toronto



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I have been "Remembering the Lake". I researched and wrote a history of our family on McQuaby Lake near North Bay and in Nipissing Township after their arrival in 1880. Family members arrived in the area by canoe over the old Champlain Trail route. The memoir has 48 pages of text with 84 pictures and was shared with family members.

Eric Simpson, District 39 Peel

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We are so inspired by the variety of ways you have all be keeping busy since last March. So many of you have been:

- learning to use Zoom and using it to connect with family and friends, joining choirs, attending conferences, and taking classes
- enjoying webinars from around the world
- organizing family documents, work documents, and endless boxes of photographs
- reading, listening to music, and enjoying operas
- walking, hiking, and gardening

Thank you for sharing. Stay safe, well, and engaged.



Dr. Paula Rochon podcast on the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ) website: Five things to know about prescribing cascades

A prescribing cascade happens when the side effects of a prescribed drug are misinterpreted as a new medical condition for which an additional drug is prescribed. Some prescribing cascades can become complicated to untangle and hard to catch. In this podcast, Dr. Paula Rochon outlines some of the common prescribing cascades that occur in older adults.

Dr. Paula Rochon is a geriatrician at Women's College Hospital in Toronto and the RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto.

Listen here: www.cmaj.ca/content/193/6/E215/tab-related-content and click on the orange "play" button.

The power of pets

Sharing your home with a pet can do wonders to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. The power of pets goes far beyond the pure joy of having a cat, dog, hamster, fish, bird or whatever your animal companion happens to be.

There is nothing better than the unconditional love of a pet to help boost your mood and lower your blood pressure. They can give you a sense of belonging and purpose. When there is another living creature depending on you for the necessities of life, it adds meaning to your life as well. Pets are proven to reduce pain, stress, anxiety and depression, boost your immune system and increase your self-esteem.

Studies from the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) have shown that there is widespread agreement among both pet owners and non-owners that companion animals play a role in addressing the societal challenges of loneliness and social isolation.

Eighty percent of pet owners say their pet makes them feel less lonely, 85 percent believe interaction with a pet can help reduce loneliness and 76 percent agree human-animal interactions can address feelings of social isolation.

If you've been thinking about bringing home a new pet, now may be the best time.



Contact Us!

We'd love to hear from you.



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