

BEYOND THE BELL

District #46 Muskoka Retired Teachers

www.rtomuskoka.org

Volume 3, Issue 3

Summer 2009

ERO

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Special Project to Others



President Lorna Walkling presenting a cheque to Kyla Dent, a teacher in Gravenhurst.

Each year RTO Muskoka applies for a special grant, for a worthy cause, funded by the provincial organization.

This year ERO Muskoka was granted \$4000 for a very special project. The money will go towards the building of a primary school on a 30 acre parcel of land in the village of Ewaso Ngiro, Africa. Completion of the Oleleshwa Primary School will allow children aged 5-9 years, who currently walk 1½ hours each way to the nearest school, to attend daily classes in their own community. In addition to curriculum, children would learn about vital health and sanitation practices to reduce illness and child mortality.

Currently, four Muskoka elementary schools have initiated educational fundraising projects for Harambee 4 Humanity. A local elementary school teacher from Gravenhurst, Muskoka, plans to spend half of the 2009/2010 school year in Kenya working to coordinate the school building project.

Being Politically Active

In August, Lorna Walkling, RTO Muskoka president and Marg Couture, RTO Muskoka Political Action representative and vice president of Provincial RTO met with Norm Miller, MPP for Muskoka Parry Sound concerning Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

RTO realizes that it is not realistic to eliminate HST but wants to ensure that it doesn't adversely affect seniors or their services in any way. Nor should seniors be disadvantaged by HST – it must be revenue neutral.

Additional exemptions need to be made to home energy costs, gasoline for cars and non-profit organizations and group insurance programs. There should be opportunities to suggest additional changes. Mr. Miller asked additional information regarding RTO and the exemption on non-profit organizations and group insurance plans.



Lorna Walkling, MPP Norm Miller, Marg Couture

..It was great to see many of you at our Spring Annual General Meeting on June 2nd at the Turner Centre in Bracebridge. In my first few months as President of District 46, I have often thought of how much I enjoy maintaining contact with former colleagues, and meeting newly retired members from across the province who have chosen Muskoka as their retirement haven. Welcome to our new RTO/ERO members!

It's truly an honour to look forward to being District 46 President for the coming year. I welcome input from members, and I invite you to contact me to share your thoughts about issues that RTO/ERO is focusing on at this time. I'd like to give you an overview, so that you may be aware of some of the current issues affecting seniors that we, as a large provincial organization, hope to be able to influence. Provincially, RTO/ERO now has a total of more than 65,000 full and associate members.

In August, 2009, I joined Provincial 1st Vice-President, Marg Couture, in meeting with local MPP Norm Miller to discuss our concerns about ways in which the proposed Harmonized Sales Tax may adversely affect seniors in Muskoka. If you have concerns about how this tax will affect you as an individual, it would be very useful to know about them.

There is much we can do as retired educators, both locally and globally, to support opportunities related to education. Through the Project – Service to Others grant process, we are able to apply annually for up to \$4000.00 from the RTO/ERO provincial office, in support of an education

initiative that our members are involved in. Last year, we supported the Alzheimer Society of Muskoka in purchasing updated resources for their well-used lending library to help families, students and professionals understand and cope with the effects of Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias. This year, we have been successful in receiving a \$4000.00 grant in support of the building of a primary school in a small village in Ewaso Ngiro, Kenya, Africa. In March, 2010, some of our members plan to go to Kenya to assist with the building project. If you have ideas you would like considered for future Project- Service to Others applications from District 46, please let me know.

We are fortunate as members of RTO/ERO to have access to one of the finest health plans available to seniors in Ontario. Further information about the health plan, as well as Quick Links to a number of topics of interest, including Harmonized Sales Tax, is available on the provincial RTO/ERO website at www.rto-ero.org.

Be sure to also check our District 46 Muskoka website regularly for upcoming events at www.rtomuskoka.org. Our new live theatre listings may be of interest to you, listing events scheduled at theatres in Huntsville, Bracebridge and Gravenhurst. Thank you, Laurie Fountain, for your ongoing and exemplary work on our website!

I look forward to my year as your President, knowing full well that I have a hard act to follow. Thank

you, Bob Harris, for the outstanding work you have done over the past three years to establish our own RTO/ERO District 46 in Muskoka. Thanks, too, to Shirley Harris, who has been Secretary for three years, and is now 1st Vice President. We are still in need of a Secretary for the coming year, and I am hopeful that this position will be filled soon. My experience with RTO/ERO executive work is that it is a fun, satisfying way to stay connected to education, and you meet some really fine people, too. Our next executive meeting will be held at the Riverside Inn in Bracebridge on October 19th. If you have an interest in filling the position of Secretary for the coming year, please contact me at Lorna.Walkling@sympatico.ca or 385-2948.

It will be a proud moment for members of the District 46 executive attending the Fall Senate in Toronto from October 26th -28th, as our own Marg Couture is currently the only candidate running for provincial President of RTO/ERO.

In closing, I want to encourage you to attend the District 46 Fall General Meeting on November 5th at the Turner Centre in Bracebridge. Lunch will be served without charge to members, and you are more than welcome to bring a prospective RTO/ERO member along as our guest, too. Registration information may be found on the last page of the newsletter. If you are unable to attend the meeting, consider coming out to the Hell with the Bell Breakfast on September 15th, or one of the Morning Recess Coffee hours listed on the back page. I hope to see you at one of these local RTO/ERO events!

If you change your email address please contact Membership Chair,
Mary Patterson at
rtomuskoka@yahoo.com
to continue to receive your newsletters and notices of all events.

District #46 Executive

Past President	Bob Harris	705-687-5478	rsharris@sympatico.ca
President	Lorna Walkling	705-385-2948	lorna.walkling@sympatico.ca
First Vice President	Shirley Harris	705-687-5478	rsharris@sympatico.ca
Second Vice President	Mary Patterson	705-762-5270	marykp99@yahoo.com
Secretary	vacant		
Treasurer	Leo Couture	705-762-1144	balacooch@aol.com
Travel & Social	Lee Shea	705-645-8677	mlshea@sympatico.ca
Health Insurance	Rod Mundy	705-789-5777	rodmundy@vianet.ca
Political Action	vacant		
Newsletter	Mary Storey	705-684-9560	mstorey@cogeco.ca
Webmaster	Laurie Fountain	705-645-9754	laurie@muskoka.com
Gravenhurst Goodwill	Norma Carrick	705-687-7572	
Bala & Port Carling Goodwill	Pearl Davidson	705-762-3477	momcpd@muskoka.com
Bracebridge Goodwill	Anne Glazier	705-645-4756	
Huntsville Goodwill	Joyanne Paget	705-787-0500	

Note from the Editor

As I write this, summer has finally started. Interesting, as it is mid August. I trust everyone has enjoyed a good summer despite the weather. What would we talk about, if not complaining about the weather?

As I mingle with several retired educator at various summer events, it has occurred to me that most of us promote the theory of "Life Long Learning".

We may be reading the newspaper or other text material, attending informative presentations, talking with others or learning a new skill. I am so impressed when I hear people say, I got a computer for my 80th birthday or we travelled to Greece after studying the history and geography of the country.

Having a background in the technical field, I love to chat to others about new computers and other

No one provides the professional development now except ourselves. I choose not to have an iPod or Blackberry but am interested in the devices and their uses. I challenge you to learn about these new items that our grandchildren use.

Mary



Bursaries for Students

This year RTO Muskoka gave two bursaries, worth \$1500 each to students pursuing post secondary education. Fourteen students applied and the difficult decision was made by the Bursary Committee of Laurie Fountain, Rod Mundy and Mary Storey. Jordon Wickers-Schreur was presented with his bursary on the evening of June 25th at Graduation Ceremonies at St. Dominic Catholic Secondary School in Bracebridge. Jordon will be studying engineering at university this fall.

Kayley Fowler of Huntsville has taken a year off after graduating from Huntsville High School. She will be attending University of Ottawa and is enrolled in the Bachelor of Science program. Our good wishes go with these two students as they extend their education.

Jordon



Mary Storey presents cheque to Kayley





Upcoming Events

To Hell with the Bell Breakfast

Please bring a recently retired teacher/friend!

Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2009 9 am

Riverside Inn, Bracebridge
Cost \$5.00 per person



RSVP by: Sept 8, 2009
Cheques Payable to: RTO District 46
RSVP to: Mr. Lee Shea
120 Front Street,
Bracebridge, ON
P1L 1J7. 705-645-8677

I (we) would like to attend the RTO Muskoka Hell with the Bell Breakfast, Sept 15, 2009
Name: _____
Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Payment enclosed \$ _____

For _____ person(s)) @ \$ 5.00

Morning Recess Coffee Parties

Bala—Bell Breakfast, Tuesday, Sept 8,
Hook and Ladder Restaurant, 9 am

Gravenhurst—Monday, September 16
Oliver’s Coffee Shop, 9:30 am

Bracebridge—Wednesday, November 25
Marj’s Restaurant, 9:30 am

Fall Meeting & Luncheon

Thursday, Nov. 5, 2009

Turner Centre, Bracebridge
120 Taylor Road, Bracebridge
Cost: \$15.00 per person



9:00 – Registration and Refreshments
9:30 – Meeting
11:30 Speaker Marg Couture (President elect of Provincial Retired Teachers)
12:00 – Lunch

RSVP by: Oct, 29, 2009
Cheques Payable to: RTO District 46
RSVP to: Mr. Lee Shea
120 Front Street,
Bracebridge, ON
P1L 1J7 705-645-8677

I (we) would like to attend the RTO Muskoka Fall Meeting, Nov. 5, 2009
Name: _____
Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Payment enclosed \$ _____

For _____ person(s) @ \$ 10.00

*******Money refunded upon arrival.*******
If you pay at the door, no refunds.

Brigadoon Theatre Trip

Thursday October 8, 2009

Morning Pick Up Times

Huntsville (Centennial Center) 7:30 am
Bracebridge (Hammonds) 8:00 am
Gravenhurst (MacDonalds) 8:15 am