

STONY BRIDGES

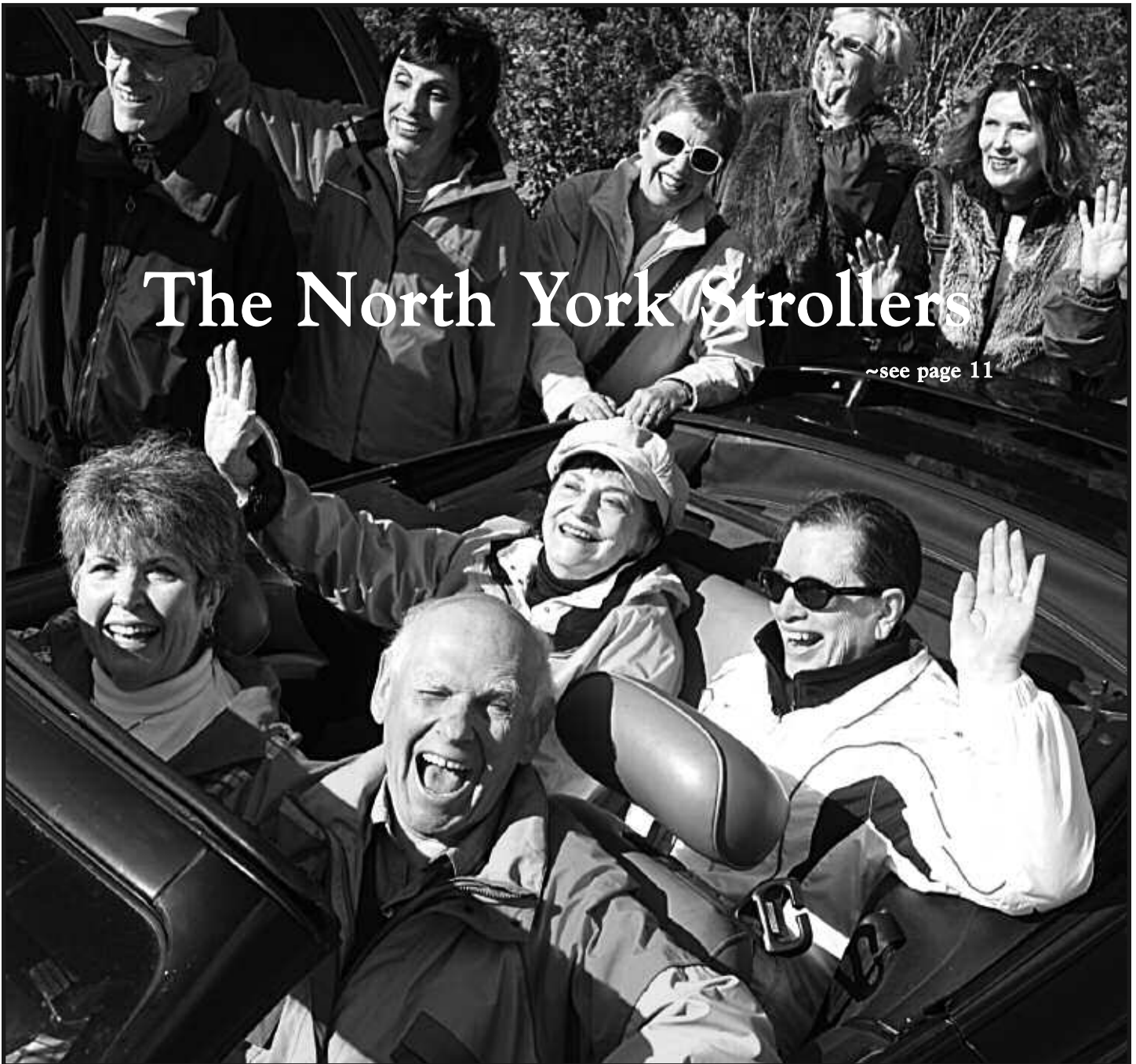
Issue 96

A Newsletter for the members of



North York, District 23

February 2009



The North York Strollers

~see page 11

Photo by Hugh Wesley for RTO/ERO

Past President 905-889-3687
Margaret Schuman alanward
416-924-0267 @interlog.com

Strollers
Joanne Famiglietti
416-483-4968
jcfamiglietti@
hotmail.com

Book Club
Irene Kitchell
416-733-8711
irenekitchell
@hotmail.com

Social
Mildred Frank
416-221-5328
speakingfrankly
@hotmail.com

Trips
Doug Tallon
416-441-4096
dougtrips
@rogers.com

Assistant Treasurer Bernadette Walsh
Jean King 416-449-8780
bernadette_walsh@
sympatico.ca

Newsletter Editor
Rob Fraser
705-752-5697
robertpf
@hotmail.com

Associate Editor
Mary Ellen Lawless
416-223-4969
medlawless@
sympatico.ca

Archivist
Mary Cairo
905-303-7988
mcairo@rogers.com

Webmaster
Dianne Fair
416-229-2696
diannefair
@rogers.com

Political Action
Claire Knapp
416-250-6218
knappc@interlog.com

Goodwill
Maureen Capotosto
905-883-1496
mpcapotosto@
sympatico.ca

Treasurer
Beverly Henricks
416-293-3890
bhenricks
@rogers.com

Membership
Jean Wilson
647-341-6896
jgwilson3
@rogers.com

Recruitment
David Fleming
416-444-4704
david.fleming3
@sympatico.ca

**Pension, Retirement
Concerns &
Photography**
Andrée Nottage
905-472-3784
anotta0172
@rogers.com

**Newsletter
Distribution
& Health Services**
George Meek
416-226-3568
george.meek
@sympatico.ca

Bridge
Alan Ward

Calendar of Events

February

3 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
4 Murder Mystery	11:30 a.m.
5 Strollers	10:00 a.m.
10 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
11 Exec. Mtg.	9:15 a.m.
11 Happy Days	1:15 p.m.
17 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
24 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
25 Book Club	2:00 p.m.

March

3 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
5 Strollers	10:00 a.m.
10 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
11 Exec. Mtg	9:15 a.m.
17 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
24 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
25 Book Club	2:00 p.m.
28 Recruitment	9:00 a.m.
31 Bridge	1:30 p.m.

April

2 Strollers	10:00 a.m.
3 Sunday in the Park	9:30 a.m.
7 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
8 Exec. Meeting	9:15 a.m.
14 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
15 Sound of Music	1:30 p.m.
21 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
22 Have a Java	10:00 a.m.
23 Recruitment	6:00 p.m.
28 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
29 Book Club	2:00 p.m.

May

5 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
7 Spring Luncheon	11:00 a.m.
7 Strollers	10:00 a.m.
12 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
13 Exec. Meeting	9:15 a.m.
13 Anne of Green Gables	2:00 p.m.
19 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
26 Bridge	1:00 p.m.
27 Book Club	2:00 p.m.

June

2 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
4 Golf	10:00 a.m.
4 Strollers	9:45 a.m.
9 AGM	10:00 a.m.
16 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
23 Bridge	1:30 p.m.
30 Bridge	1:30 p.m.

Submissions

STONY Bridges welcomes submissions and letters to the editor from members. Please include name, address and telephone number (for identification only) and some past and present biographical information (for publication). Pictures are also welcome. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters or submissions.

Send them to:

Rob Fraser

116A Hinchberger Bay Dr.,

Callander ON P0H 1H0

Phone: 705-752-5697

email: robertpf@hotmail.com

✕

No Newsletter?

1) If you are a member of RTO/ERO, District 23 North York or any other RTO/ERO District, call George Meek at 416-226-3568.

2) If you are not a member of RTO/ERO, then you will need to join to receive a newsletter. Call RTO/ERO provincial office at 416-962-9463, then call George Meek.

✕

Change of Information

Please use the form found on the back page of this newsletter to notify RTO/ERO and us of your new information.

✕

Deadline

The deadline for materials

for the next issue is

June 15, 2009

Stony Bridges publishes in February, August and November for the Retired Teachers of North York, District 23.

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President's Message

by Michael Sheffe

Happy New Year!

By the time you read this, the shine will have worn off the funny hats, noisemakers, and champagne glasses from the celebrations, but the wish of a Happy New Year is still, I believe, a suitable one.

Our last few months have been very exciting and many events have occurred. I would like to take a few moments to delineate some of these.

Marisa Celenza, Luciana Soncin, Margaret Schuman, and I represented District 23 at the Senate Meetings held last fall. As you may know, the Senators, Observers and guest were treated to a wonderful choir. The grade 5 and 6 students from Northlea P.S. performed harmoniously.

A new Provincial Executive was elected at the fall 2008 RTO-ERO

Senate Meetings. In the photo, the new executive members from left to right are: Ron Poste, Past President; Sue Stephenson, Executive Member; Doug Carter, Executive Member; Marg Cou- ture, First Vice President; Joan Murphy, Second Vice-President; and Brian

Kenny, President. This is the second consecutive term for Brian Kenny and Ron Poste in their positions.

In addition, The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant-Governor

~See PRESIDENT/page 4



Picture submitted by Michael Sheffe

~PRESIDENT/Continued from page 3

of Ontario, spoke eloquently to those in attendance. His Honour congratulated RTO/ERO on its 40th year, commenting on the wonderful legacy left on society by teachers. He recounted how he was inspired by so many teachers to “be the best you can be” and how grateful he is for their wisdom. He concluded his remarks by stating, “In the name of the Queen, I congratulate RTO/ERO and all retired teachers.”

As you are no doubt aware, our



Picture submitted by Michael Sheffe

OTPP pensions have increased by 2.5% as of the beginning of this year. You should have received a notice of your new monthly amount at the end of January.

The Holiday Luncheon held in December at Spirlaes, was attended by over 150 members and their guests. It was a huge success. The venue was outstanding, the food and service was excellent. The entertainers were marvelous. From the comments the executive members received, this luncheon was very well received. Everyone had a great time. Kudos to Mildred Frank for all of her efforts! Also thanks go to Marisa Celenza, David Fleming, and Luciana Soncin for their behind-the-scenes work.

For those members who require

a PSA Test— prostate specific androgen test— which can give an early warning of possible prostate cancer and used to cost about \$30 per test, take note that if this test is recommended by a doctor, it is now free. Men, who have put off having this test done might wish to speak to their doctor / health care professional about having this test, secure in the knowledge that there may be no fees attached to this.

Your Trips Conveners have been and continue to be, very busy. They have delivered on a number of well attended and well received excursions this past fall. Please note there are many excursions planned for you for the next few months. Our Conveners work with third party companies, who have strict deadlines. If your money and confirmations arrive late, it may be impossible to secure tickets for you. In addition, many of our trips have in the past, ‘sold out’ early. To avoid disappointments, complete the confirmation forms and send in your money sooner rather than later to ensure you get a spot.

Some of the upcoming trips which have been planned include: *Murder Mystery* on February 4, *Happy Days* on February 11, *Sunday in the Park with George* on April 3, *Sound of Music* on April 15, *Anne of Green Gables* on May 13, *West Side Story* on September 15.

Our Have a Java social, sponsored by the North York Strollers, will occur on April 22. Our Spring Luncheon will be held on May 7. Our annual Golf Tournament will be held on June 4. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held On June 9.

The Bridge Club continues to meet every (almost) Tuesday at the Willowdale United Church. All interested players are welcome. All skill levels of Bridge players are welcome to attend.

~See PRESIDENT/page 5

E - mail Service

Occasionally, RTO-ERO District 23, North York executive members have items of interest to share with the members. These may arise between published issues of Stony Bridges.

We have an email fan-out service, which we use to inform our members of such events. This is an efficient, expeditious, and economical way to deliver important information to our members. If you would like to be included, please email your name and email address to: msheffe@rogers.com

For the Subject line, please use, “Add me to the District 23 email list.”

If you have been receiving these email notices regularly, you need not do anything. Some members may have received these emails in the past, but no longer are receiving them. In that case, please send me your current email address. Ensure that you set your Preferences to receive e-mail from the above e-mail address. If your e-mail address changes, please inform me.

Your information is kept confidential. I do not distribute it, or sell it to anyone else. Please note that when you receive an email from this service, it does not show your email address, nor anyone else’s email address. Thank you.

Michael Sheffe,
President, RTO-ERO District 23,
North York.

Please look elsewhere in this edition of STONY to find out all of the details for all of the activities listed above. Please remember to heed the deadlines for sending in your tear-off notes and money to the appropriate person (if applicable).

If you are the recipient of a myriad of telemarketing telephones calls soliciting your business and you would like these calls to stop, there is a solution. You can register your telephone numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry. After 31 days from the time your telephone numbers have been registered, telemarketers must stop calling you. All of your telephones can be put on this registry, including land lines and cell phones.

Please note that there are some exceptions to this rule. There are some calls that would still legally be able to be made to your number. For a complete list of which companies can be stopped and which companies/organizations would still be able to call your telephone, as well as answers to the most frequently asked questions, go to: <https://www.donotcall.gov> on your

computer. This is also the website to use to register your telephone(s) on the Do Not Call List.

For those of you who miss marking students' work, take heart. The EQAO is looking for retired teachers who would like to mark the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).

You do not need to be a member of the College of Teachers to apply. You will be paid for your work as a marker, if you have been selected to be a marker. The OSSLT will occur on April 2, 2009 and you will mark the tests shortly thereafter.

If you are interested in this opportunity, go to the following website: www.eqao.com. Once there, go to "Career and Educator Opportunities". Or, you can telephone, 1-888-327-7377.

If you would like to see the photographs of recent events; review the current edition of STONY Bridges; view or place a classified ad; or just surf the website please go to <http://www.rtoerotorontodistricts.org/>

Dianne Fair is our webmaster and if you have any items to place on the website, please contact her.

I would like to congratulate

Rhoda Potter on becoming the 2200th member of RTO-ERO District 23, North York. She will be a guest of the Executive at the Spring Luncheon.

For those of you who know of friends and/or colleagues who are thinking of retiring from teaching, you might want to remind them that two Retirement Planning Workshops (RPW) have been planned. One will be held on the morning of Saturday, March 28 at the Toronto Catholic District School Board offices on Sheppard Avenue. The other RPW will be held at the Toronto District School Board offices in Etobicoke on the evening of Thursday April 23. Flyers have been sent to all North York Schools with all of the details.

If you would like to help run District 23 North York, several openings will be available on your Executive. If you would like to become more involved with District 23, North York and have some time to devote to help out, please contact me, or anyone else on the Executive. We are always on the lookout for members who have the skills, desire, and the time to assist in the operation of the District. ❖

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario

All retired women teachers are invited to join the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario-York North.

We meet regularly for luncheons and other activities. For further information call:

Elsie Watson at 905-201-9516 or

email her at

js.watson@sympatico.ca



Doing the Tennessee Wick Walk at the North York Inter Departmental Education Association (IDEA) Fall Conference 1984 ~ Former North Yorkers, now members of RTO/ERO, District 23, North York: (l to r) Nancy (Tarsey) Marshall, Priscilla Galloway and Marni Angus.

Picture submitted by Priscilla Galloway

BOOK CLUB

The Book Club meets the *last Wednesday* of each month at Edithvale Community Centre (Finch and Edithvale - on south side west of Yonge St.) from 2 to 4 p.m.

Books to be discussed

February 25, 2009
Suite Francaise
Irene Nemirovsky



March 25, 2008
Sir John A. Macdonald
Richard Gwyn

April 29, 2009
Portrait of a Killer
Patricia Cornwell



May 27, 2009
Water for Elephants
Sara Gruen

Contacts:

Irene Kitchell: 416-733-8711
Mary Ellen Lawless: 416-223-4969

North York Strollers

The North York Strollers is a friendly and enthusiastic group who investigate and discover various locations within the city of Toronto. The goals of the walks are: to enjoy the companionship of other nature lovers, to enjoy the natural beauty of our city and the changing seasons, to explore neighbourhoods and to exercise a few muscles in the process.

Walks are planned with a minimal number of steps and grades. The pace of the walk is determined by the needs and desires of the group. A refreshment and washroom break is usually planned approximately one hour into the walk. Walks last approximately two hours, but we have been known to continue a little longer and some often enjoy lunch together at the conclusion of our stroll. We've had four interesting walks this fall, with many new members joining in the fun. New walkers are always welcome. We walk on the *first Thursday* of every month, regardless of the weather - rain or shine. Meeting places are listed for each walk.

Walks begin at 10:00 a.m.

March 5, 2009

Downtown Landmarks

Led by Margaret Schuman &
Joanne Famiglietti

Meet at Union Station Subway (indoors at the clock)

May 7, 2009

Parks of East & West Riverdale

Led by Ernie Walker

Meet at Castlefrank Subway Station

April 2, 2009

Dundas Square & Environs

Led by Margaret Schuman &
Joanne Famiglietti

Meet at Dundas Subway Station
(Eaton Centre exit at Sears street level)

June 4, 2009
Centre Island

Led by Margaret Schuman &
Rose Labate

Meet at Ferry docks at 9:45 a.m.
SHARP!

For more information and/or directions please call

Joanne Famiglietti (416) 483-4968 or
Margaret Schuman at (416) 924-0267.

Recruitment

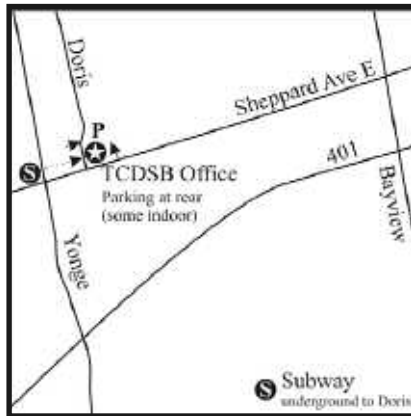
On Thursday, November 13, 2008, the Retirement Planning Workshop Committee of the four RTO/ERO Toronto Districts sponsored our fourth annual workshop at York Mills C.I. in North York. This is a very popular venue for these workshops due to its central location, large room (available to us for the workshop) and adequate parking. Over eighty-five participants were present. All the feedback received was very favourable. Indeed the workshop was one of the most successful we have produced.

Two more workshops are planned in the spring of 2009: March 28 and April 23. Educators, planning on retirement in June 2009, are invited to attend one of these workshops. See below for details

Saturday, March 28, 2009

TCDSB Head Office
80 Sheppard Avenue East
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

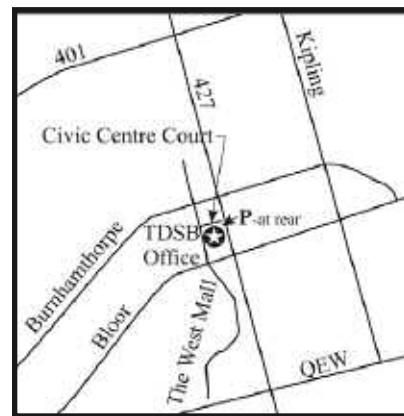
Registration/Refreshments start at 8:30 a.m.



Thursday, April 23, 2009

TDSB Etobicoke Office
1 Civic Centre Court
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Registration/Refreshments start at 5:30 p.m.



Learn about: living a full life, finances and Health Benefits available in retirement (English Only)

Workshop materials provided by the Retired Teachers of Ontario

Registration and Light Refreshments served a half hour before start time

Cost: \$15.00 for pre-registered participants only (\$20.00 for on-site registration)

Note: All attendees/participants must register

To pre-register, please complete and submit the form below and return to:

Tom Caster, 2548 St. Clair Avenue East, Toronto ON M4B 1M1

Email: tacaster@rogers.com Phone: 416-751-9629

Please include your cheque (\$15.00/person) payable to: RTO/ERO Toronto Districts.

Registrations must be submitted two weeks prior to the registration date.

Space limitations may restrict on-site registration.

Note: multiple participants for this workshop may attach a separate sheet to this form.

I/We will attend the RPW at the TCDSB Head Office on Saturday, March 28, 2009

I/We will attend the RPW at the TDSB (Etobicoke) office on Thursday, April 23, 2009

Name(s): _____

E-Mail: _____ School/Location: _____

Phone: _____

Please check the applicable box AEFO ETFO OEFTA OSSTF _____

Health Services and Insurance Report

by George Meek, Convener

Note: You can also access much of this information on the RTO/ERO Members-only section (www.rto-ero.org) of its website in a tabloid format entitled 'Health Matters' produced by the RTO/ERO Health Services Committee following each of its meetings. Much of this information comes from the December edition.



A. Health Plans Matters

1. What's New for 2009?

a) Rates: Monthly premium rates for the Semi-Private Hospital Plan will decrease by 10% and the Extended Health Care and Dental Plans will each increase by 2%. Premium rate changes will be effective February 1, 2009. As premiums are deducted one month in advance of coverage, your January pension/bank deduction will have the new premium rates.

b) Coverage Changes: All coverage changes will be effective January 1, 2009.

i) Semi-Private Hospital Plan

- Semi-Private Hospital room reimbursement level will increase to 95%.
- Convalescent Home Care benefit will increase to \$75/day, to a maximum of 30 days following a 24 hour hospital confinement.
- Convalescent Home Care benefit will increase to \$75/day, and the maximum number of days will increase to three days following non-elective day surgery.

ii) Extended Health Care Plan

- Hearing Aid benefit will increase to \$1,000 overall every three consecutive calendar years.
- Orthotics benefit will change to \$500 every two consecutive calendar years.

- Prescription Drug benefit maximum will increase to \$2,300 per calendar year.

- Vision Care benefit for eyewear (eyeglasses, contacts and laser eye surgery) will increase to \$300 every two consecutive calendar years.

- Vision Care benefit for eye exams will increase to \$75 every two consecutive calendar years.

iii) Dental Plan

- Dental Care benefit will change to reimbursement based on the 2009 Fee Guide for General Practitioners.

Important: The two Booklets are revised and reprinted every three years. The next distribution is scheduled for early 2011. Note: There is a \$10 charge to reissue the January 2008 RTO/ERO Group Benefits Program Booklet. Why not visit the RTO/ERO Member's Only Website- your booklet is available in PDF format - FREE! To help keep track of the changes that have taken place since the last printing (January 2008), please keep the '2009 Update' and 'Going Places' with your booklets. Please refer to the Update for specific monthly premiums. 'Going Places' and the 2009 Update' are also available on the RTO/ERO main website, under *Health & Insurance Plans-What's New?*

2. Travel Smart:

i) Proof of Departure: Proof of departure from your province of residence is required to make a claim under your RTO/ERO travel policy. For more details regarding eligible proof of departure, please refer to Page 12 of your January 2008 RTO/ERO Out-of-Province/Canada booklet.

ii) Day of Departure: Your "day of departure" is the calendar day that you leave your province or territory of residence.

iii) 48 Hours: You *must* contact Mondial Assistance within 48 hours of the emergency, or payments will be limited to \$2,000 per insured person per trip.

iv) Travel Tips: Winter is here, bringing with it the Snowbird season. Before leaving your province of residence, take the time to familiarize yourself with your RTO/ERO Out-of-Province/Canada policy Booklet). Knowing your policy will save you time, frustration and most importantly, allow you to make informed and wise decisions while traveling. Add to this out of province travel checklist to make it your own:

- Do I have my January 2008 Out-of-

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Province/Canada Travel Booklet? It contains my Mondial Assistance (formerly World Access Canada) Emergency Contact Numbers.

- Do I have *both* my RTO/ERO certificate and my Provincial Health Insurance card numbers?
- Do I have Proof of Departure from my province of residence that meets the necessary criteria, as outlined on Page 12 of my January 2008 Out-of-Province/Canada Travel Booklet?
- Do I expect my trip outside of the Province to exceed 62 days? If so, have I called the Service Department (1-877-406-9007) to enroll in the RTO/ERO Supplemental Travel Plan?
- Do I want to take advantage of the free Pre-Trip Assistance that is offered by Mondial Assistance (1-800-249-6556)? Prior to my departure I can call for information regarding travel advisories, required inoculations, visa requirements and more!

v) Canadian Passport Requirements:

Starting June 1, 2009, U.S. law will require Canadians to present a valid passport when entering the USA by either water or land. Canadians are already required to present a valid passport to enter the U.S. by air.

3. RTO/ERO Healthwise:

Inside your Fall 2008 issue of *Renaissance*, is your detachable insert *Health Wise*. It contains important information on the RTO/ERO Group Health Plans and should be filed with your RTO/ERO Health Insurance Plans Booklet.

4. Convenience Services:

As a participant in the RTO/ERO Health Plans, you have access to the following convenience services:

- Drug Card – your pharmacist can bill Johnson Inc. directly for your eligible

prescription drug expenses.

- Electronic Dental Claims – your dental office can send your claim to Johnson Inc. electronically.

The settlement of your account with your dentist remains your responsibility.

- Direct Deposit – claim payments can be deposited directly to your bank account.

• Electronic Notification of Claims Payment – you can receive, by e-mail, a notification that your claim has been paid and the deposit amount, as well as an explanation of benefits.

- Members Only Website – using your user name and password, you can access your real-time information, from the comfort of your home computer – day or night.

• Benefit Statement & Tax Letters – annually, you will receive statements summarizing your coverage, premiums and claims amounts for the prior calendar year, which you may be eligible to use to claim medical expenses under your Income Tax. (2009 Update)

Finally, If you know teachers who are close to retiring, tell them about RTO/ERO and to consider joining us and our excellent health plans. If they require more information they can contact RTO/ERO or me (George

Meek at 416- 226-3568 or george.meek@sympatico.ca).

Note: The most accurate information about our Health Plans is found on the RTOERO website: www.rto-ero.org and in the two RTO/ERO Health Plan Booklets.

B. Health Matters

1. Eye Health – Cataracts: By the age of 80, more than 50% of the population will have a cataract (a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision) or have had cataract surgery. The lens lies behind the iris and the pupil. It focuses light onto the retina at the back of the eye, where an image is recorded. The lens also adjusts the eye's focus, letting us see things clearly both up close and far away. The lens is made of mostly water and protein, and as we age, some of the protein may clump together and start to cloud a small area of the lens. This is a cataract. Over time, the cataract may grow larger and cloud more of the lens, making it harder to see.

Wearing sunglasses and a hat

~See Health/page 10



At the Holiday Luncheon, President Michael Sheffe (r) greets Rhoda Potter who is District 23 member #2200.

Picture by Andrée Nottage

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with a brim to block ultraviolet sunlight may help to delay cataract. If you smoke, stop. Researchers also believe good nutrition can help reduce the risk of age-related cataract. They recommend eating green leafy vegetables, fruit, and other foods with antioxidants. The symptoms of early cataract(s) may be improved with new eyeglasses, brighter lighting, anti-glare sunglasses, or magnifying lenses. If these measures do not help, surgery is the only effective treatment. Surgery involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing it with an artificial lens. A cataract needs to be removed only when vision loss interferes with your everyday activities, such as driving or reading. You and your eye care professional can make this decision together. Once you understand the benefits, risks and cost of surgery, you can make an informed decision about whether cataract surgery is right for you. In most cases, delaying cataract surgery will not cause long-term dam-

age to your eye or make the surgery more difficult. You do not have to rush into surgery. Sometimes a cataract should be removed even if it does not cause problems with your vision. For example, a cataract should be removed if it prevents examination or treatment of another eye problem, such as age-related macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy. If your eye care professional finds a cataract, you may not need cataract surgery for several years. In fact, you might never need cataract surgery. If you are age 60 or older, you should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years to check for signs of cataracts, age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and other vision disorders. Early treatment for many eye diseases may save your sight.

Source: US National Institute of Health – National Eye Institute

2. Spotlight on Listeria: Listeria monocytogenes (commonly known as listeria) is a bacterium that is widespread in the environment. It is found in soil,

vegetation, water, sewage and the feces of animals and humans. Listeria can cause Listeriosis, a serious but rare illness that in certain cases can lead to brain infection and even death. The elderly, newborns, pregnant women and those who have a weakened immune system are most susceptible to developing Listeriosis.

Causes: Listeriosis is caused by eating food contaminated with Listeria bacteria. Listeria can be found in unpasteurized (raw) dairy products, raw vegetables and uncooked meats. Unlike most other harmful bacteria, Listeria will grow on foods stored in a refrigerator. Foods that are contaminated with Listeria look, smell, and taste normal. Listeria can be killed by proper cooking procedures.

i) Symptoms: Symptoms may start suddenly and include: vomiting, nausea, cramps diarrhea, severe headache, constipation or fever. Some infections become severe and develop experience only mild flu-like symptoms.

ii) Testing: A blood or spinal fluid test will determine if you have Listeriosis. Contact your health-care provider if you have symptoms, especially severe symptoms.

iii) Treatment: Listeriosis is treated with antibiotics. Depending on the form of the disease, treatment may take up to six weeks or more. Antibiotics given to pregnant women with Listeriosis can often reduce the risk of infection in the newborn or unborn child. There is no vaccine to prevent Listeriosis.

iv) What should you do? Throw out food that has been recalled because of Listeria contamination. See the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) for the most current list of food



Picture by Andrée Nottage

Guests at the Holiday Luncheon: Standing from left to right: Rhoda Potter, Frances Berman, Norinne Wilson, Joanne Weinsten. Seated: Fonny Tran, Joanne Callander

~See Health/page 11

~Health continued from page 10

recalls. If you have eaten a contaminated product and you become ill with fever or serious illness, contact your health care provider and mention your possible exposure.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

C. Drug Information Update

1. Ontario Adult Insulin Pump Program:

Each year, over 1,300 adults with type 1 diabetes will now receive free insulin pumps under the Ontario Adult Insulin Pump Program. The provincial government will pay 100% of the \$6,300 cost for an insulin pump, as well as provide an annual grant of \$2,400 to help pay for supplies. Applications for insulin pumps and supplies can be made through registered diabetes education centers throughout Ontario.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

2. Zostavax®:

Health Canada has approved Zostavax® for the prevention of shingles in individuals 60 years of age or older. Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. believes that the vaccine should be available through Canadian physicians and pharmacies sometime in 2009. Please contact your Claims Department for any questions regarding reimbursement eligibility under your RTO/ERO Extended Health Care Plan.

Source: Health Canada, Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. ❖



Photograph by Andrée Nottage

Holiday Lunch prize winners: L. Drecun, B. Isbister, P. Hasler, R. Potter, M. Sarti

You could be a Roots of Empathy Instructor!

Roots of Empathy is a program for elementary school children. The program's aim is to increase empathy – the ability to understand another person's feelings. The heart of the program is a parent and infant who visit the classroom once a month for the school year. Children learn to care and respect each other, resulting in less bullying and aggression.

As the Roots of Empathy Instructor you:

- coach the children to observe the baby's development, celebrate milestones, interact with the baby and learn about an infant's needs.
- visit the classroom before and after each baby visit to prepare and reinforce teachings, using a specialized curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for each of four age ranges—Kindergarten (JK/SK), Primary (Grades 1-3), Junior (Grades 4-6), Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8).
- commit to four days of mandatory training, 27 classroom visits from October to June, preparation of lesson materials and travel time to a local community school.
- are comfortable presenting to children in a classroom setting.

Are you interested in volunteering your time in a local school?

Would you like to partner with a baby and a parent to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy?

For more information, please contact Penny Dickie at 416 849-4690 x25, pdickie@rootsofempathy.org or visit www.rootsofempathy.org

The Pilgrimage to Neil Young...

Mining for the Heart of Art

by Lynda Pogue

How does the musical art world relate to the visual art world?

It can be galvanizing to reflect upon how one artistic journey parallels and influences another. This article will explore how Neil Young's wisdom bridges these two artistic universes. It's about breaking rules. It's about navigating your own currents. It's about mining and searching for your heart of gold. All the italics are Neil Young's words.

*I want to live,
I want to give
I've been a miner
for a heart of gold.
It's these expressions
I never give
That keep me searching
for a heart of gold
I've been in my mind,
it's such a fine line
That keeps me searching
for a heart of gold*

Neil Young was born in Toronto, Canada 62 years ago and has lived in America for most of his life. He's famous for continually evolving... his hauntingly authentic voice is heard as a singer/songwriter/musician/filmmaker. He's relentless in pushing himself to discover new ways to develop and utilize his raw talents. As with many artists he's driven, idiosyncratic, focused, and defiant when it comes to standing up for what he believes. *A dreamer of pictures / I run in the night.*

Last year, Mark Kermode (an interviewer from the BBC) flew from London to New York to interview Mr. Young. He surprised himself because he



Eternal, by Lynda Pogue. This painting has gold mica flowing through the vein in the middle. *My heart of gold.*

had never been a fan of the legendary star... and that all changed. As soon as he listened to and watched Jonathan Demme's concert movie "Heart of Gold" Kermode said, "It was like a light went on in my head. I could hear this beautiful melancholic music and I burst into tears. I was converted." Kermode gets full points for being open enough to alter his opinion. He grew.

Your own personal adulation of or conversion to Neil Young's music might be revealed in the emotional train wreck you'll experience if you click on YouTube: Neil Young Interview-BBC2 and then continue your journey as you move through the video clips of his early music. You'll notice how profoundly and deeply he feels and reacts to everything around him. He becomes part of the surrounding environment as he responds like a tuning fork. He listens with his penetrating eyes.

It's both Kermode's and Young's

willingness to break through straight line thinking that those of us involved with art/ideas must grasp. It's worrisome when invisible blinders go on and reveal that an artist (or anyone else) has such a narrow focus that either they cannot embrace a new way of looking at something old... or literally hide his or her head inside an old dream. How "down" is that? Where's the growth? Where's the spark of revelation?

*He hides his head
inside a dream
Someone should call him
and see if he can come out.
Try to lose
the down that he's found.*

The famous/infamous Dennis Hopper is Neil's friend and one of his biggest fans. He says that every time Neil Young goes on the stage "It's like watching Picasso doing a series of paintings." This statement from the enigmatic Hopper is brilliant and this idea of actually seeing paintings/colors/textures/images when you hear Young's music is mind-blowing. Consider the converse... you can hear a painting. This concept sends collective shivers up the spine of artists. What a glorious way to view/experience art... by listening to it. There's probably a piece of art somewhere close to you right now. Can you hear it?

*The painter stood
Before her work
She looked around every where
She saw the pictures*

~See YOUNG/page 13

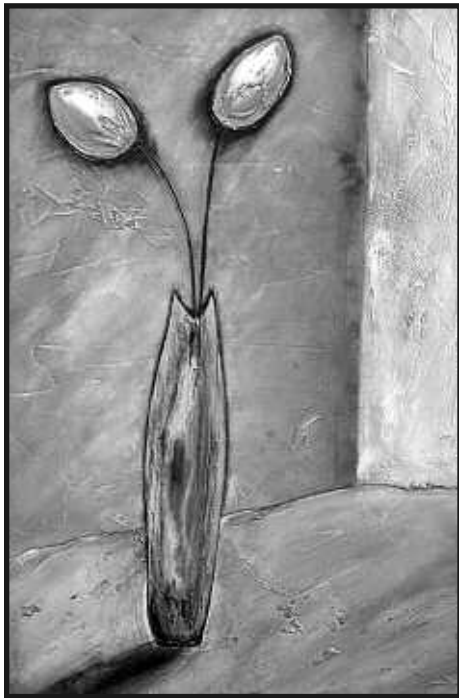
~YOUNG/continued from page 12

and she painted them
She picked the colors from the air

Green to green
Red to red
Yellow to yellow
In the light
Black to black
When the evening comes
Blue to blue
In the night

It's a long road
Behind me
It's a long road
Ahead

In Toronto, Jana Lynn White interviewed Young while he was on his CSNY2K Tour (2000). During their conversation Neil gave the viewers another astonishing insight that has the



“Trusting” by Lynda Pogue. Now, when I see how I picked the colors from the air I can actually hear this painting and the story about how much these two have come to trust each other.

potential to deeply affect artists. (Again... this applies to anyone who's paying attention.). There was a discussion about the plethora of songs that Neil had recently written.

There were way too many songs about the same thing... it got overweight... and wasn't able to reach it's potential because it was so heavy...so I gave some away... created some space... it was one of the most beautiful Zen things that ever happened... [The songs] now have a lightness and a delicacy that had been drowned out by the others...old songs suddenly have new meaning.

This is delicious advice. The purity of this idea is poetry. Giving things away to simply create more space. More space in your mind. More space in your studio. More space for inventory. More space on your website. Clean air. More space. For an artist this often equates with donating a piece of art to an institution (possibly for fundraising purposes) and consequently gets his/her name out there. However the *Zen thing* doesn't apply to this notion. While donating art is an important thing for artists to periodically do for others, it's not the same as unreservedly giving something away with the only payback being the freeing of space. *I've got the love art blues/ Don't know which one to choose.* The pieces of art with the most quality can rise to the surface because you can see them clearly again. Unobstructed. *Old songs suddenly have new meaning.*

Let's consider one more concept that Mr. Young explored with Ms. White that reveals another parallel between the musical and visual arts worlds.

The best ones come out fast because it's a natural thing and I keep getting out of the way of it... I don't want to control it for my own gain or do some manipulative thing to it. I try not to judge it but let it just come through...I can't really ex-

plain... it's hard to detail poetry and explain why... it's got an individual thing going and it's not trying to be anything other than what it's doing.

There are times when an artist needs a long gestation period in order for a piece to be born. A labor of love. And, there are those blissful times when the art materials seem to develop into an artwork at the speed of light. If this hasn't happened to you for a while, then you might consider forcing the issue. Don't allow yourself the time to ponder...just let the ideas screech out... laying rubber on the highway.



‘Caramel Haze’, by Lynda Pogue. I'm mad about this painting because the energy it took to create it flowed at such a fast-fast pace. I keep getting out of the way of it.

Try not to judge it but let it just come through.

Hundreds of thousands of people have made the pilgrimage to Neil Young for his music or his films and know they can count on one thing: he has always always always stayed true to himself ... always. *We have to do linear things that have nothing to do with music... so when I go back to it it's like jumping in cool water.*

~See YOUNG/page 14

~YOUNG/continued from page 14

Researching Neil Young has renewed my personal commitment to the integrity of my own work. It's good to be around someone with screamingly passionate beliefs. ❖

The lyrics for this article were quoted from: Heart of Gold, Love Art Blues, Only Love Can Break Your Heart, and, The Painter. You may be interested in learning more about this icon called Neil Young by visiting www.neilyoung.com or any of the 21 million other sites that refer to him.

Lynda Pogue is a Canadian artist who lives near Toronto, Ontario. She is represented by Agora Gallery in New York and Covent Garden Fine Art Gallery in Canada and she invites you to visit her website at lyndapogue.com.

War....Again

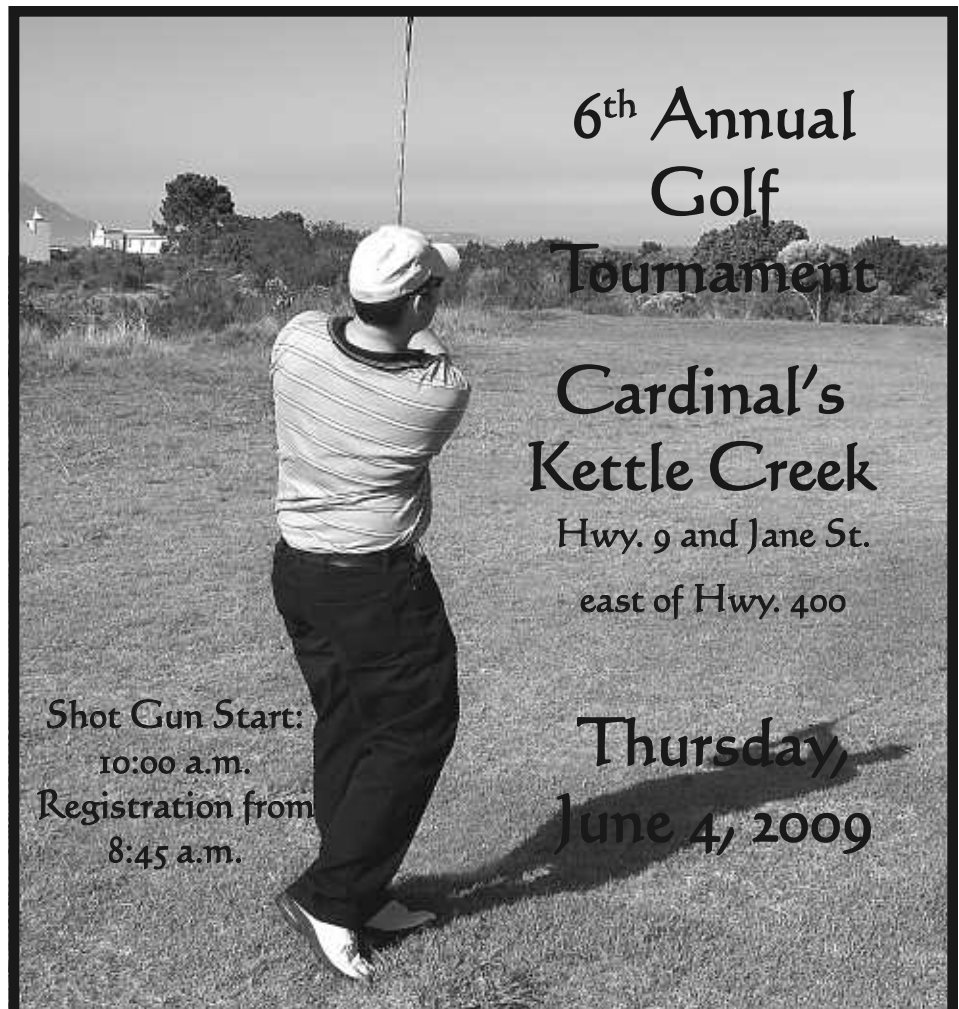
Poisoned winds over the flowers
count the years

With each blow
the fist'd callous thickens
drawing cosmic tears

Dry furrowed fields
watered with geysers of our blood
send up slow bones

It will be our harvest too
Mangled skeletons
with children's rattle bones
and no tears to wash away the stains

Elka Enola



6th Annual Golf Tournament

Cardinal's Kettle Creek

Hwy. 9 and Jane St.
east of Hwy. 400

Shot Gun Start:
10:00 a.m.
Registration from
8:45 a.m.

Thursday,
June 4, 2009

\$45 per Golfer

Barbecue chicken or vegetable lunch.
Prizes

Profits from the day will support the work of our
'Service to Others' project.
Golf carts are available for \$12 per golfer; reserve yours
with your registration.
Register as individual, partner or team.

Questions to Helen: 416-485-0131
or Darlene: 416-221-7242

~ See page 35 for registration form

In Memoriam

By Jean Wilson, Convener

We regret to inform you that some of our members have passed away. Our condolences go to family and friends, and we hope they will find comfort in fond memories of days gone by. The following information is taken from RTO/ERO, Provincial Office in monthly membership updates from October 2008 through to December, 2008. I apologize for any errors or omissions.

James W. Barnard , William A. Bush, William D. Crew, Murray Holmes, Betty Naftolin, Helen Dunbar,
Winnifred D. Farmer, Christina Ingram, Elsie J. Leitch, Violet I. Anderson, Ethel L. Butcher, Alan P. Longfield,
Dorothea H. McDonald, Doris A. Pritchard

Membership Report

*From January, 2008
by Jean Wilson*

As of September 30, 2008, we are pleased to report that District 23, North York has 2190 members. Your executive welcomes all new members who have joined in October, November and December 2008. The following information was taken from RTO/ERO, Provincial Office in monthly membership updates. I apologize for any errors or omissions. Every effort has been made to contact all new members and welcome them to District 23, North York. Newsletters are sent to all new members shortly after our monthly updates have been received.

October 2008

A. Earl Allen, Erika Allen, Shirley R. Bush, Margaret C. Crew, Susan Ladoucer, Alexander Low,
Mary Martin, Judy Singerman, Norine Wilson

November 2008

Sandra Arbitman, Sharon Basman, Ted Borovoy, Carole I. Clark, Karen L. Falconer, William Mowat,
Rhoda Potter, Louis Rocha, Fonny Tran

December 2008

Eugene Kraus, Thomas G. Macey, Jeffrey Shifrin



7994 Yonge Street
Thornhill ON

\$30

Thornhill Golf and Country Club

Spring Luncheon Thursday May 7, 2009

Cut-Off Date: Friday, May 1, 2009

Cocktails: 11:00 a.m.

Lunch: 12 noon

Menu:

✓ rolls with butter

✓ ginger carrot soup with dollop of creme fraiche

*✓ choice of pork tenderloin with apple/cranberry compote and caramelized onions
or roasted cod loin with a roasted tomato, caper/black olive chutney
both are served with roasted fingerling potatoes and market fresh vegetables*

✓ blood orange sabayon

✓ coffee and tea

Note: Please advise Mildred of any dietary requirements.

*Spring Luncheon
Thursday, May 7, 2009
Cut-off Date: Friday, May 1, 2009*

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Guest(s): _____

_____ tickets @ \$30 = _____ Food Choice: Pork _____ Cod _____

*Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to:
Mildred Frank, 705-505 Cummer Ave., Toronto ON M2K 2L8 (416-221-5328)*

7994 Yonge Street
Thornhill ON

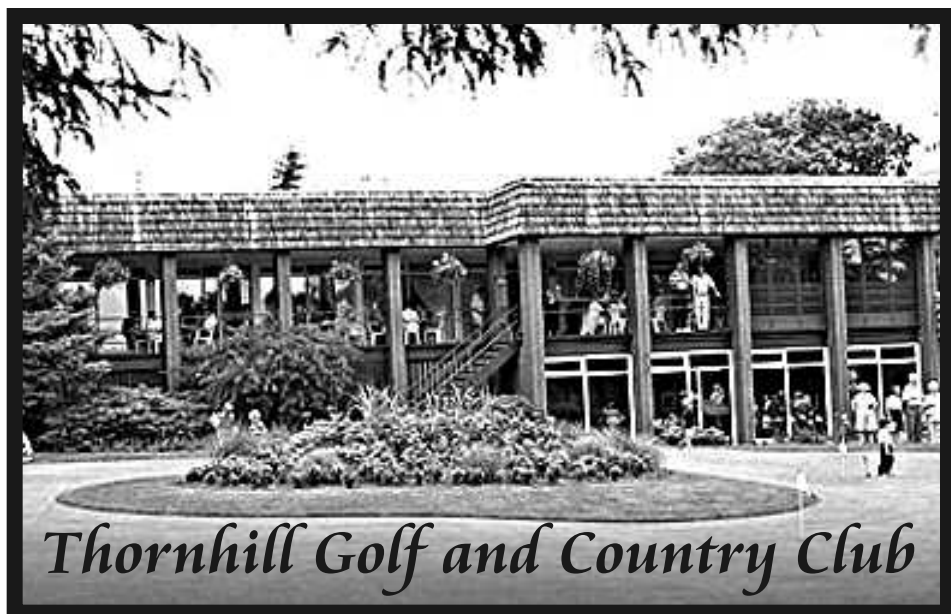
\$13

(subsidized cost)

Actual cost of the event - \$25

Note: If you were born in 1939,
it's a free lunch.

10:00 a.m.



Annual General Meeting and Lunch Tuesday, June 9, 2009

Cut-Off Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Menu:

✓ rolls with butter

✓ roasted vegetable gazpacho soup with garnish

✓ ricotto tortellini topped with sliced chicken finished in a pancetta rose sauce with mixed vegetables

✓ chocolate duo - chocolate mousse espresso with rocky road square

✓ coffee and tea

Note: Please advise Mildred of any dietary requirements.

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, June 9, 2009
Cut-off Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Guest(s): _____

_____ tickets @ \$13 = _____ Free tickets _____ (Born in 1939)

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to:
Mildred Frank, 705-505 Cummer Ave., Toronto ON M2K 2L8 (416-221-5328)

Travelers Guiding Travelers

by Dianne Fair

We are starting a new feature on the website and are hoping you will join the team. Many of our members love to travel and some are keen to plan trips on their own. Last fall I had the opportunity to travel to Barcelona. When organizing my trip I was able to contact another District 23 member who is now living in Barcelona.

Don Stewart and his wife Lynda willingly shared their enthusiasm for Barcelona, and provided a lot of useful tips for making my trip a memorable one. They have volunteered to be our first trip advisors. In Don's words,

"Lynda and I would be willing to help you get acquainted with our favorite city in the world. Just send us an e mail and we will try to help you in any way we can."

If you have a favourite travel spot, and would be willing to act as an advisor to fellow District 23 travelers, please send your e-mail address to me. diannefair@rogers.com Please include a brief outline of the travel destination(s) you are willing to share information on. This information will appear on the website under a new heading **TRAVEL.** ❖

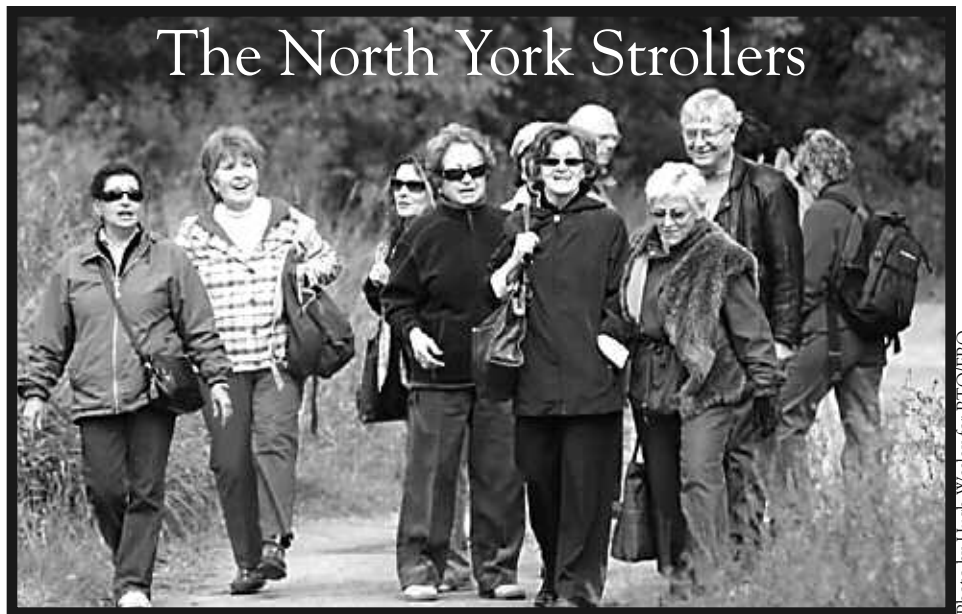


Photo by Hugh Wesley for RTO/ERO



Dreamstime.com

Have
A
Java
On Us!

Wednesday, April 22, 2009
10:00 a.m.
Timothy's
Bayview Village Mall
Bayview & Sheppard

Come, enjoy meeting and connecting with fellow RTO/ERO members and enjoy a COFFEE compliments of District 23, North York.

You might also like to join us at 9:30 a.m. to walk a few laps in the mall. One lap equals approximately one km.

For further information please contact:
Margaret Schuman ~ 416-924-0267
m.p.schuman@sympatico.ca

Stratford



Paul Nolan as Tony and
Chilina Kennedy as Maria

Two rival gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, wage a turf war in the mean streets of New York City. But when Tony, best friend of Jets leader Riff, falls in love with Maria, the sister of Sharks leader Bernardo, simmering tensions escalate toward a shocking finale. With its explosive dance numbers and unforgettable score, this modern-day retelling of Romeo and Juliet changed the face of the American musical.

West Side Story

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Cut-Off Date: June 26, 2009

\$87

9:30 a.m. Depart Willowdale
United by bus.

11:30 a.m. Lunch at Demetre's
*Choice of Roast Beef
or Fillet of Sole or
Breast of Chicken*

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Performance at the
Stratford Festival
Theatre.

7:00 p.m. (approx) Arrive at Willowdale
United

~See page 35 for registration form

Blessed City

Terry G. Harris

I had not envisaged the top
of the world so close to
the ground.

I am standing on the roof
of a twenty-floor condo building,
gazing towards the south.
The night falls, exposing
the city's veins and pores
under my microscopic eyes.
Sparks of light sink and rise,
revealing a striking view
of a downtown metropolis
with its ocean of light
line that lies
below the sleeping sky.
A glorious display!

I linger in that site in silence
until the sun awakens
glittering over the earth
and dawn reveals itself.
The usual motion and clamour
replace the lull
in the realm of the mystique
that portrays the city
while it sleeps.

I turn scanning my
surroundings—
the reading light still on
beside my bed.
I shall always remember
the power
of that intense encounter with
my nocturnal Toronto.

Web Alert

by Dianne Fair



What's New

The District 23 Homepage Slideshow is featuring the Champagne Pour. Check out new photos added since spring.

Stony On-Line

To date, 123 members have opted to receive their STONY Bridges on-line. You can get yours on-line too. See details below.

Remember

District 23 information can be found on our website: <http://www.rtoerotorontodistricts.org>

Log on to view: Activities, Classifieds, Member Services, Newsletters, Photos,

Executive Members and more.

Classifieds! Classifieds!

All members are able to submit ads to the Classifieds section on the website. You might have a service to provide or need support with a project, a property to rent or an event of interest to members. Send your ad to me at the address below. Classifieds can also be placed into STONY Bridges. Send to robertpf@hotmail.com.

Web Links

I want to remind you that there are numerous links on the District 23 website:

OTPP, TRAVEL, HEALTH to name a few, and a MEMBERS ONLY section that requires registration before access is given. CONSTITUTION, FACT SHEETS, SENATE, TAX TIPS and GOVERNANCE are just a few of the topics you will find in the Members Only section of the website. Have your RTO/ERO membership number handy to register.

Contact diannefair@rogers.com
with questions

Get Your Stony Bridges "On-line"

Currently we send a copy of Stony Bridges in February, June and November to each of our 2100+ members by mail. This costs about \$1.50 per copy for printing and mailing.

Members in many organizations have chosen to receive such newsletters 'on-line' rather than in hard copy **thus saving costs to their organization while making a real contribution towards the environmentally-friendly program of 'reducing and recycling'.**

For members like you who are on the Internet, we can offer this opportunity to you. This is the way it works:

- the program would begin for you with the August 2009 Stony Bridges;
- when this and future Stony Bridges have been posted, you will receive a prompt e-mail to that affect including

a direct link to www.rtoerotorontodistricts.org where it is posted;

• go to **North York-District 23** and then go to **Newsletter** (at the top). A user-friendly copy **in blue** of the current Stony appears. Copies of forms or coupons are made easy to print. If you wish to print certain parts of the Stony, use the 'cut, paste, and print' process; if you wish to see Stony as it was printed and sent as hard copy to members then go to **(Download the PDF Version here)** which is just under the title **Stony Bridges**. If you wish to print certain parts of the Stony, use the 'cut, paste and print' process; and,

• to implement this option, please consult the 'Information Required' on page 35 and send it to Dianne Fair (our Webmaster) by e-mail at diannefair@rogers.com. Dianne will be work-

ing with George Meek, (Newsletter Distribution Convener) in administering this program.

We hope you will try this process in the interests of the environment and saving costs to the District (which can be used elsewhere in the interests of the members). The June 2008 Stony is already posted on our website as indicated above in both formats. Please go there and see how user-friendly it really is.

Note: Previous editions of Stony for the current year are also available 'on-line'.

If after you have tried Stony 'on-line' and find it does not meet your needs, please let Dianne know by e-mail and you will begin to receive your Stony in hard copy by mail starting with the next edition.

If you wish to register for Stony On-Line, see page 35

Going Nuclear

The Ontario Government is apparently having a hard time getting nuclear companies to agree to take responsibility for cost overruns and delays on its proposed new nuclear projects. That's not surprising given that the nuclear industry has not been able to bring a project in on-time or on-budget in Ontario in 25 years. But it is bad news for Ontario taxpayers and ratepayers, who are already on the hook for an \$18 billion nuclear debt. If the Ontario Government is serious about not repeating the mistakes of the past, it must pass a Nuclear Cost Responsi-

bility Act that makes it illegal for nuclear power companies to pass their capital cost overruns onto electricity consumers or taxpayers.

The Ontario Government intends to sign contracts for two new nuclear reactors this spring -- at a cost of \$26 billion. We can't let this happen.

Nuclear energy is the costliest and riskiest way to keep the lights on in Ontario.

Clean green renewable energy and greater efficiency can meet all our electricity needs. Dr. David Suzuki and Margaret Atwood are among the more

than 700 people who have signed our petition calling for a Nuclear Cost Responsibility Act. We need hundreds of more signatures to show Energy and Infrastructure Minister George Smitherman that Ontarians will not accept another sweetheart deal for nuclear projects of dubious value.

Please sign the petition, get your friends and family to sign and learn about a better approach to meeting Ontario's energy needs at

www.OntariosGreenFuture.ca.

Bridge Convener Position Available



We are looking for someone who is interested in taking over the position of bridge convener or becoming an assistant convener. The position would entail co-ordinating the activities with respect to the set-up of the room which is used each Tuesday at Willowdale United Church; ensuring all of the necessary items are available for the bridge players; collecting a small fee from players; and other administrative duties which would need to be attended to so the afternoons would each be a success.

Alan Ward, our current convener, is willing to work with you to, 'show you the ropes'.

If you would like to fill the position of the Bridge Convener, please contact Michael Sheffe, President of District 23.

Who Says, “You Can’t Go Home Again”?

or “Return of the Native”, Like *Third Generation* (with apologies to the Thomas’ ~ Wolfe and Hardy)
by Rocky Sankoff

Here’s the way the story should be told. While in the land of my forefathers, the bus trip went through Dvinsk and near Strope. At our lunch stop I took a cab to an old house my grandfather had described to me. Following his instructions I found the place, virtually untouched by the “fascist German Nazi evildoers” (direct quote from Minsk war memorial). It was deserted, waiting for its original owners to reclaim it (another true fact, many houses in Berlin and other area are empty, waiting for the original owners to return and lay claim to their property). I went to the backyard as instructed by Grandpa Jake, found an old rusty shovel just where it was supposed to be, paced off ten steps north from the fifth wood slat on the northern wall, three paces east, found the lichen-covered rock under what was left of a gnarled willow, dug down two feet, found a rusting old samovar, and on opening it found the lost jewels of the last Russian Romanov Tsar...worth billions of rubles or millions of dollars. What you say? Never heard of the old Tsar’s jewels? Of course not, they were lost and no one knew they even existed – except for my grandpa and a few select others who helped hide them. Unfortunately being “in the know” was not the best possible situation in a “leave no witnesses” scenario and they were poisoned by the same loving Tsar at the banquet following the secreting of the jewels. Luckily my grandpa had a cast iron stomach and being smarter than the average Russian, stole a horse while everyone was in a drunken stupor and escaped all the way to Canada. That’s

the way the story should read, but unfortunately it doesn’t. No jewels, no rubles, no dollars.

Otherwise we had an exciting trip. Spent time in Copenhagen with a trip to the Danish Resistance Museum, the Little Mermaid, and Tivoli Gardens, a rather over rated amusement park – especially at my age when you can’t go on the roller coaster because you’re over sixty-five and the other rides (read kiddy rides) are off limits because you’re too tall. Also ate a Christmas dinner (the menu was rather forgettable) at the beginning of June in a rather unChristmasy setting in a local restaurant. Some people will do anything to bilk the tourists out of several kroner.

In Stockholm we saw the 382 year old Vasa in its dimly lit museum, the direct cause of my scarred shins due to walking into railings and other oddly placed dangerous objects. The City Hall, where one day I shall claim the Nobel Prize which rightly belongs to me, is a handsome building located in a pretty setting alongside the lake. We went to the Ice Bar and were given an expensive shot of Vodka in an ice tumbler. The tumblers we tried to take home as souvenirs didn’t quite make it. I wonder what my friends will think of their gifts...a plastic container of water labeled “Authentic Ice Tumbler from Stockholm Ice Bar”.

Then a ferry ride to Helsinki with many foreigners (oops, I forgot, I was the foreigner) and a tour around the environs of the Finnish capital. Among the highlights were the church built into bedrock (what a saving on

the cost of drywall) and the Sibelius Monument made of dozens of metal pipes with enough holes in the pipes to make a slab of Swiss cheese look anaemic.

Off to Saint Petersburg (two and a half hours at the border complete with custom’s officials taking a cigarette break in the middle of processing us) with a stop for lunch at Vyborg. At the border, trucks are lined up for kilometres along what passed for a highway and we were told it sometimes takes a week or more for them to be processed and cross the border. I wonder what the produce tastes like after three weeks on the side of a Russian road.

Then three days in an amazing city, Saint Petersburg nee Leningrad nee Saint Petersburg.. Saw the Hermitage, a nice building which beats the Louvre hands down, but the exhibits are on a par with the great galleries of Europe. There are many nice paintings including some stolen or taken from the Germans. The guide told us that they will return the pictures to Germany when the Germans return ALL the stuff the Germans stole. Many former churches (St. Isaac’s) turned into museums by Lenin and Stalin and cronies, a plethora of palaces including the Yusupov where Rasputin was terminated, Peterhof, and Catherine’s Palace. Interesting Russian philosophy, or reality here, re labour costs which were virtually \$0 (any currency).. Germans destroyed the Palace in the 1940’s. Russians took the prisoners of

~See HOME/page 23



©Dreamstime.com

war and said, “You broke it. Now fix it. Then you can go home.” The latter two had magnificent gardens, pools, statues, and fountains. We saw Swan Lake at the Alexandrinsky Theatre. They have a curtain call for all but the principals after the second act. Some thought that was a strange way for the ballet to end so stood up and tried to leave, but were sent back to their seats by the ushers as there was a third act with a curtain call just for the principals. We also had an enjoyable evening of Russian folklore dancing (Cossacks?) and the Russian (Red?) army choir.

On the way to Moscow we stopped at Velikiy Novgorod (Great New City) to see their Kremlin and do a short city tour.

In Moscow we saw more palaces, the Kremlin, Red Square, ex-churches now museums including St Basil’s, and the GUM store which is much larger and nicer than any mall we have seen in the New World. There are plenty of war memorials everywhere in

Russia. Some cities or towns have monuments of rock or large single or multi-figured statues; others have tanks, artillery pieces, or airplanes. Moscow has a large anchor and chain marking the furthest German advance in WW II. In Victory Park there is a very large Holocaust Memorial. Saw the battle of Borodino cyclorama. Went to the Moscow Circus which had a dearth of clowns and no trapeze (they were on the ferry between Helsinki and Stockholm and we watched them there). We went on the Metro which has magnificent decorated stations (using mosaics, stained glass, chandeliers, and statues) and carries 7.5 million passengers a day with trains every 50 seconds or so. The Russian cities are very clean with no visible signs of panhandlers or homeless people. An interesting architectural marvel featured an apartment building where all floors have balconies. Tiny oversight, top floor has no apartments on it. Also someone forgot to put in doors to the balcony area, so the only access to the balcony is through a window, also off-centre. No wonder the Russians produce so many world class gymnasts.

Next stop was Smolensk. We enjoyed a city tour. We were fortunate enough to be at a location where speeches were being given to welcome participants, in their national costumes, to an “international” (all former eastern block countries) art festival complete with bread and salt. It was the real thing as we were the only non-Smolenskians (apart from performers and families) there. We visited the war memorials, eternal flames, and the obligatory monument to General Mikhail Kutuzov, victor over Napoleon and his ‘army of 200 languages’.

Then to Minsk in Belarus with the mandatory two hour border stop while customers and officials dilly dally their way around while processing the lot of us. Saw the memorial to Russian (Belarus was then part of the USSR) Afghanistan losses and large Holocaust

Memorial which is situated at a pit where “Nazi evildoers” murdered 5,000 people.

Amazing how so many Russian buildings and cities (and Warsaw) have been reconstructed with great detail back to pre 1940 structures using original plans, sketches, photos, and drawings, plus the added stark communist brutalistic architecture, and, some new construction, too, a mixture of 1930s and earlier plus modern plus communist. The cities are extremely clean, more so than any others I have been to, although Moscow is rife with billboards and advertising. Many cities have large monuments declaring them to be “Hero Cities of the Great Patriotic War” e.g. Moscow, Minsk, Smolensk, Leningrad (St Petersburg), Stalingrad (Volgograd) Odessa, Sevastopol, Kerch, Tula, Murmansk, Novorosslysk, and Kiev. Brest was designated a Hero-Fortress. These cities were awarded the Order of Lenin and Gold Star Medal.

On the way to Warsaw we spent over three hours at the Belarus-Poland border. We also got a flat tire on the bus and stood around in the middle of a Belarussian forest for an hour and a quarter while the tire was changed. Possibly due to the narrow and bumpy roads which left a lot to be desired with their numerous potholes of varying sizes and shapes.

Warsaw was completely rebuilt as to original plans. Toured the former ghetto with its memorials, the wall, the only two buildings left standing in the ghetto after the war, the Synagogue, and other walls in Warsaw complete with bullet holes and plaques where partisans were executed.

Legends abounded throughout the trip e.g. Poznan’s Town Hall clock has butting goats, statues of mythological heroes, and a woman carrying two wine casks on a pole across her shoulders.

~See HOME/page 24

Food throughout Europe was much better than expected, although we received a steady dose of cucumber and tomato salads in Russia and lots of rice, potatoes, dry bread and bottled water. Beer was quite good, Vodka plentiful and cheap, especially the local stuff. The desserts and pastries were so so. Lots of poppy seeds in these...reminds me of my grandmother and her baking.

Finally to Berlin (more border stops...this one the longest at over three hours). We went to the Museum at checkpoint Charlie, to Potsdam and the site where the Potsdam agreement was hammered out, the gardens at Celienhof, and the usual sights like the Reichstag, the Eastern Gallery Wall, and Brandenburg Tor.

We flew home squished like sardines, without the oil, on Air France which has a printed menu for lunch and individual movie screens for all. ❖

Political Action

by Claire Knapp

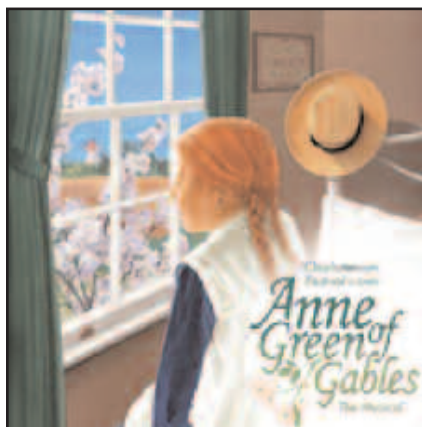
In the recent **Renaissance** issue, Winter 2008, there is a Report from the Senate Political Action Committee, (p. 24) This Committee is chaired by Jim Sparrow and, in the article, he outlines the major goals of the Political Action Committee (PAC). One of these goals is to encourage and support the political action needs of each District.

I am the Representative of PAC in District 23, North York. I liaise with the other Districts of Toronto to share common concerns and interests. We meet approximately four times throughout the course of the year. This past year, our Chair was Pat Carson who is also a member of the Provincial Committee. In our discussions, we realized that we needed to focus on **one** issue rather than try to address all areas of concern which occupy the Provincial Committee. To this end, we made the issue of Poverty our main thrust. As a

Committee, we drafted a letter to our Provincial Executive urging this body to support the Provincial Government's initiative in this regard. Each of us then took the letter back to our District for approval. As of November, 2008, a letter from Michael Sheffe as President of RTO/ERO, District 23, North York, was sent to Brian Kenny, President, RTO/ERO urging our Provincial Executive to support the initiative of the Provincial Government in its efforts to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Our own District applies for a grant from the Provincial RTO/ERO each year to promote "Service to Others" within our community. This year, we are considering various ideas with this focus in order to reduce poverty in some way.

Also, in March 2009, a **Provincial Political Action Workshop** will be held for all PAC Representatives across the province. ❖



Charlottetown Festival's perennial favourite, Anne of Green Gables - The Musical™ is Canada's longest-running musical! Freckled-faced Anne with her fiery temper, passion for melodrama and penchant for misadventures, brings laughter, love and more than a little consternation to the lives of Marilla and Mathew Cuthbert. Based on the novel Anne of Green Gables, by Lucy Maud Montgomery, this story is loved by millions around the world and in 2009

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Cut-Off Date: Wednesday, April 8

\$52

Tickets available from Bernadette between 1:15 & 1:45

Elgin Theatre
189 Yonge St.
2:00 p.m.

~ See page 35 for registration form

Cross-Province Hospital Cuts Cause Major Lay Offs, Privatization; Threaten Local Emergency Rooms, Birthing, Hospital Beds

The Ontario Health Coalition

The Ontario Health Coalition released a report detailing hospital cuts and restructuring plans now underway across Ontario.

“We are seeing the deepest and most widespread hospital cuts in more than a decade,” noted Natalie Mehra, coalition director.

“The province has set funding levels for hospitals that are less than the rate of inflation for this fiscal year, dropping further next year. Hospitals cannot maintain existing programs and services at current levels of funding. The cuts we are seeing are disorganized, undemocratic and causing huge public backlash.”

“Most communities have spent the last 50 - 100 years to build their local hospitals and make services locally accessible,” added Helen Havlik, retired nursing director from the Petrolia hospital and a coalition member. “The government is going in the opposite direction, moving services out of local communities. For small and rural hospitals, once you move out the services that are being proposed in some communities, you no longer have a hospital at all.”

“The current government plan for hospital cuts and restructuring is saddled with similar flaws to the last round of restructuring that went over budget by billions of dollars while reducing services and compromising people’s health,” Mehra warned.

Among the major findings of the report:

a. Province-wide at least 50% of hospitals (75 hospitals) are, or have been in deficit this year and almost 70% (104 hospitals) are projected to be in deficit next year. Hospitals are forbidden to

run deficits and must submit plans to eliminate them by the end of next fiscal year.

b. Provincial funding for hospitals’ global budgets is less than the rate of inflation for this year and next. It has been set at 2.4% for 2008/09 and 2.1% for 2009/10. At these rates, hospitals are unable to maintain existing programs and services. The government has provided a multi-step program to increase fees and cut services across the province.

c. Cuts now proposed across Ontario include closures of Emergency Departments; closure of local birthing service; cuts to hospital beds and departments; essential closure of small and rural hospitals; privatization of physiotherapy, chiropody and support services; lay offs and attrition to reduce the size of the hospital workforce; increased fees for patients and their visitors, and other measures.

d. Emergency Departments are being restructured, closed, or reviewed in Hamilton, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Leamington, Wallaceburg and Petrolia.

e. The funding squeeze is forcing hospitals to centralize core hospital services across large geographic regions, moving them out of local community hospitals. Patients will have to travel from one hospital to another across their regions to access services. The provincial government has not made clear how far patients will be required to travel for hospital care.

f. There are no clear plans and funding to offset increased municipal costs for ambulance, paramedic, fire and police services that will be required if the local Emergency Departments are closed or converted into clinics. Ambulance of-

flood delays are a major problem in many larger hospitals already. There are concerns that the larger hospitals cannot take the influx of patients that would result from the movement of services out of local hospitals.

g. Planning for infrastructure is misaligned with service planning. In Ajax - Pickering, a brand new mental health suite of nine beds was just completed in time for all the mental health beds to be moved out of town to Scarborough. In Port Colborne, the government announced funding to expand and renovate the Emergency Department less than one year ago and now the Niagara Health System plans to close it down.

h. Hospital deficits are worsened by staffing shortages and inadequate long term care (at home and in facilities) which are provincial government policy.

i. Hospitals have reportedly been asked to sign “communication protocols” with the government-appointed LHINs, dictating what information can be released to the public and when.

j. There has been major public outcry. Six thousand people have protested in Fort Erie and Port Colborne. Municipal Councils are passing motions for democratically-elected hospital boards, dissolution of amalgamated hospitals and provincial funding support to offset cuts. Editorials in community newspapers across the province have decried the lack of clear planning and cuts to services. Tens of thousands have signed petitions to save local hospital services.

k. Ontario’s hospitals have already been restructured for more than 15 years. Current underfunding is forcing deep cuts to patient services. ❖

For more information: 416-441-2502.

Goodwill Report

Maureen Capotosto
905 883-1496

mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca

The Goodwill Committee and your Executive of District 23 are committed to maintaining contact with our older members and those who may be confined. If you know of a member who would appreciate support from us, please let us know by calling the Goodwill Convener or an Executive member.

Did you know that in the year of your 70th birthday you are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting, and

the lunch that follows it, for free? We will also do our best to recognize members reaching milestone birthdays (80, 85, 90, 95,). In honour of our members who reach these significant birthdays, District 23 will be making an annual donation to the nutrition programs that support students in the Toronto schools.

Please remember to notify RTO/ERO if your address or phone number changes. Use the form on page 36.

Convener

Maureen Capotosto
905 883-1496

mpcapotosto@sympatico.ca

Cards:

Birthday Cards for Over 80's

Judy Nielson
416 256-2731

Bereavement Cards

Xenia Cooper
905 881-5481

Get Well/ Keeping in Touch

Joan Smith
416 449-4422

Telephone Calls: Sick, Shut-in, Etc.

Vinny Coetzee
416 621-6681

New Members

Sharon Basman
416 - 444-3311

In Sympathy

Each year RTO/ERO District 23 North York makes a donation to the following charities: Alzheimer Society of Toronto, The Canadian Cancer Society, and

The Heart and Stroke Foundation in honour of our members who have passed away.

Did You Know?

The Annual General Meeting is held in June along with a luncheon. This event is subsidized by RTO/ERO District 23 North York for all members. The actual cost is \$25 but each member is only charged \$13. We do this because we believe it is important for our members to attend this important meeting. You have an opportunity to learn about

how your executive operates and get up-dates on all the activities connected with our organization. As well, this is an opportunity to connect with friends and fellow members as you enjoy a delightful luncheon in a very pleasant setting. Please join us on June 9th, 2009. You will find full details and the registration form on page 17.

Were You born in 1939?

If so, then you are entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting for

~Goodwill continued on page 27

STONY Bridges/February 2009



GOODWILL/continued from page 26

free. The date is Tuesday, June 9th, 2009. Details are available on page 17 of this newsletter.

Please join us to celebrate your 70th year by sending in your RSVP and noting that you are one of our birthday guests.

Knitter Alert

The Goodwill Committee would like to hear from knitters in District 23 who would like to become involved in a community project of knitting and /or sharing your skills to teach others to knit. For more details please contact Maureen Capotosto, Goodwill Convener.

Service To Others

Thank you for the proposals we have received for our submission for the Project - Service to Others, 2009. We are preparing an application for an initiative that supports the concept of "Service to Others". The intent is to raise the profile of retired teachers by visibly demonstrating to active teachers and to the public-at-large that retired teachers care about their communities and about public education, and are willing to do something to help those who need assistance. We will report on our project in a future newsletter.



*Princess of Wales
Theatre
300 King St. West*

Wednesday, April 15, 2009

Note: ☛ Early Cut-Off Date: Friday, February 27, 2009

Do not Delay

1:30 p.m.

Come and enjoy the highly anticipated smash-hit London production of THE SOUND OF MUSIC, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Sing along with the Von Trapp children to all your favourite songs!

Since the play is not subsidized by RTO/ERO, you can bring along your friends.

If you have any questions, kindly email (bernadette_walsh@sympatico.ca) or phone 416 449 8780.

\$72

*Tickets available from Bernadette between 12:45 & 1:15
inside the main entrance of the Theatre*

~ See page 34 for registration form

Chalkdust Memories

Farcical and humorous tales submitted by our readers.

1948

My Beginnings

By Marian Yorke

“I’m sure you could stay with poor Mrs. Smith. She lives in one of the council houses. Anyone will tell you which one it is.”

This is what the headmaster told me after agreeing to hire me for my first teaching position.

As I was eager to get settled and prepared for my first post, I made my way to the council houses – narrow, depressing looking, grey stone row houses, close to the curb of the main street of ‘Barton-in-the-Clay.’ Mrs. Smith was the saddest looking woman I had ever seen. Within a few minutes of meeting her, I learned the reasons for her many woes. Her husband had died during the first world war, and her son had married and left her. (I learned later that he had been assigned a newer council house just down the street, and that he came and checked on his mother every day.) Also the rent was too high, there was a food shortage, her rheumatism, etc. It went on and on, and I was to hear all this day after day for as long as I resided with ‘poor Mrs. Smith.’

My bedroom, at the top of a creaky staircase, consisted of a metal bed, a wash stand with a chipped porcelain bowl, a jug and slop pail and a chest of drawers. I was to be allowed to make my school preparations at the kitchen table after we had done the washing up at nights.

With the enthusiasm of a

young teacher starting out, I agreed to everything and set out to find ‘Teacher Lizzie,’ who had retired in the village, and whose place I was taking. She was the one I should have been in awe of as she had taught in Barton for 59 years, ever since she had left school at the age of 16. What a sweetheart “Teacher Lizzie” was! Her face was full of wrinkled happiness, and she made me welcome in her little cottage and never stopped telling hilarious tales of her teaching years while preparing the tea. What she had lacked in official qualifications, she had certainly made up over the years in a wealth of experience and wisdom. I left feeling I had found a true friend on whom I could call at any time.

My next stop was to call on the vicar. At that time, just after the war, it was considered correct to present oneself to the local dignitaries. Fortunately, in a village the size of Barton, the vicar was the only one who come under this category. He was a jolly man in frayed garments who looked older than his years, probably aided by poverty in which his family seemed to be living. I met his wife and six children, all of whom made me welcome. Owing to the fuel shortage, they were only occupying a small part of the vicarage. It was arranged that, as his wife was the local Girl Guide captain, I was to assist her in the capacity of Lieutenant. This suited me fine, as I had previously been a ‘Tawny Owl.’

With the help of my trusty steed (my second hand Red Raleigh Sports Bike, the first bike I had ever owned) I made my way back to Mrs. Smith’s. It was time for High Tea. We sat in the gloomy kitchen, tiled in mostly cracked dark green tiles, which met the brown stained walls half way

up. There was strange smell, which I later realized was the rancid fat used over and over again to fry my egg. I listened to more doom and gloom, and offered to queue up for sausages once a week, and to take the radio battery to be recharged.

The next day, after telling Mrs. Smith that a cup of coffee was all I needed, I was off to school bright and early to start my preparations. This was now my breakfast from then on, and I have never been able to drink bottled, chickory flavoured coffee since!

The headmaster, whose house was in the schoolyard found a huge rusty key and unlocked my classroom. Why it was locked, I can’t imagine. Here another surprise awaited me. The room could not have been larger than 10 feet by 14 feet. It was completely filled with desks: five seaters on one side, two seaters on the other side of the aisle. The top surfaces were heavily scratched and initialed. The rest consisted of ornate iron sides with attached seats, all bolted to the floor. I thought this kind of equipment had died with Queen Victoria but apparently not.

All my plans of projects, centres of interest, self planned activities, group work etc., which I had been trained to use during my three years at teacher’s college, flew out the window.

There was hardly room for pupils to enter one at a time. The inside ones would have to enter first and climb into their positions. There were no display shelves, notice boards, storage cupboards, nothing. When I looked somewhat dismayed, I received more shocking news. This was to be the first year the school-leaving age had been raised to 15 years. And no extra accommodation had been made for the

25 students who would normally have been happily out of school by now. This meant, with no desks for them in the Senior room, they would be roaming the school, looking for odd jobs.

When I first met these surplus students - they appeared to be mostly boys, six feet tall boys or so they seemed to me (I was only five feet) - they knocked on my door every few minutes asking for jobs I did not have. They terrified me. In later weeks, I organized them to sharpen pencils, until I found my precious pencils getting shorter and shorter, and disappearing when I was not eligible for any new ones that term.

Much later I found that these boys were quite harmless and could be quite cooperative. They helped individual children with reading and various activities in the cloakroom where most

of our more active projects had to take place.

Gradually, I found that the pupils were eager, polite and enthusiastic and most cooperative little children. At that time there was no Kindergarten. These children started school and were expected to read and write and do sums by the end of the year. Everything extra I wanted to introduce in the way of arts and crafts, acting, physical education had to be fit in-between, somehow, without disturbing other classes.

How many times I have thought back to the achievements of those little children who learnt to read from old tattered books, and drew pictures on the insides of envelopes I opened up for them. Fortunately, a relative from the USA took pity on us and

sent us 30 pencils. They even had erasers on the ends. What a special day that was!

Unfortunately, I was only in Barton-on-the-Clay for one year because another opportunity came along. I have never had the chance to return, but the happy memories have never left me. ❖

Marian Yorke started teaching in England in 1948 after completing three years at the Froebel Institute of Teacher Training College in London. She came to Canada in 1952 and resumed teaching in 1957 at Downsview Public School, and then, until her retirement in 1983, at Blaydon P. S.



SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

Another award-winning musical from Stephen Sondheim, a compelling story about love, art and inspiration. Spend Sundays in the park with the French impressionist painter Georges Seurat as he creates his masterpiece, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. Hear from the figures in the painting about their lives and loves – especially Dot, the woman with the umbrella and Georges' mistress and muse. A hundred years later, see his great-grandson, another artist, learn from the ghosts of the past.

Friday, April 3, 2009

Cut-Off Date: March 2, 2009

\$93

9:30 a.m. Depart Willowdale United by bus.

11:30 a.m. Lunch at Lakehouse Restaurant in Vineland
Choice of Grilled Chicken Breast or Angus Prime Rib or Penne Polo with Chicken Strips & Pine Nuts

2:00 p.m. Performance at the Shaw Festival's Royal George Theatre

7:00 p.m. (approx.) Arrive at Willowdale United

~See page 35 for registration form

Into the Wild Blue Yonder

or The Sky's the Limit
by Rocky Sankoff



©Dreamstime.com

So this year's drive south turned out to be a pain, what with the cost of gas, the surly restaurant service, the uncertain weather conditions, and a nagging spouse (either way - male or female) who just happens to be the world's worst backseat driver. There's also that extra night on the road. You are older, crabbier, and can't see as well at night. So you've resolved to fly next year and maybe have one of those 'drive-your-car to Florida' companies ferry your car for you.

Here then is a bit of a primer of what might occur during your in plane experiences while flying south.

There are things to do while preparing for your flight. Make a list, then immediately misplace it. On sec-

ond thought, let's ignore packing "discussions", forwarding mail disasters, etc., and what ensues when you get to your destination and realize you have left all the prescription medications on the kitchen table. No details will be provided as to the arguments which follow placing blame on someone.

You will line up for tickets, line up for security, line up to get on the plane, and line up in the airplane aisle as you wait to get to your seat. You will also line up for washrooms later on.

When the jet lands, you will line up again in the aisle to debark, then wait for luggage and line up for customs.

You will eventually be permitted to board the plane, after being pat-

ted down, removing your shoes, having your nail clippers confiscated, having all fluids in containers of more than three ounces dumped, and waiting in a pre-boarding area for at least an hour. Needless to say, your Swiss army knife which is always an integral part of your "pocket stuff" is a goner.

Once on the plane, aisles are narrow and very small. Other people's parcels seem over packaged and the carry on luggage seems larger than the prescribed size, and probably is. The person ahead of you picked up the last copy of the free newspaper.

Eventually you find your seat. The comfort factor depends on several variables. Normally you sit beside your spouse. But then again you may not due to the complexities of the booking situation or the stupidity of the person who arranged your seat. If needed, you have access to a life-preserver and an oxygen mask, but no parachute.

The person on the other side of you is probably quite large so that body parts may indeed overlap onto you, or their arm takes up the entire armrest, and then some, so you are wedged in tighter than a small size T-shirt on an NFL offensive tackle.

This person may have a body odour similar to that of a dead camel, will snore loudly when sleeping, breathes weirdly and noisily, has a cold with a wracking cough, takes off their shoes and hasn't washed their feet in a week, licks their thumb noisily when turning magazine pages, keeps leaning

over you in an effort to see out the window and, worst of all, could be a nose-picker.

Your neighbour could be a grunter. He or she may ask for your paltry snack if you don't eat it immediately. The individual might be a sloppy or disgusting eater destroying what appetite you might have left after opening your gluey on flight meal (if you're lucky enough to get one). And rest assured that if you are among the last 15% served, the airline will be out of whatever you want. Your neighbouring gourmet will probably belch, more than once, and be very industrious with their toothpick, or fingernail, if no small bit of lumber is available.

Sometimes the person beside you doesn't like airplane delicacies and brings along his food: a chopped egg sandwich, an orange for dessert, and an evil smelling piece of cheese. I have seen passengers furtively lean over their portable tray and, using a napkin as a shield, expectorate in their empty coffee cup.

Their arm safely over the entire armrest, they will help with your Sudoku or crossword puzzle. All the puzzles in the airplane magazine will probably be finished...in ink.

Your neighbour knows everything about any subject they decide to talk to you about and have very poor grammar. They may also stuff a newspaper in the place where the armrest should be. You will have a small TV on the seat back in front of you, or hanging over the aisle some 20 feet away and featuring a postage stamp size image. But often it is impossible to see the picture or hear the sound. If you are watching the movie, prepare for periodic digging of elbows into your ribs accompanied by "Didcha see that?" or "Wad-dya watchin?" every so often.

All the while the baby across

the aisle has an unbelievable case of colic and howls precisely every 40 seconds. You could also be unlucky enough to have said baby in the arms of the parent beside you. At some point the baby will have to be fed. Not a bottle mind you, but nature's alternative. This is when you have to seriously study the ceiling until the feeding is over. This is usually announced by a belch. There is also the possibility of the child producing their version of "return of the swallow". You could be a beneficiary.

If your neighbour is fortunate enough to have the window seat, you are virtually guaranteed that they have a weak bladder and will be up and down quite often on their way to the washroom. Make certain you visit the washroom before the trays with drinks, food, and duty free merchandise block the aisle preventing one from getting to the washroom.

Another exercise involves the washrooms. If you can get in, and the washroom is in working order, you might find there is no toilet paper, no water, no paper towels, a nauseating odour, and discover the person ahead of you forgot to flush. While you are in an awkward position the plane will lurch...for certain. If you just happen to be brushing your teeth, the end result of this lurch could be very painful. When you leave, check to make sure you are not trailing a string of toilet paper attached to the bottom of your shoe.

You'll get earphones, but leave them on the plane, you can't use them anywhere else. A blanket is supplied, but if you need to use it you'll probably need a second one to keep warm. If you have a window seat, you might be looking out at the top of the wing and when you get high enough the cloud cover will prevent you from seeing anything. Don't worry about those flashes

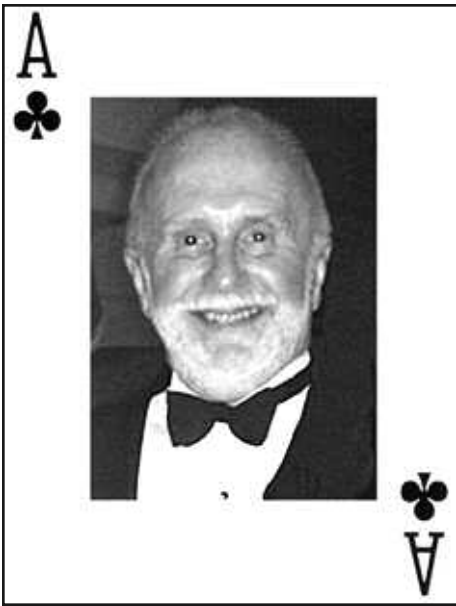
that look like fire on the wing tip, it's only the sun's reflection. The plane is not on fire. And any small flames from the rear of the engine are usually normal. Also don't get paranoid about all the rattles you hear, chances are the plane is not falling apart.

When the jet lands, you will line up again in the aisle to debark, then wait for luggage and line up for customs. Finally you arrive at your snowbird abode where you can continue the argument about who left the &%\$^#@ medications on the kitchen table.

The return trip will be similar, with one exception. On the airplane the little glass doodads you bought for the grandkids, and the bottles of alcoholic beverages purchased at the duty free will be safely stowed (you thought) in the overhead compartments. Then some mental midget will arrive at the last minute and jam his hard sided, oversized carry-on into your compartment in such a way that the doodads become ground glass and the beverage bottles are suddenly opened...from the bottom.

To save the cost of cab fare, you will wait in a pre-arranged location for your eldest unmarried daughter (or son) to pick you up and drive you home. They will have forgotten these arrangements. ❖

Irwin (Rocky) Sankoff retired from Forest Hill Collegiate in 1995. He joined District 23 instead of 16 because he wanted to play bridge at Willowdale United, close to home. About retirement, Rocky says he does, "Whatever I want to, whenever I want to." That includes - travel, reading, writing, playing bridge and spending plenty of time with his grandchildren. He now lives in Ballantrae. The name "Rocky" comes from his training and work in geology.



Bridge Report

by Alan Ward

The Bridge Club continues to meet at Willowdale United Church on Kenneth Avenue at Church St (south of Finch, east of Yonge) every Tuesday. New members are warmly invited to join us: it is suggested that players arrive no later than 12.45 p.m., since competitive play begins promptly at 1 p.m. For more information please contact Alan Ward through email at alanward@interlog.com or by telephone at 905-889-3687.

The Table Champions

Congratulations to the following players who were undefeated in at least five rounds once between October 14th and December 16th 2008.

Madeleine Merrick, Vic Suzuki, Lee White (2)

The Slam Bidders

To recognise those players who have the courage of their convictions and the skills to succeed in high level contracts, a small prize will be given to any player who bids and makes at least two small slams in the course of an afternoon's play.

Contract Bid (made)

October 14 th	Jack Foote & George Vanderwerf	6D (7)
	Hazel Perkin & Bob Radko	6H (7)
October 21 st	D. Ford & Linda Savoy	6D
October 28 th	Bert Gates & Wayne Justeson	6S
	David Fleming & Carson Klinck	6N (7)
	Vic Suzuki & Eulaline Taylor	6S (7)
	Wayne Justeson & Carson Klinck	6H
November 4 th	David Fleming & Lee White	6N
	Mary Lutes & Mel York	7C
	Dianne Fair & Wayne Justeson	7H
November 18 th	Tony Cribbin & Wayne Justeson	6S
	Wayne Justeson & Hardie McNeil	6H
November 25 th	Mavis McKernan & Helen Wiber	6H
December 9 th	Angela Jutlah & Bev Suzuki	6S (7)
	Angela Jutlah & Bev Suzuki	6H (7)
	Hazel Perkin & Bev Suzuki	6N (7)
December 16 th	Carson Klinck & Vic Suzuki	6N (7)
	Vic Suzuki & Alan Ward	6N
	Marg Jang & Mavis McKernan	6N

Words of Wisdom from the World Wide Web

A few evenings ago, while sitting in front of the computer and seeking ideas for this issue of the Stony Bridge column, I entered the words Bridge Humor (humour) into my browser. Eddie's bridge humor provided ten pages of quotes and tall tales including the following gems. (<http://kantar-bridge.com/humor.htm>)

"Where's the hand you held during the auction?" Jan Nanitschke said when he saw the dummy,

"I'd like a review of the bidding with all of the original inflections." George Kaufman

"One advantage of bad bidding

is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts." Alfred Sheinwold

A wife holds her bosom before her husband leads. He wants to lead a diamond, but when he sees her holding her bosom, he leads a heart. A diamond lead would have set the hand. Later he asked her why she was holding her bosom, to which she replied that she was trying to show a bust.

Four guys are playing bridge at the golf club and there is one kibitzer. The phone rings and one of the players has to leave. The remaining three beg the kibitzer to sit in, even though he has never played before. Reluctantly he agrees and deals the next hand, opening the bidding with 4C. A strange bid for a beginner! The left hand opponent

doubles and the others pass, whereupon the novice bids 4D. Once again he is doubled, followed by two passes. On his third turn, the novice bids 4H. This bid is also doubled. Once more the bidding returns to the novice. This time he says "and the jack of spades!"

A married couple are not speaking to each other after a horrible game and they drive past a field where donkeys are grazing peacefully. The husband breaks the silence by asking his wife "are these relations of yours?" She replies "Yes! They're in-laws."

Richard Pavlicek's website will repay a visit. It may be found at <http://www.rpbridge.net> and provided the following hand, rightly described as a bizarre auction. ❖

Truth ... Stranger than Fiction!



7 ♠ x by South

E-W Vul

♠ 10 5 3

♥ 3

♦ 10 2

♣ K Q J 7 6 5 3

♠ 9 8 6 2

♥ A K J 10 4

♦ K 7 3

♣ 2



♠ A K Q J 7 4

♥ Q 9 2

♦ A Q 6 4

♣ —

♠ —

♥ 8 7 6 5

♦ J 9 8 5

♣ A 10 9 8 4

Lead: ♥ K

West

1 ♥

7 ♥

North

3 ♣

7 ♠

East

5 NT

Dbl

South

6 ♠

All Pass

With a good five card major and a singleton club, West opened 1H. At favorable vulnerability, North made a preemptive bid of 3C. Looking at 18 HCP, the queen of hearts and a void in North's suit, East went directly to the Grand Slam Force, asking West to bid 7H with two of the three top hearts. South knew that his/her partner had seven clubs and that any sacrifice up to and including 7C should make a profit. (4C can be made) Bidding 6S should draw a spade lead from North to defeat the contract in the event that E/W chose to play in 7H. If E/W double 6S, South can retreat to 7C.

Unfortunately North interpreted this bid by South as implying a strong spade holding and decided to raise the suit. When the smoke cleared, N/S were down 13 doubled for a penalty of 3500 points. This hand was actually played in a 1987 tournament.

Sometimes truth really is stranger than fiction!

Tear-Offs

Please write separate cheques
for each slip.

PLEASE NOTE:

When filling out your registration (Tear Off) slips, we ask you to follow the guidelines listed below. This will help our Assistant Treasurer sort and direct tickets.

- 1) A separate cheque is required for each event/activity.
- 2) Each person's name must be included on each form for each event/activity.
- 3) When applicable, each RTO/ERO member may bring ONE guest who pays the *subsidized* cost. Additional guests pay the *actual* cost
- 4) Unless you are contacted, your registration form and cheque are your confirmation for the activity/event.
- 5) Tickets, if required, are given out only on the day of the function.

Sunday in the Park with George
Friday, April 3, 2009
Cut - Off Date: March 2, 2009

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Guest's Name: _____ Meal Choice: (Circle one) Beef Penne Grilled Chicken

_____ tickets @ \$93 = _____ Cheque enclosed for \$_____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to
RTO/ERO c/o Jean King, #869-6021 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. M2M 3W2

Sound of Music
Wednesday, April 15, 2009
Cut - Off Date: Friday, February 27, 2009

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Guest's Name: _____

_____ tickets @ \$72 = _____ Cheque enclosed for \$_____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to
RTO/ERO c/o Jean King, #869-6021 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. M2M 3W2

Stony Bridges Online
Cut - Off Date: June 1, 2009

I would like to receive my copy of Stony Bridges beginning August, 2009 on - line.

Name: _____ Tel #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Please send this information to Dianne Fair by e-mail at diannefair@rogers.com
If your mailing and/or e-mail address(es) changes please let Dianne know.

Anne of Green Gables
Wednesday May 13, 2009
Cut - Off Date: April 8, 2009

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Guest's Name: _____

_____ tickets @ \$52 = _____ Cheque enclosed for \$ _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to
RTO/ERO c/o Jean King, #869-6021 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. M2M 3W2

Golf Tournament
Thursday, June 4, 2009
Cut-Off Date: May 10, 2009

Golfer #1 _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #2 _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #3 _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Golfer #4 _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Power Cart: Yes No (please circle)

_____ golfers @ \$45 = _____ + \$12 per golfer for cart _____ = \$ _____ Cheque enclosed for \$ _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to:
RTO/ERO Marilyn Johnson, 114 Lund, Richmond Hill ON L4C 5V9

West Side Story
Tuesday, September 15, 2009
Cut - Off Date: June 26, 2009

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Guest's Name: _____ Meal Choice: (Circle one) Beef Sole Breast of Chicken

_____ tickets @ \$87 = _____ Cheque enclosed for \$ _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to
RTO/ERO c/o Jean King, #869-6021 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. M2M 3W2

REFUND POLICY

1. All trips and events advertised in STONY BRIDGES and requiring a cheque and order form, will show a cut-off date. The date is set to enable us to comply with our commitment to pay for the event. No cheque should be post dated beyond this date.

2. Any booking can be cancelled at any time prior to the cut-off date by phoning the event organizer or Jean King, Assistant Treasurer 905-764-1125 (trips/theatre), or Mildred Frank 416-221-5328 (Social Convenor).

3. Cancellations beyond this date will only be accepted if there is a waiting list for tickets, and we can sell your ticket to someone on the waiting list.

4. Ticket holders are welcome to sell, give or transfer their place or ticket privately.

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Send to:
RTO/ERO c/o Dianne Vezeau
Suite 300, 18 Spadina Rd.,
Toronto ON M5R 2S7
Phone: 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888
www.rto-ero.org

Name: _____

New Address: _____

New Phone: _____

Old Address: _____

Old Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Note: The Provincial Office will inform District 23 of these changes.

STONY Bridges
C/O George Meek
414 - 4005 Bayview Ave.
North York ON M2M 3Z9

