



BEYOND the BELL

Newsletter for the Retired Education Community Spring 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On optimism, silver linings and renewal



I am writing this as spring begins. And as always you can't help but feel better as the days grow longer. Although we have faced more problems in the last two years than at any time in my lifetime, at this time of year, it is easier to find the silver lining.

Climate change is accelerating but it is now undeniable by all but the most close-minded. The economic problems that we face will force us to change what we are doing, so the opportunity to implement carbon reduction policies has never been better.

The war in Ukraine is devastating, but Putin may be the one person who can unite the free world. As we watch the destruction of a beautiful country and the death and displacement of its citizens, we are heartened by their President and the influence he has had, not only on Ukrainians, but on all of us.

Finally, the pandemic...or to steal a line from Norma Kaye...the *dampanic*. We have lost friends and relatives to COVID; we have lost friends and relatives because of COVID. We have paused active and busy lives for two years, and at our age we know that two years is a big piece of the rest of our lives. We have watched our children and grandchildren cope with conditions that were more familiar to our grandparents' lives than to ours. Thankfully, we have had communication and stimulation through advances in technology, that helped us at many times during the last two years.

And now things are looking more optimistic. We have reason to hope that COVID will be controlled by vaccines and medications, if not eradicated. We are ready to resume the activities that have been out of reach. As we start to socialize and travel with great caution, let's savour every moment and enjoy every contact.

Happy Spring.

Joanne Garvey, President, District 46 Muskoka

HIGHLIGHTS OF VALENTINE'S SWIRL PARTY

February 16 On Zoom



Special guest *Peaches* fascinated with exceptional beauty and wit, delighting all with anecdotes from an insightful, storybook life.



Linda Ann Jewell sends warmest greetings to "mutual friend", retired teacher Robin Clipsham.



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Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital School 1969 - 1971 *Where the Wild Things Are....*

by Lorna Walkling

Those of you who began your teaching career in the late 1960s may recall that permanent teaching jobs were scarce, and eager new teachers were plentiful at that time. My earlier training as a Child Care Worker (Child and Youth Worker, or CYW) at Thistleton Regional Centre turned out to be a true asset; I was hired by the Etobicoke Board of Education in 1969 to be one of four teachers for emotionally disturbed children in residential treatment at the hospital formerly known as the Mimico Asylum: the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital School. The Child and Adolescent Unit was located on "Ward H", the only children's program in the sprawling provincial institution, and the "school" was a run down four-room cottage on the shore of Lake Ontario. The students were escorted by treatment staff from the ward to school each day, and it was not uncommon for one or two kids to arrive for class in pyjamas and rubber boots because they had not earned enough points on their behaviour modification program the night before to wear regular clothing for the day. The school housed 20-25 students in four classes; my class that first year included six pre-adolescent boys and one girl, ranging in age from 8 to 13 years. Each one presented with extreme behaviours that had resulted in their placement in a residential school program. They were a motley crew indeed!

Each classroom was assigned a CYW from the ward to work in partnership with the teacher, and this teaching model is one I have advocated for throughout my career in education. With behaviour managed therapeutically by the CYW, the teacher is able to focus on the academic needs of each student, and gains are made in both behaviour and in skill development. I was partnered with a wonderful young woman named Jan King, whom one of the boys fondly insisted on calling "Miss Jane". The name stuck, and the bond we developed during our work together has grown into a lifelong friendship built on happy memories of our years as a team at LPHS, and later at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry. More on that chapter later... During my second year of teaching,

the school program was moved from the cottage to Cumberland House, another building on the hospital grounds, and our classroom was the entire third floor of the old red brick building, with a turret in one section of the room. Having one's desk placed in the turret for a day was something every kid worked hard for, and we made sure this special perk was shared by all. Little did we know when we started there in the fall of 1970 that this building, and especially the turret room, was known by many to be haunted! To reach the room, one had to climb a steep, narrow staircase and unlock the door at the top to enter the classroom. The door was never unlocked when we weren't there, but on numerous occasions we arrived in the morning to find our school supplies scattered about the turret in complete disarray, and it was believed that this was the work of "Hughie", the resident ghost of Cumberland House.



Cumberland House

As I look back on those years, I have vivid memories of the students, and also the programs that Jan and I developed together. Without giving names, a snapshot view of our class would include two eleven year-old boys from Regent Park in Toronto who had never been out of the downtown core of the city, one



very aggressive young man from an affluent, well-known Toronto family who was taller than I was, one little girl who was sexually provocative with the boys and a couple of other smaller boys, one of whom went by the nickname “Sugar Bear” because he could be a real sweetheart. The kids generally enjoyed coming to school and seldom needed to be returned to the ward due to unacceptable behaviour in the classroom. A key component to our program was regular class outings, and as Jan and I got to know each other and developed a trusting working relationship, we ventured further and further with our unique little group.

One warm, sunny afternoon in early May, while we had the kids down by the lake for recess, we dreamed up an overnight camping trip to Heart Lake Conservation Area, complete with government issue tents and fishing nets. A few weeks later we camped, and the weather turned bitterly cold. We survived it, but the small fish the kids had caught and put into milk cartons were frozen into solid blocks of ice the next morning!

One of our most memorable outings into the world beyond the institutional setting was when we took the class to Christian Island. Our history lessons had included discussion about indigenous people, and the kids were keenly interested in meeting real “Indians”. I connected with a teacher at the school on Christian Island, Jan booked the hospital van, and we headed north. Not far beyond the city limits, we realized that the kids from Regent Park had no idea what a cow was! They were mesmerized, and a wee bit frightened, of the cattle grazing in fields we passed. When we reached Cedar Point, to get to Christian Island we took a “ferry”, which was actually the tugboat, “R.A. Hooey”.

Upon arrival, wide-eyed, barefoot indigenous students met us at the dock and invited us into their school, which rivalled ours in its primitive nature. I know Jan and I will always remember that day, and I hope the kids will, too!

Our program at LPHS was of interest to several community groups, and we often had people touring our classroom, which I don’t think would ever happen today. On one such occasion, a group of well-meaning women came to see us and one of them asked me, “Do they play just like real children?” I have never forgotten that comment, its implications for kids in treatment classrooms, or the response I gave, reminding them that all children are “real” children, and play is an integral part of all children’s lives!

In 1971, Jan and I moved on to the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, where we spent two years working as a team of teacher/ CYW in research classrooms connected to OISE and York University. One program, the Short Term Academic Research and Treatment (START) program stands out as being highly successful in returning kids to their home schools, with 5 out of 6 primary-aged students being returned to a community school the following year. We were put in a “fishbowl”, a glass-sided

classroom, for the year, psychologists and child psychiatrists developed and monitored the program, and we were the front line workers. Again, a behaviour modification program was merged with an educational classroom program, and impressive gains were made by the students.

I hope you have enjoyed reading about my first years in education, and I do hope you will consider writing about your memoirs as a beginning teacher to share in future editions of *Beyond the Bell!*



Miss Jane and the boys on the beach



The Cold Camping Trip



Join hands with us - be part of the story

- ✦ Be on a roster of teachers
- ✦ Donate to fundraiser
- ✦ Have other ideas for helping?

Reach out to www.buc-knoxrefugees.ca

Or contact Linda Ann Jewell laj@vianet.ca



How our world has changed these past two years! First the pandemic, of course, which has evolved and brought changes in attitudes over the course of our isolation and the resulting rise of populism even here in Canada with the "Freedom Convoy" in Ottawa and border cities across the country. Was that just a month or so ago? And now we are embroiled in the terrible war in Ukraine with its dire consequences and prospects for the future. It is particularly heart-breaking to watch, from the safety of my comfortable home, the streams of Ukrainian refugees leaving their homeland in search of safety in foreign lands. Canada has promised to provide sanctuary for an unlimited number of these refugees who might want to come this far - the least we can do, I say. But please, Mr. Trudeau, let's not forget the countless other refugees who have been lined up, some for many months, even years, waiting at our doorstep to be able to come into Canada.

This is of particular concern to me as a member of the BUC/Knox Refugee Partnership committee that has been working since last summer to complete the requirements and raise the funds to sponsor the Syrian Janbali family to come to Canada (hopefully Muskoka). Working with this family has put six beautiful faces onto the refugee crisis for me. Ardawan, Ghazwa and their four children, Kanaan (18), Ahmed (14), Roula (12) and Emma (1) have already fled their war-torn homeland of Syria and taken refuge in Iraq where they await approval to come to Canada to start a new life in a safe new home in our midst. In the meantime they are living with other family members (12 people in an apartment where they often experience a lack of water and power), reading about Canada and getting a start at learning English. Ardawan, the father, gets work as he can as a handyman; Kanaan, the older son, is enrolled in a hairdressing school; Mom, Ghazwa, is busy with wee Emma.

The Janbalis are related to another Syrian family who was previously sponsored by Bracebridge



Janbali Family

United Church (BUC) back in 2017. Hassan and Berivan Khaled and their young family settled and remain in Bracebridge where they have adjusted to life in Canada quite well. Hassan is working at The Pines, giving back to the community who brought them here. His wife, Berivan is a stay-at-home mom, learning English along with the children who are at school and looking forward to the arrival of her aunt and family to the area. Bracebridge United Church in partnership with Knox Presbyterian Church in Bracebridge have taken on this second sponsorship.

The Janbali family has already been designated as refugees by the United Nations; the necessary paperwork has been filed with the United Church of Canada and the Canadian government. Fundraising locally has been going extremely well so far. Our initial goal, set by the government, was \$60,000, to be raised in advance to settle the family and support them for their first twelve months in Canada. To date we have raised over \$50,000. Eventually the family will need help with housing and furnishings, jobs, language skills, clothing, transportation and orientation into Canadian life - just to name a few basic requirements. Is this something that interests you as a retired member of the education community in Muskoka? Maybe you could help by being on a roster of teachers (language or otherwise) to support this family in many different ways. Or maybe you would like to help financially. Or maybe you have another idea about how you could be part of the support team for this very worthwhile project. If so, please check out our website www.buc-knoxrefugees.ca or contact me, Linda Ann Jewell at laj@vianet.ca. I would love to hear your ideas. It will "take a village" to see this project through.

I certainly hope and pray that these folks and so many others who are anxiously waiting their time to emigrate to peace and safety in Canada don't get pushed aside now as the world focuses on the current refugee crisis in Ukraine. We have room for them all.

Linda Ann Jewell, District 46 Member

Spring 2022 BEYOND the BELL Newsletter





CAM - RTOERO46 Curriculum Project wraps up as team presents teaching materials and bookmarks to TLDSB Superintendent



Left to right: Tamsen Tillson, Sue McKenzie, Len Ring, TLDSB Superintendent Jay MacJanet, Janet Libke, Linda Mathers, Joanne Garvey

Keep Informed

For the latest updates and resources related to the three KEY ISSUES, **National Seniors Strategy, Geriatric Healthcare, and Environmental Stewardship**, visit <https://rtoero.ca/giving-back/advocacy/>. You will also find numerous webinars on these issues and more, such as insurance, equity and inclusion, ageism and long term care.

Thanks to the team of RTOERO District 46 members and our community partners from Climate Action Muskoka (CAM), seven thousand bookmarks have been distributed throughout Muskoka to encourage permanent and seasonal residents to learn more about climate change. Specifically, the CAM website provides the means to enter the *Community Carbon Challenge*, where you can calculate your individual carbon footprint and develop a personal climate action plan. Visit climateactionmuskoka.org and make a difference. Lots of ideas and actions are presented to help everyone.

This project has also distributed bookmarks and curriculum materials developed by CAM to all grade 4, 5 and 6 classes in Muskoka. Early feedback is very positive about the support given to teachers.

We are grateful for the Community Service Grant funds that we received from RTOERO to facilitate this partnership and the resulting positive message and actions that our communities and citizens can take.

Be Informed Globally... Learn Locally... Act Individually

District 46 has also purchased newspaper ads in anticipation of yet to be determined actions that we can take to inform our members and the public in response to specific questions posed to the candidates for the June 2, 2022 provincial election. The format may be similar to what District 46 did during the federal campaign last September, which was to post answers to questions by each candidate on our website <http://district46.rto-ero.org/>. Watch for a link during the month of May in Metroland newspapers and on its website.

RTOERO also invites you to watch any or all of three virtual town hall events scheduled in April where the main political parties will be asked where they stand on our three key advocacy issues. All members received a message from RTOERO Chair Rich Prophet on April 1st with links to register.

John Beatty, Political Advocacy

BURSARY NEWS

\$8000 available

Top award \$3000



Application requirements were amended this year to allow consideration of students who have taken a gap year, provided valid reasons are given. A flexible pool up to \$8000 will be offered, with one main award of \$3000 and smaller awards to be determined, depending on the number of eligible applications received by the due date.

Pat Schofield, Bursaries



Shutterstock



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ Treasurer
- ◆ Secretary
- ◆ Benefits Representative

District 46 invites applications for the position of **Treasurer**. Bookkeeping and reporting are available from head office; training manual and Chromebook provided.

Secretary's duties include preparation of meeting minutes and carrying on the Executive's correspondence. A laptop is available.

The position of **Benefits Representative** is not overly time-consuming and there is excellent virtual training offered through the provincial office.

Please contact **Joanne Garvey** or any member of the executive if you are interested in learning more about any of these roles.



UPCOMING EVENT

Beyond the Bell Picnic

Kerr Park

130 Beaumont Drive, Bracebridge



Tentatively planned for
Friday, September 9

Food and refreshments provided by RTO

Event to be confirmed and further details provided by eBlast



NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

RTOERO offers free membership until retirement to anyone actively working in the **education community in Canada**. Please visit <https://rtoero.ca/> for information on pension, insurance and the many benefits of RTOERO membership.



CONTACT INFO

Executive Committee members may be reached via the following secure contact form:

<https://district46.rto-ero.org/district-contact-us>

<i>President</i> Joanne Garvey	<i>1st Vice President</i> John Beatty
<i>2nd Vice President</i> Laurie Fountain	<i>Past President</i> Bob Harris
<i>Secretary</i> Position open	<i>Goodwill Representatives</i> <i>Bala and Port Carling</i> Carolyn Dunn Rapson
<i>Treasurer</i> Position open	<i>Bracebridge</i> Norma Kaye
<i>Membership</i> Laurie Fountain	<i>Gravenhurst</i> Kathy Allison
<i>Pension & Retirement</i> Bob Harris	<i>Huntsville</i> Doris Macdonald
<i>Political Advocacy</i> Position open with John Beatty and Joanne Garvey	<i>Benefits</i> Position open
<i>Newsletter</i> Lorna Walkling and Jennifer Lyndon	<i>Bursaries</i> Pat Schofield
	<i>Communications</i> Jennifer Lyndon



Ramblings from Raymond

I think most people would agree that the past winter has been particularly harsh in many ways, and after two years of COVID isolation, all of us are anxious to find safe ways to reconnect in person with family, friends and community activities. Sadly, for me, the recent death of my husband, Tom Walkling, has reinforced the importance of staying connected in retirement to the colleagues I've enjoyed working with throughout my career in education. I've been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support I've received from so many of you through cards, notes, texts, emails, phone calls, memorial donations, and just "showing up" for Tom's visitation and funeral service. Having people from all stages of my life express sincere sympathy at a time like this is a comfort I am so thankful for. Maintaining contact with childhood friends, high school classmates, and so many of my former co-workers feels more and more important as I age!

Speaking of aging, a number of the original executive members of RTOERO District 46 have reached a point in their lives where it is no longer possible for them to continue in their roles. We need some of our younger members to join the group, and I can assure you that no role is overly demanding of your time. Sincere thanks to Rod Mundy, for his years of service as the Health Benefits representative, Anne Mundy as Treasurer, Shirley Harris as Secretary and Bob Harris as President for numerous terms over the years since Muskoka became District 46 on its own, separating from District 6, Parry Sound in 2005.

As I write, the sun is shining and the weather forecast is heading up into the double digits, with the promise of new growth and time for the outdoor activities we love to do. I sincerely wish all of you a safe, happy spring and summer, and I look forward to seeing you at the *Beyond the Bell Picnic* on Friday, September 9 at Kerr Park.

Lorna



In Memoriam

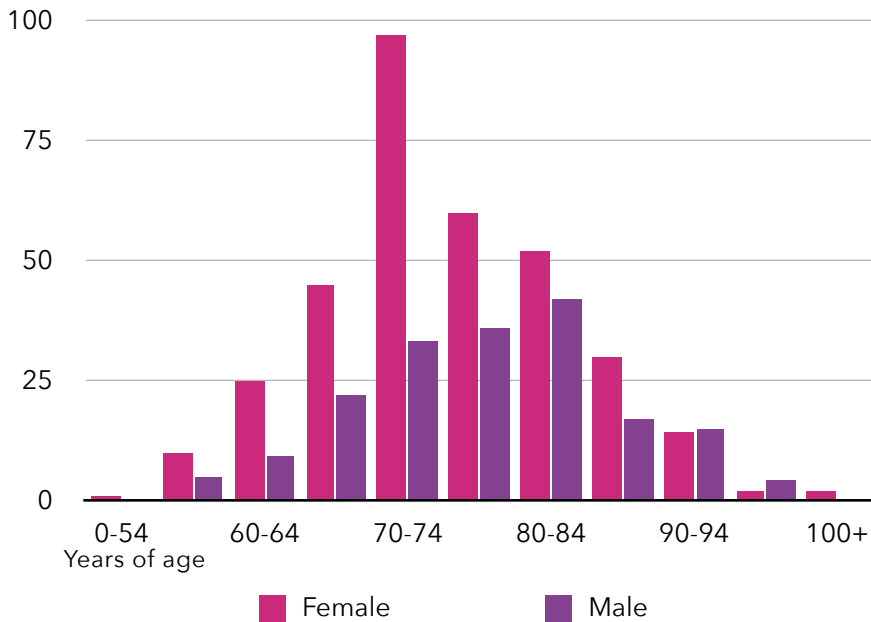
Although the list may not be complete, we are saddened by the loss of the following members and extend our condolences to family, friends and colleagues:

- Don McCormick (October)
- Arno Liebster (November)
- Marjorie Reid (January)
- Beverley Cowan (February)
- Roger Desjardins
- Bruce Werry
- Tom Walkling (March)

Please be sure to notify a member of the executive if you know of a member who has passed on.



Muskoka Membership by Age / Gender



COVID-19 Vaccines

Information about **immunization**, assessment centres and local cases is available at the **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit** website:

<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/COVID-19/Vaccine-and-Immunization>

COVID-19 Updates

Visit the official website of the **Government of Canada** for the latest announcements and information about COVID-19:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Thank you and congratulations!



Lorna, Bob, Anne, Rod and Shirley

We extend our best wishes and deepest gratitude to Rod and Anne Mundy, who have officially retired from volunteer duties, after record-setting years of service.



Carolyn and Norma

Norma Kaye recently celebrated a milestone birthday. Congratulations Norma, and many thanks for the wonderful work you do for RTO46.

