



THE RETIRED TEACHERS OF ONTARIO LES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS RETRAITES DE L'ONTARIO

DISTRICT 16 former CITY OF TORONTO

NEWSLETTER

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Volume 39, Issue 3

January, 2017



RTO/ERO: a service organization for retirees from School Boards, Colleges, Universities and Private Schools welcoming members of AEFO, CUPE, ETFO, OECTA, OSSTF, Administration Associations and other employee groups.

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AGM & Spring Luncheon
Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Dates To Remember

February, 2017	Date	March, 2017	Date
Art/Sketch	3	Art/Sketch	3
Bridge.....	7	Bridge.....	7
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Health & Wellness Workshop Advance Notice

Bill Tajer and **Valerie Mah** have organized a series of three Health and Wellness Workshops for Spring, 2017. Six presentations have been arranged on assorted topics. See page 14 for program and registration details. **16**

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of RTO/ERO or RTO/ERO Toronto District 16.

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The excitement and chaos of the holiday are now well behind us but, unfortunately, the winter lasts quite a bit longer. So let's take advantage, or at least hunker down, get some of those indoor jobs out of the way, or read a good book.

I find that most of our members are not familiar with the governance structure of RTO/ERO and, since it looks as though it may change in the near future, I thought I would tell you what is current and, also, what is being proposed.

At present, your local Executive is elected at the Annual General Meeting in May. Usually this is not very competitive and I really hope that more people will come forward to lend a hand organizing Toronto District 16. In turn, the Executive selects two Senators who will be the voting representatives at each of two Senate Meetings held in Toronto, one in the Spring, and one in the Fall. The main duties of the Senate are to oversee the activities of the Provincial Executive, to set a budget, and to elect the members of the Provincial Executive.

In common with other not-for-profit organizations, RTO/ERO is

registered with the government and is obligated to meet a certain level of fiduciary diligence, and to carry out other responsibilities as prescribed by law. Through legal counsel the Provincial Executive has determined that members of the Senate can be held personally liable if the organization is found not to have met its obligations. The Provincial Executive has been working for nearly two years to come up with a new structure to remove the risk to Senators and to carry out the duties of the organization better and with less risk.

To this end, the Senate will no longer be the supreme authority. Rather, a nine-member Board would be established to make the key decisions within the strategic direction and budget set by the Senate. This Board would not be elected, but be selected as a slate by a committee subject to acceptance, or rejection, by the Senate. The Board would comprise two experts who are not RTO/ERO members and the remaining seven would be chosen on the basis of their skills and knowledge. The Annual General Meeting would be moved to the

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Contact Roger: 416•461•7373 | rogerapwilson@sympatico.ca

Front Cover - Top: At our Fall Luncheon, **Joan Elliott** (left) and **Roger Wilson** (right) presented the *2016 RTO/ERO Service-to-Others Grant* to RTO/ERO member **Carol Montemurro**, for *The Art City 2016 New Canadian Landscapes Program*. Details on Page 11. **Bottom:** A few of our draw -prize winners.

Back Cover: Our entertainment: **Amberley Beatty**.

President continued from Page 3
Spring. The Fall Senate would be discontinued.

I have a number of concerns about these proposals and your Executive will be discussing what stance the District should take when the debate occurs at the Senate in May. We are also in close contact with the other three districts in Toronto to determine their views and to discuss

the possibility of a united front. If you want more details see elsewhere in this magazine.

Enough of that!

One way to beat the February blahs is to get out and do something. Take a look at what District 16 offers. We have lots of activities and I encourage you to join your former colleagues and have a bit of fun.

Roger 16

To: RTO/ERO Members

From: Gayle Manley, Chair, Health Services & Insurance Ctte

Martha Foster, RTO/ERO President

Jim Grieve, RTO/ERO Executive Director



**BENEFITS
OPEN
ENROLMENT
WINDOW**

At the December, 2016 meeting of the Health Services and Insurance Committee (HSIC), it was determined that ***RTO/ERO will waive the medical evidence requirement and implement an open-enrolment window for any individual insurance plan policyholders wishing to transfer their existing coverage into the RTO/ERO Group Insurance Plans, subject to RTO/ERO membership eligibility.*** Coverage can commence as early as February 1, 2017.

Our commitment at RTO/ERO is “*Here for you now, here for your future*”. We are here to improve the lives of our members and seniors. Our Plans, too, are designed and run by members, for members.

From now until April 30, 2017, we will treat those wishing to transfer from any individual insurance plan as if they were coming from a group insurance plan and therefore will waive the medical questionnaire requirement. Coverage with RTO/ERO will commence the day following the termination date of their prior insurance.

Please direct insurance enquiries to our administrator, Johnson Inc., at 1•877•406•9007, and membership enquiries to RTO/ERO at 1•800•361•9888.

Call volumes at this time of year are higher. If you need to leave a message, we are committed to returning calls within 24 hours.

We will continue to keep you updated. Thank you for supporting RTO/ERO and helping to distribute this important message!

Recreation/Social ~ Heather Talbot



We rely on the voluntarism of our members for the breadth of activities available. If you have a special interest and are looking for an outlet, consider contacting Heather with a proposal. She'll bring it to the Executive; we'll place an ad in our Newsletter.

Art, Bridge, Travelogue, West End Book Club meet at Holy Rosary Parish Hall on St. Clair between Spadina and Bathurst, just east of Loblaws:



Art Friends - Marie Lynch (416•421•4936 | lynchmarie11@gmail.com) We meet, sketch and paint on the first Friday of the month from 10:00am to 12:00. Our next sessions will be on February 3 and March 3. Bring along whatever you've been working on and, as always, we'll have ourselves a fine time!



Bridge - Tessie Leung (416•421•9054 | tessleu191@rogers.com) Anyone who knows the basic bidding rules of bridge is welcome to join on the *first, third and fifth Tuesdays of the month from September to June* from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Friendly atmosphere. Tea is served.

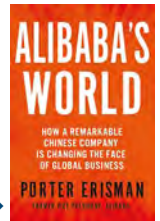


Non-Fiction Book Club: Cynthia Bracewell (cgbracewell@sympatico.ca | 416•424•4156) and **Nancy Ballanger** (nancyballanger@gmail.com) host this specialized book club on the *second Tuesday of the month* from 1:30 to 3:30. *This popular group is at capacity at this time. We list their selections for those interested in their reads.*



← **February:** *The Last Stand: A Journey Through the Ancient Cliff-Face Forest of the Niagara Escarpment* by **Peter E. Kelly**

March: *Alibaba's World: How a Remarkable Chinese Company is Changing the Face of Global Business* by **Porter Erisman** →



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Check out our other activities:

- Health & Wellness Workshops .. ~ see Page 14
- Theatre, *Joseph...Dreamcoat* ~ see Page 33
- Theatre, *HMS Pinafore* ~ see Page 34
- Travelogue, February 22 ~ see Page 31
- Travelogue, March 22 ~ see Page 32

Contact Heather: 416•265•8930 | heatalb@rogers.com

Social/Recreation continued from Page 5 ~ At Holy Rosary Parish Hall

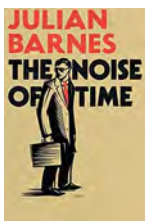


Travelogue - Dick and Marilyn Holyer (416•929•8512 | mar.dickholyer@sympatico.ca) go around the world with slide/digital presentations and treats on the *fourth Wednesday of the month, 1:00pm*: October to May.

See Pages 26 and 30 for our January and February presentations.

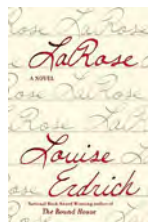


West End Book Club ~ Steve Feldman: (416•588•6637 | vsf@sympatico.ca) hosts this book club in Room 2 at Holy Rosary Church. We meet the *4th Tuesday of each month*, September to June (NOT December) from 1:30pm to 3:30pm.



← **February:** *The Noise of Time*
by **Julian Barnes**

March: *LaRose*
by **Louise Erdrich** →



The following activities meet at varying locations:



Book Club ~ Lynne Fitzpatrick (fitz9284@gmail.com) and **Elaine MacIntosh** (416•463•2637) host this activity. *This popular group is at capacity at this time. We list their selections for those interested in their reads.*



← **February:** *The Sisters: The Saga of the Mitford Family* by **Mary S Lovell**

March: *The Light Between Oceans*
by **L M Stedman** →



Downtown Coffee Club: Host, **Ann Ludwigsen** (acludwigsen@rogers.com | 416•270•4166).

Meet other retired teachers and friends informally! 625 Church St any *Wednesday or Saturday around 10:30am* at The Croissant Tree (NE corner of Church and Charles St. E, one block south of Bloor/short walk from Yonge/Bloor subway station). Buy a coffee, look for a table of happy retirees!

Continued on Page 39 ↗



Your Toronto Executive received at its November meeting, in addition to the Chairs' reports:

- **Lone Smith** reported on the success of the Wills & Laws Workshop with 76 attending;
- **Lone Smith**, RPW Registrar, reported on the last 2016 workshop: 134 paid/150 registering;
- **Joan Elliott** reported on the Fall Senate:
 - Code of Conduct approved (see Page 8);
 - the Strategic Plan 2020 was approved (includes a marketing program to encourage recognition of RTO/ERO among potential retirees and to be known as an advocate for older citizens);
 - the 2017 RTO/ERO budget was set with stable membership fees;
- **Bill Tajer** reported on the initial plans for a spring Health & Wellness Workshop (details on Page 14);
- **Valerie Mah** reported on the search for documents/photos as preparation for the 50th Anniversary of RTO/ERO (please assist if you can);
- **Armand Gagné** reported on the new Foundation Grants (see Page 13);
- **Marjorie Blake** sent out over 100 letters/cards to new members and those celebrating 80th and 90th birthdays.



RTO/ERO Toronto Districts, a voluntary organization, represents the four RTO/ERO Districts in Toronto (Etobicoke/City of York; North York; Scarborough and East York; Toronto; District 22, 23, 24, 16 respectively).

Two 2017 Retirement Planning Workshops (RPWs) have been planned. If you know of colleagues considering retirement, please let them know.

Thursday, March 2, 2017
The 519 Community Centre
519 Church Street

5:30pm - 8:30pm

Registration/Refreshments: 4:30pm

Pre-Register By February 3

Thursday, April 20, 2017

The Estate Banquet & Event Ctr
430 Nugget Avenue

5:30pm - 8:30pm

Registration/Refreshments: 4:45pm

Pre-Register By April 7

On-Line Registration at:

<https://www.rto-ero.org/rpw-schedule-list>

On November 8, the executives of these four districts met with RTO/ERO's Executive Director, Executive Assistant/Outreach Advisor, Chief Administrative Officer, Financial Officer, Pension/Benefits Officer; president, and past president. A detailed Q&A period helped all to appreciate the inner workings of RTO/ERO and districts representing over 13,000 members. **16**

Approved by Senate, October, 2016

A. Introduction and Purpose

1. The Retired Teachers of Ontario/Les Enseignantes et Enseignants Retraités de L'Ontario (RTO/ERO) appreciates the dedication of its members to the organization, especially those who assume voluntary leadership positions at both the provincial and district levels.
2. RTO/ERO recognizes that the vast majority of its members behave in a professional and decorous manner reflective of the way they acted within their working environment prior to retirement, and expects this will continue.
3. These expectations are reflected in RTO/ERO's Code of Ethics, as outlined below in Section B. Adhering to these ethics helps ensure that members, staff, and visitors may participate in activities in a safe, inclusive and accepting environment, where conflicts and differences can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and dignity.
4. RTO/ERO further recognizes that in rare situations members may engage in conduct that would discredit, or be seen to discredit, RTO/ERO by behaving in ways towards fellow members, visitors, and/or staff that do not reflect the Code of Ethics, and thus conflicts may arise.
5. When such conflicts cannot be resolved locally between and amongst members, at the District level, and with members and/or staff at the provincial level, provisions within the provincial Code of Conduct (Code) may be used to resolve such conflicts as expeditiously and informally as possible.
6. In even rarer and more extreme situations, when such conflicts cannot be resolved using informal procedures, more formal provisions within the Code may be used.
7. When it is necessary to use these formal procedures there may be consequences for the member(s) involved, including, in the most extreme of situations, the loss of certain membership privileges, excluding the right to participate in the RTO/ERO group insurance program.
8. The Code will provide a conciliatory approach to investigate allegations of misconduct that allows the Provincial Executive to address complaints

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Members save big with Venngo MemberPerks®

RTO/ERO announces that Venngo MemberPerks® memberperks

is being included as a part of the Extended Health Care (EHC) Plan, effective January 1, 2017 through Venngo. The MemberPerks program is a world-class group discount program that includes savings on everything from health and wellness to entertainment, restaurants, travel, and more.

MemberPerks® include:

- Instant access to a growing list of over 1,200 perks for you and your family;
- A broad range of discounts on everything from apparel and computers to shoes and events;
- 350+ health and wellness perks;
- The Venngo mobile app to access to your discounts wherever you are;
- Discounts that are easy to redeem in-store, online, or over the phone;
- New & seasonal offers when you sign up for the MemberPerks e-newsletter.

What you need to know:

- MemberPerks® is FREE for anyone with RTO/ERO's Extended Health Care Plan starting January 1, 2017
- RTO/ERO members and their families without RTO/ERO's Extended Healthcare Plan can join MemberPerks® for only \$24.95/year, plus HST.

Learn more: Read Winter Renaissance, Update newsletter (mailed with your group insurance renewal information), and check your email for an announcement with instructions in early January.

Questions? Contact Venngo customer service at:

1•866•383•6646, or membersupport@venngo.com

Register NOW with your Member Number at:

http://www.rto-ero.venngo.com

Diet or Exercise: What works best for weight loss?*

- Improving your diet is more effective than exercising to lose weight, but a combination of diet changes AND exercise has the greatest benefits for weight loss and heart health.
- Start small: Nutrition expert Dr. Russell de Souza suggests one small diet change and five minutes of exercise each day can help build long term healthy habits to keep the pounds off.
- Measuring your waist circumference is a more accurate indicator of weight loss impacts on heart health than measuring your weight on the scale. 16

Contact Bill: 416•494•8590 | bill.tajer@sympatico.ca

*Source: McMaster Optimal Aging Portal: www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org



Find An Inactive Teacher



Why? By law, the Teachers' Pension Plan (TPP) must pay contributors what is owed them by the time they reach age 71.

What Is An Inactive Teacher? Anyone who taught in Ontario in the past – full-time, part-time, on contract or occasional, qualified or deemed qualified (Letter of Permission) who contributed to the TPP; *and has not* received a pension, refund, or Commuted Value Payout. When they taught is not important but generally they ceased working prior to 2000.

The Problem? The TPP does not have valid addresses or emails to contact them and to pay what is owed. They have probably moved and not realized that they were owed money or they didn't realize that they paid pension contributions many years ago. Many women have changed their surname.

How Can I Help? If you have contact with former colleges or relatives who taught in the Ontario school systems, encourage them to contact the Teachers' Pension Plan Board at 1•800•668•0105.

Source: Suzanne Jones, RTO/ERO member, TPP Benefits Adjudication Cttee

OMERS OMERS Pensions to Increase by 1.45% in 2017
OMERS uses the monthly average of the CPI for a 12-month period ending in October, and compares it to the monthly average for the same period the previous year. The percentage determines the increase for pensions.

In late December 2016, OMERS will send an Annual Statement of Pension to retired members and survivors, with their updated pension amount for 2017. Members whose pensions began in 2016 will receive a pro-rated increase. Details on their website.

www.omers.com/corporate/news_article.aspx?newsid=8853

The dates used to calculate the OTPP and OMERS annual increases differ slightly in the fiscal year employed: October and November respectively.

Pension Contact:

Susan (general information):

416•367•9917 | susanweinert@hotmail.com

OTPP (specific personal concerns):

416•226•2700 | 1•800•668•0105 | www.otpp.com

OMERS (specific personal concerns):

416•369•2400 | 1•800•387•0813 | www.omers.com

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OTF President Mike Foulds: *The One Percent IS Responsible!*

On September 28, 2016*, MacLean's magazine published an editorial, "*Why the one percent isn't to blame for income inequity.*" Ontario Teachers Federation President **Mike Foulds** responded with the following letter to the editor. A portion of this letter was published in MacLean's letters to the editor on October 10*.

It was disheartening to read the September 28, 2016 Editorial *Why the one percent isn't to blame for income inequity, Our Editorial: It's past time to rein in the public sector pension plan*

bacchanalia. Not disheartening as a member of a fully funded jointly-sponsored public pension plan, but disheartening to see what was once Canada's preeminent weekly news magazine sink further into the muck of right wing "journalism" best exemplified by such luminaires as Fox news.

Your editorial dismisses "the notion that an elite group of "one-percenters" is responsible for vast problems of income inequity" not through careful consideration of history or facts but through ignorance of them. Highly desirable Defined Benefit pension plans that are well managed and that possess good governance models are thriving in Canada. One need only consider the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan's 107% funded status this past year as an example but I would be remiss to not mention OMERS' 6.7% net investment return in 2015 or CDPQ's 9.1% return in 2015. To make the comparison between these well managed and well governed public sector Defined Benefit Pension Plans and the travesty of the General Motors Canada Limited's management of their Defined Benefit Plan without actually delving into the causes of GMCL's pension problem should be an embarrassment for a "news" organization.

In 1992, Bob Rae's NDP passed Pension Benefit Act Regulation 5.1; the "Too Big to Fail" Legislation. It allowed companies with pension funds in excess of \$500 million to elect to be treated as a "qualifying plan". This legislation allowed qualifying companies to fund their pension plan on an ongoing basis permitting them to significantly reduce their pension plan contributions and, predictably, their wind up ratios declined. Along with GMCL, other companies such as STELCO and Algoma Steel elected to

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Mike Foulds continued from Page 11

take advantage of this offer. STELCO and Algoma both went bankrupt and the fallout of their underfunding of pensions is a matter before the bankruptcy courts. GMCL claims it nearly went bankrupt in 2009 and as a result the Ontario and Canadian government provided GMCL with billions in bailout. GMCL used portions of that taxpayer money to address the pension shortfall it had created by underfunding the pension plan through the “Too Big to Fail” pension legislation loophole. (http://www.genmo.ca/media/101013_Your_Pension_A_Reference_Document_Issues_Affecting_the_GM_Canada_Salaried_Pension_Plan_2013_09_27_Version_2.1.pdf)

Your editorial also fails to take into account the research conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), which confirms that an estimated 10 to 15% of Defined Benefit beneficiaries collect the government’s Guaranteed Income Supplement, compared with 45-50% of other Canadian retirees. Defined Benefit pensions reduce the annual pay out of GIS, a supplementary government benefit provided to low-income seniors, by approximately \$2-3 billion a year. The study also found that defined benefit recipients contribute \$14 - \$16 billion annually to government coffers across Canada through income, sales and property taxes. (<https://www.otpp.com/news/article/-/article/701993>)

When one compares the average annual pension benefits paid out by OMERS (\$28,300 per year average starting in 2014), HOOPP (\$24,000 per year average unreduced starting in 2015), or OTPP (\$45,000 per year average starting pension in 2015) to name a few, with the compensation paid to executives at such places as Rogers where CEO Nadir Mohamed’s reported total compensation in 2013 was \$26,769,973, or General Motors’ CEO Mary Barra whose 2015 compensation was \$28,588,663, it seems ludicrous that a rational person would think the Defined Benefit pension plan of public sector workers is the cause of the “vast problems of income inequity” but your editorial attempts to make that case.

“Given current trends, it won’t be long before DB plans are the exclusive domain of the public sector.”

I fear that you are correct. However, UNIFOR, and before it CAW and USW, did not make the series of poor decisions to underfund the Defined Benefit pension plan at General Motors. Those decisions were made by the “one-percenters” running the companies and collecting bonuses while underfunding their employees’ retirement.

Rather than deride public sector employees for their pensions or declare attempts to address the retirement income problem through enhancement

Continued bottom of Page 13 🗨️



- 1 The first project addresses the challenges of social isolation in older adults: \$50,000 to the *Hamilton Council on Aging* to support the Hamilton Seniors' Social Isolation Project, a collaboration between seven community organizations to measurably reduce the rates of seniors' social isolation
- 2 *Ryerson University, AGE (Advanced Gerontological Education) and McMaster University* to evaluate a standardized, online Dementia Education Program for post-secondary health care students to build students' capacity to support patients with dementia displaying challenging behaviours with non-medical intervention;
- 3 *Northern Ontario School of Medicine, University of Guelph, University of Ottawa, and Lakehead Universities* to develop a toolkit for healthcare professionals caring for older LGBT adults facing the end of their lives;
- 4 *Mount Sinai Hospital and the University of Toronto* to evaluate a Geriatric Education Program for Orthopaedic Surgery Residents that aims to strengthen geriatric competencies among orthopaedic trainees; and
- 5 *Baycrest Hospital, the University of Toronto, Meighen Manor, and Reikai Centres at Sherbourne Place and Wellesley Central Place*, to investigate the benefits of using cognitive stimulation with elderly long term care residents during friendly visits by volunteers.

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Mike Foulds continued from Page 12

of the Canada Pension Plan as “misguided” it would be a welcome change to see some critical analysis of how Defined Benefit pension plans in the private sector were allowed to be systematically underfunded to the point of insolvency by the “one-percenters” ...responsible for the vast problems of income inequity” than a blatant attempt by a news magazine owned by “one-percenters” to shift the blame to hard-working public sector employees.

Mike Foulds, Ontario Teachers' Federation President

* The McLean's date referenced in Mike's introduction is that of the web-posting. The print version appeared in McLean's October 10 issue on Page 5. A much truncated version of Mike's Letter-to-the-Editor was printed in the McLean's issue dated November 24, 2016.

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Never test the depth of the water with both feet.

Everyone seems normal until you get to know them.

Health & Wellness Workshops



Date: Wednesdays, April 12, 19, 26

Site: Holy Rosary Parish Hall, 354 St Clair Avenue West
 North side of St. Clair 'tween Bathurst/Spadina at Tweedsmuir
 Street Parking is limited | Excellent TTC Access
 Subway to St. Clair West Station then walk east
 Streetcar to Tweedsmuir then walk west

Fee: \$20.00 to help subsidize the three workshops.
 Space is limited. Register early.

Topics: (there will be a break, with refreshments, at 10:30am.)

Day	9:30am	10:45am
Wednesday, April 12	<i>Best Doctors:</i> an RTO/ERO insured benefit	<i>Seniors and Fraud</i> Kristin Thomas , Police Constable
Wednesday, April 19	<i>Eldercare Select:</i> an RTO/ERO insured benefit	<i>Reconnecting to Your Creativity:</i> Marsha Stonehouse
Wednesday, April 26	<i>Benefits & Precautions when Taking Prescriptions and Supplements:</i> Akeel Jaffer , Pharmacist	<i>RTO/ERO Health Benefits:</i> Update by Lori MacDonald-Blundon , RTO/ERO Pension & Benefits Officer

The \$20.00 fee gives you access to all three workshops. Although you may elect to attend fewer workshops, the cost is the same since incurred costs are based on full attendance.

This event is organized by:



Valerie Mah
District Archivist



Bill Tajer

District Health Services/Insurance Representative

Questions & Registration: Contact **Valerie Mah**
 by phone: 416•533•0445
 by email: vmah@ican.net

Fee Payment: Fee payable at the door, cash or cheque.
 Make cheque payable to **RTO/ERO District 16**

Top 25 Movies of 2016 ~ John Borovilos



So many questions. Here are some answers!

Why watch movies? With the world in a seemingly downward spiral of barbaric, bizarre problems, a world of increasing jealousies and economic gaps, a world where fewer people seem to care about their own privacy amidst the anti social media, or the way they treat people on their Emails and Internet, good movies have a way of transporting us away from our own reactions to these problems, letting us think and put things in perspective, if even for a few precious hours. Our own personal anxieties and rude relationships with others are pushed aside, while we enter worlds of other possibilities, yes, even in senseless tragedies.

From the inspirational and heroic, multicultural moments of *Lion*, *Sully*, *Loving*, and *Zootopia* to the pathos and excruciating grief of *Manchester by the Sea*, *Moonlight*, *Remember*, and *Jackie*, we learn and we change. In comedies such as *Central Intelligence* and *Hail, Caesar!*, we learn to smile and laugh again. And, in the rare musicals like the 80s *Irish Sing Street* and the dazzling, magical *La La Land*, like my friends in the Toronto Choristers, we learn the value and therapeutic delight in just plain singing, maybe followed by a little dancing! A grand and delightful, transformative escape.

This year provided all these things at the movies – and provided us with a few answers I have been asked by readers of this annual review (my 15th in 15 years with the RTO/ERO).

Why are so few comedies today actually funny? It seems that real wit and good-hearted laughter are quite rare today and that Hollywood producers and writers have descended to sophomoric gross-out jokes (including constant cursing that is supposedly cool; bodily functions, vomiting, and crude relationships) that supposedly amuse the masses, particularly those who are in their teens and twenties. Lord knows what all this is doing to their minds, but only time will tell.

Having said that, some film-makers are trying to make movies that are mildly amusing or fun: *Hail, Caesar!*; *Zootopia*; *The Meddler*; *The Lobster*; *Florence Foster Jenkins*; *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2* (with lots of silly stereotypes, but done with respect and love). This may surprise some people, but my favourite laugh-out-loud comedy this year was *Central Intelligence*, a film which actually reminded me of those beloved Abbott & Costello movies with the hilarious pairing of Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart caught up in high-level, slapstick “intelligence” operations. Try it and see if you can’t stop yourself from laughing.

Why should people see sad movies? I know some people who avoid

Continued on Page 16 📖

Movies continued from Page 15

sad films like the plague, thinking that these films will depress them. Maybe they will. Personally, I find myself caught up in very real lives and hope against hope that they might find some kind of happy, or at least tolerable, resolution at the end, just like we all try to do. I also believe in Aristotle's theory of catharsis when approaching drama, that somehow watching strong drama will cleanse us of our own inner demons, helping us to lead kinder, more forgiving lives. Some of the very best films did just that this year.

Moonlight showed the importance of unconditional love, forgiveness, and acceptance as a young, black boy struggles through three stages in his young life to deal with an irresponsible mother, sadistic bullies, and his own sexual identity. Amazing performances and a brilliant script made all this work as the young hero was forced to answer the question, "Who is you?". A great question for all of us with the echo of the Delphic Oracle's "Know Thyself" as a way to possible truths, understanding, and happiness. *Manchester by the Sea* dealt with enormous loss and grief as a result of an incredible act of irresponsibility. Casey Affleck was superb in his almost mute, incoherent role as a tortured man unable to forgive himself.

Nocturnal Animals dealt with false values, cold betrayal, and sweet revenge in a Hitchcockian way – certainly moving and shocking, but also the best thriller of the year. The ending will remind you of the brilliant classic, *The Heiress*.

Jackie revealed to us, through Natalie Portman's towering performance, not the iconic, vulnerable, grieving widow of JFK, but the real steely woman behind the media mask as she willfully constructed the Camelot myth that would endure forever.

So many other films with sad elements also dealt with identity issues: *Lion*; *Hello, My Name Is Doris*; *Indignation*; *Captain Fantastic*; and *The Meddler* (with an amazing Susan Sarandon trying to find herself again in her 60s after her husband dies – this film is both amusing and touching, just like real life).

What were the scariest films of the year? Certainly the kinds of films that used to scare me when I was young no longer do. My scary films have nothing to do with obvious and demented villains, boring superheroes in

Continued on Page 17 🗨️

Movies continued from Page 16

tights saving the earth from something or other, grotesque faces, monsters who lurk in the night. Lately, the things that scare me have more to do with technology and its invasion on our privacy, cyberbullying, and so-called social media that are actually anti-social.

Snowden shows how we are being constantly tracked no matter where we are as we are brainwashed into thinking privacy is no longer a virtue. *Eye in the Sky* demonstrates the art of war today as high-tech drones, played like video games, can effectively kill people far, far way. And, if there is collateral damage (ie: innocent civilians, children, hospitals, schools), so what?

At least *Arrival* shows how technology can be used by intelligent people for good before the hotheads, suffering from ignorance and xenophobia, understand what's going on and shoot first, ask questions later. This is smart Science Fiction where decoding language (a la Rosetta Stone) and language itself become more important than guns.

Nerve really hit a nerve because of the casual way it shows young people using their anti-social media to become voyeuristic, sadistic, bullies in a game whose ultimate aim is to humiliate and then kill innocent players. I'm not sure if this is a futurist parable or a critique of our media-obsessive world today. But scary? Yes. I keep thinking that I lived in a Golden Age a long time ago.

Best film of the year? *La La Land* – strongly moving, beautifully edited, exciting movement and music, magical lighting and cinematography – by the same director, Damien Chazelle, of my #1 film of 2014, *Whiplash*. A classic, yet innovative, musical. A classic romance, where love gives way to fame and ambition. See it and be dazzled.

Here are my choices for the TOP 25 MOVIES of the year – enjoy!

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. La La Land | 13. Hell and High Water |
| 2. Manchester by the Sea | 14. Nerve |
| 3. Moonlight | 15. Snowden |
| 4. Nocturnal Animals | 16. Sleeping Giant |
| 5. Lion | 17. Eye in the Sky |
| 6. Jackie | 18. Captain Fantastic |
| 7. Arrival | 19. The Meddler |
| 8. Sing Street | 20. The Lobster |
| 9. Central Intelligence | 21. Hello, My Name Is Doris |
| 10. Florence Foster Jenkins | 22. Remember |
| 11. Zootopia | 23. Indignation |
| 12. Sully | 24. Hail, Caesar! |
| | 25. Loving |

John Borovilos **16**

Project STO (Service To Others) Grants ~ 2017

2017 Applications now available at:

<https://www.rto-ero.org/programs-services/project-service-to-others>

Our provincial organization gives its districts an opportunity to support a member's favourite organization in the amount of up to \$4,000. It is important that applicants understand the process. Here is a brief outline:

A Toronto District 16 application must be submitted to the provincial office by a specific date. *To this end, individual applications must be received by the President, Roger Wilson, by our closure date of March 1, 2017*, to be considered by the Toronto Executive. Just one project, if any, can be selected. The Toronto Executive makes the final decision about which project, if any, is forwarded to the provincial Service-to-Others (STO) Committee. Although all applications may be worthy of consideration, only one per district is allowed to go forward. Those applications meeting the basic criteria for the grant are selected for further consideration; those not meeting the basic criteria are rejected outright. (The process, although somewhat subjective, is based on which application best meets the stipulated conditions.) Applicants are informed of the disposition of their submissions.

The RTO/ERO STO Committee considers, potentially, 48 applications from districts over the summer, and meets in September to decide the degree of support and which projects will receive that support. In 2016, our proposal received 2,000.00. Our November Newsletter listed all 2016 recipients.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is completed according to the stipulated directions. Although an executive member may give guidance, such assistance should not be considered support. The full executive will make a decision regarding one, or none, of the submissions.

Submit applications (.DOC/.DOCX format) as follows:

Email preferred: rogerapwilson@sympatico.ca

Canada Post: Roger Wilson
207-660 Pape Avenue
Toronto ON M4K 3S5

16



Volunteers Wanted: Are you interested in textiles, and would like to volunteer a few hours a month or help with fundraising? The **Textile Museum Of Canada** can use your help.

Information and application at <http://www.textilemuseum.ca/join-support/volunteering/volunteer>. Training provided.

Location: 55 Centre St. (near the St Patrick subway station).

Depuis 1968



Since 1968

RTO/ERO Service-to-Others Award, 2016

Editors: RTO/ERO proudly operates a grant program for its 48 Districts, providing \$100,000 to sponsor local community projects. Through *Project – Service to Others (STO)*, Districts apply for individual projects that support local, national and international programs that often involve children and/or disadvantaged groups, to a maximum of \$4,000 per project. See Page 18 for the local Toronto District 16 process.

Established in 2000, Art City is a not-for-profit organization providing multidisciplinary after-school art programs free of charge to children and youth who reside in St. James Town; a densely populated neighbourhood in Canada.

Children of St. James Town can face daunting social issues, have difficulty engaging with the wider Toronto community, and are at higher risk of negative social outcomes. There is a dearth of resources for children and youth, particularly in the arts in this community. Many families cannot provide access to cultural capital, and as a result, members of this community continually fall behind. Art City provides free art workshops, snacks and field trips for all students attending the program-eliminating one major barrier for artistic expression.



Art City offers innovative and exemplary programs to develop and produce arts education programs to foster creative thinking and nurture self-esteem and personal accomplishment. We provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment for young people with the help of professional artists and the community, to promote the development of problem solving and interpersonal skills, instilling confidence and teaching respect and tolerance of others. We strive to equip children for future success as members of the St. James Town community and society at large.

Our programs strive to remove systemic racial, social, and cultural barriers by connecting with families; the majority of whom are recent immigrants or first-generation Canadian families who have income levels well below the citywide average. We are an anchor in the community and have built a team who are exceptionally knowledgeable and competent in their respective positions, as well as committed to the community they serve.

Continued on Page 20 

STO Award, 2016 continued from Page 19

Through the arts, Art City facilitates development and impresses a love of positive artistic expression while engaging the youngest members of the neighbourhood with the wider Toronto arts community. Providing the children with this positive refuge, as well as strengthening skills focused on creativity and communication, makes them better able to tackle life's challenges. The experience has lifelong rather than short-term benefits.

As the only free arts-based program in the community, Art City offers innovative and exemplary programs to the St. James Community. The quality of artistic programming flourishes each year and results in increased participation in our after-school, weekends, March Break and Summer Time programs. We are filled to capacity, and often have a waiting list for families who are eager to have their children enrolled in our program.

Art City is an active member of the Toronto arts community, and engages in partnerships to create projects with lasting value to a community. We have partnered with community and corporate organizations to create permanent outdoor murals, to program Community Open House nights, Henna Nights, and lead collaborative community-arts projects.

Each year, we see an exponential growth of family and participants. Art City is filled to capacity every day, and many of our programs have waiting lists, testifying to our reach and impact in our community. Through our after-school, weekend, March Break and summer programming, we are able to engage and educate children and youth in the neighbourhood, and connect with their families and the entire community. Every year, we welcome back families that have been involved with Art City for years, while meeting many newcomers.

We are currently at capacity for our 2016 Winter/Spring Program, with many more children on our waiting list. We receive 151 visits per week.

St. James Town

545 Sherbourne Street Unit 4

Toronto ON M4X 1W5

416-944-0315 | artcitytoronto@gmail.com

www.artcitytoronto.ca

Twitter: @ ArtCityToronto

Facebook: www.facebook.com/artcitytoronto

8/og:artcitytoronto.wordpress.com

Two cannibals are eating a clown.

One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

Fall Artisan Participants

Available products: runners, hand towels, baking, travel guides, jewellery, flower photography, books, beeswax candles; water colours, wood turnings, lavender, water colours, acrylics. Missing photo: **Eileen May**



Maria Arduini



Barbara Grabowski, R.T.G.



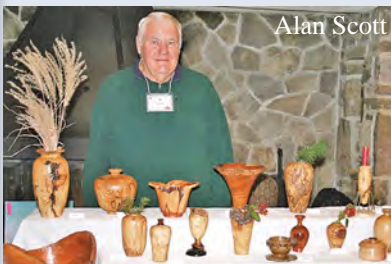
Marjorie Blake



Maria Lynch



Tony Jinkinson



Alan Scott



Maria Teresa Rifa



Marion Stephens



Ursula Yanchak

Fall Luncheon Photos

Our Spring and Fall Luncheons are attended by a variety of members and friends. Of course, the organizers attend (**Betty Lou Reynolds/Kay Jeffery** to your left). Our district is officially represented by your president, **Roger Wilson**, and vice president, **Joan Elliott** pictured at the bottom of this column). Members and



friends of all ages (mid-fifties to over 100); steady attendees who rarely miss these events; current past executive members; and, new and long-term members who attend for the first time all enjoy the camaraderie of former colleagues and new friends.

Will we see you at our Spring Luncheon and Annual General Meeting on May 3, 2017?



Fall Vendors Participants

Access Abilities | Marione Samodal

154 Norseman Street, Etobicoke ON M8Z 2R4
416•237•9654

marion@accessabilities.ca | www.accessabilities.ca



Computers Made Easy | Ryan Taylor

647•990•3279

ryan@computersmadeeasy.ca
www.computersmadeeasy.ca



Family History Simplified | Louise Todd

705•252•4467

louise@familyhistorysimplified.com
www.familyhistorysimplified.com



Investors Group | Catherine Miao

300-200 Yorkland Boulevard, Toronto ON M2J 5C1
416•491•7400 x6300

catherine.miao@investorsgroup.com
www.investorsgroup.com



Johnson Insurance Inc. / Home/Auto Insurance | Dave Brawley

1•866•307•7751

www.johnson.ca/rto-ero



Merit Travel | Rena Christakos

408 King Street W, Toronto ON M5V 1K2
416•345•9726 x3362

rchristakos@merittravel.ca | www.merit.ca



Moving Seniors With A Smile | Laurie Bell

4 Parker Avenue, Toronto ON M1N 2B6
416•697•8106

laurie@movingwithasmile.ca
www.moving seniorswithasmile.ca



Pearle Vision, Liberty Village | Bruce Prouty

2-51 Hanna Avenue
Toronto ON M6K 3N6
416•588•3937

info@perlelibertyvillage.ca | info@pearleuniversity.ca
www.pearlevision.ca



Retire-At-Home | Nicole Troiana

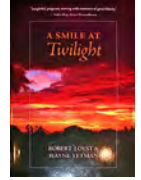
137-1140 Burnhamthorpe Road, Suite 228,
Mississauga, ON L5C 0A3
416•479•9659

ntroiano@retireathome.com | www.rahmississauga.com



A Smile At Twilight | Robert Loyst (author)

www.asmileattwilight.com



Tab | Donna Smyth

905•543•0950 | 1•877•892•9716

donnap05@outlook.com | www.dnghealthwize.ca



Total Access Centre Centre | Daniel Wiskin

200 Spadina Avenue, Toronto ON M5T 2C2
416•546•1000

dwiskin@totalaccesscentre.com
www.totalaccesscentre.com



Tapestry at Village Gate West | Brian Dugas

15 Summerland Terrace, Toronto ON M9A 0B5
416•777•2911

bdugas@discovertapestry.com | www.discovertapestry.com



University Women's Canadian Club | Jane Dickson

www.wccto.ca



University Women's Club | Susan Freeman

www.uwctoronto.ca | www.facultyclub.utoronto.ca



Editor: As a courtesy to the vendors at our Fall Luncheon, we acknowledge their contribution through the information above. They participate without subsidization from District finances, and donate our draw prizes. **16**



Frontier College is looking for tutors to support young adults upgrading their high school math or physics (MAP4C or SPH4C) courses in order to get apprenticeships in the construction trades. Tutoring takes place near St. Clair Avenue and Yonge Street from 4-7pm on Monday-Thursday each week.

For more information, contact Vicki Coleman at vcoleman@frontiercollege.ca or 416•923•3591 ext. 378.

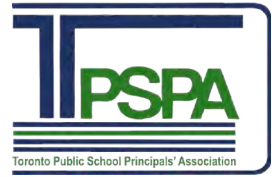
Approximate Start Date:

January or May, 2017 (Minimum 3 month commitment)

TPSPA 7th Reunion

T.P.S.P.A. Reunion (Toronto Public School Principals' Association)

Plan now for our next reunion at:
The Mandarin (Yonge & Eglinton)
Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 11:30am



Book your cruises, trips, treks, etc before/after this date so you do not miss your former colleagues! Significant others welcome.

Cost at the door: age 65 and over \$21.00 cash
under 65/\$25.00 cash
Exact change is much appreciated

Cost includes: unlimited buffet, tea/coffee or pop, tax and gratuity.
Cash bar available.

Pre-registration is necessary before Friday, May 12, 2017 with
Arlene Freeman 416•630•3672 | auntiear@sympatico.ca or
Valerie Mah 416•533•0445 | vmah@ican.net

For roof parking, enter the car park one block south of Eglinton (Berwick) west of Yonge and proceed to the top deck. The Mandarin is accessible with an elevator on street level on the east side of Yonge Street, mid-way between Yonge and Berwick. When registering, please indicate you will need help and you can call us on your cell phone and someone will meet you at the Yonge Street door. **Note:** The Mandarin does not pay for parking at lunch time so why not take T.T.C.

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Latin Ballroom Dance ~ Back by Popular Demand

Dance the Winter Blues away with a Latin beat! Join us for a series of FREE introductory Latin Ballroom Dance classes:

Fridays, January 27, February 3, 10, 17 from 1:30 - 3:30pm

Holy Rosary Parish Hall, St. Clair Ave W, E of St. Clair West subway stn

Get a taste of popular Latin dances such as Salsa, Cha cha, Rumba, Bachata and more. These are introductory classes for novices so no experience is required. No partner, no problem! A great way to get active and have fun!

To confirm your interest in attending send an email to Anna at the following address: adcat39@gmail.com, or, leave a phone message for Stephen at 416•481•4841 including your contact information.

Classes will be led by **Anna Di Costanzo** and **Stephen Cheong** (a Toronto District 16 member).

RTO/ERO Scholarship Program, 2017



Each year RTO/ERO awards up to 25 Scholarships (on a one-time basis) in the amount of \$1,500.

Criteria:

Citizenship: You are a resident, Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant.

Relationship to RTO/ERO Sponsor: You are a:

- child; step-child; grandchild; great grandchild;
- daughter-in-law; son-in-law;
- niece; grandniece; great grandniece;
- nephew; grandnephew; great grandnephew.

Programs - Teaching: You are enrolled in the last year of a program that will directly lead to a career in teaching in Canada and the completion of the program provides you with teaching credentials that are recognized by the appropriate provincial teacher regulatory body.

Programs - All other Programs: You are enrolled in the last year/semester of a program that is recognized at a Canadian Publicly-Funded or Not-for-Profit College or University.

Processing Information: When your application is received it is reviewed and processed. If there are errors and/or omissions in the application it will be returned to you by email detailing the reasons for its return.

If there are no errors in the application we will email you and advise that the application will go forward to the Project – Service to Others (Scholarship) Committee. The Committee meets in the late spring to review the Scholarship Applications and every Scholarship applicant will receive a letter from the Chair of the Committee in early June detailing the findings of the Committee.

The Scholarship 2016-2017 Application Portal is Open at:

rto-ero.org/programs-services/scholarship-program

This portal contains three documents:

1. **Process and General Information** – please take the time to review. It contains eligibility and process information.
2. **What the Application Looks Like** - what information and documents you will need to provide.
3. **The Application**

2017 Scholarship Deadline Date:

The application will be removed from the RTO/ERO website at 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on March 3, 2017.

Toronto Ride - Do you need a Lift?

Toronto Ride is a collaborative partnership of fourteen not-for-profit, community support service agencies providing transportation services to seniors 55+ and adults with disabilities who are not eligible for Wheel-Trans. Services are provided Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm.

When an agency is unable to fulfill a request, the request is sent to all the other partner agencies. Due to increasing demands and limited resources, Toronto Ride may not be able to accommodate every transportation request.

Who Is Eligible?

Toronto Ride provides assisted door-to-door transportation to seniors 55+ and adults with disabilities not eligible for Wheel-Trans. Clients must:

- Reside within our partner agencies' boundaries;
- Be able to enter and exit our vehicles with limited assistance;
- Have foldable walkers and wheel-chairs, if required.

Where Can You Go?

Transportation is provided within the boundaries of the City of Toronto. Basically any place whose postal code begins with the letter M. You can schedule a ride to and from:

- Medical appointments;
- Therapy appointments;
- Rehabilitation programs;
- Adult Day Programs;
- Partner agency programs;
- Grocery stores, banks, hairdressers, the mall, etc.;
- Social outings to visit friends.

Medical appointments are given priority when rides are being scheduled.

How Much Do Rides Cost?

Cost of the ride is determined by distance travelled. Subsidies may be available, if required, within available resources.

Here is our fee schedule (one-way rides):

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| • 0 to 5 km = \$6.40 | • 15.1 to 20 km = \$18.10 |
| • 5.1 to 10 km = \$10.20 | • 20.1 to 25 km = \$22.20 |
| • 10.1 to 15 km = \$14.80 | • 25+ km = \$1.05 per km |

If a client needs an escort for a ride, one escort is allowed to join the client free of charge. Additional escorts are charged at the same rate as the client.

How Do You Request A Ride Or Ask A Question?

- Contact Toronto Ride at 416•481•5250 or admin@torontoride.ca
- Provide as much advance notice as possible.
- Any rides cancelled with less than 24 hours notice are subject to a cancellation fee — the price of a one-way fare.

16

By Doug and Lesia Pape



From August 16 through September 17, long time Richmond Hill residents **Doug and Lesia Pape** (right) experienced an adventure of a lifetime. They were passengers on the inaugural cruise of the largest ship ever to sail the Northwest Passage. The 1000 passengers and 845 crew of the Crystal Serenity, their support vessel, the RRS Shackleton, whose normal duty is to ply the ice of Antarctica, 12 zodiacs, a fast boat, and 2 helicopters, set sail from Anchorage Alaska destined for New York City.



During this entire trip, guides, experts, archaeologists and lecturers



Crystal Serenity with RRS Shackleton

including from The National Geographic Society were boarding and disembarking. Also, the ship had Inuit guides, academics, and speakers for each section of the Northwest Passage, and finally Greenlanders to speak about their Island.

The ship took advantage of the six weeks or so that the passage is open. This one voyage took the cruise line four years to plan and no detail or risk was overlooked including extra Canadian pilots especially trained and licensed for ice choked waters. They travelled north through the Bering, the Chukchi, and then the Beaufort Sea. They travelled east along the north shore of the mainland, then north and across the top of Baffin Island, visiting the small hamlets of Ulukhaktok,



The Elders of Ulukhaktok

Continued on Page 30

Northwest continued from Page 29

Cambridge Bay and Pond Inlet along the way and enjoying all the sights in between.

Since there can be no permanent docks in these small arctic settlements, anyone going ashore had to learn how to get into and out of a zodiac without falling into the subzero

water. Since their ship carried more people than any of the towns they visited, briefings also included all safety requirements, cultural sensitivity, and environmental awareness. Before every shore excursion, sentries had already come ashore and had been posted to positions to keep



Musk Ox family

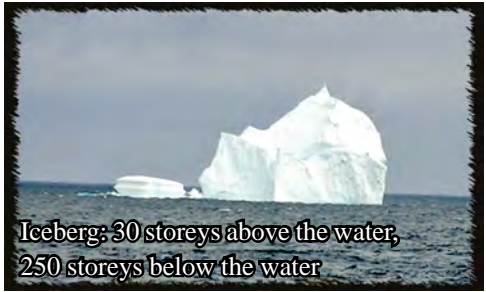
everyone and all the predators safe. After having left Canadian waters the ship sailed on to Ilulissat, Greenland to where the icebergs of the North Atlantic are born, then on to the farthest settlements of the prehistoric peoples who travelled east from Siberia, and then to the ice-free ports of Sisimiut and Nuuk where the Northwest Passage journey ends or starts.

They were numbered among the very few who will ever traverse this passage that first took 3 years to complete in 1904, by the Norwegian Amundsen, and before that, the many who tried but failed including all souls in the two-ship Franklin expedition of 1845. The pictures can never do it justice. From the wildlife, to the unforgiving cold, to the sometimes-cruel seas, and extreme weather, to the genuinely friendly people, who accepted with gratitude, the gifts the Papes brought from our town to each northern Canadian community, all these memories, and more, made for an exciting, enriching, and magical journey.

With the help of Karen and the town's Library Services and staff, they were able to take 50 pounds of books, mementos, and Richmond Hill souvenir pins to each Canadian port of call.

This is just a sample of the many sights and memories that Doug and Lesia will remember forever.

Photos by **Lesia Pape 16**



Iceberg: 30 storeys above the water,
250 storeys below the water



Mother Polar Bear and her cubs

Belgium before Brexit by Gib Goodfellow

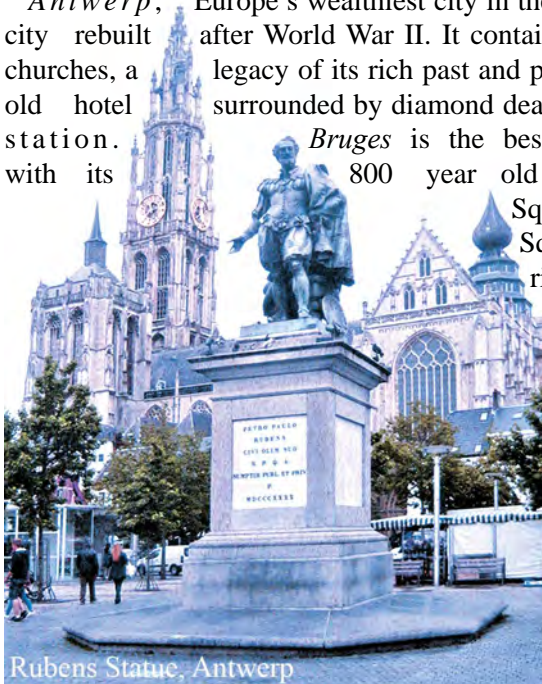
In June, this year, Phyllis and I visited Belgium for two weeks. We divided our visit among the four principal cities. *Brussels*, the capital, contains the royal palace, the European Union’s parliament and civil service, and a stunning Grand Place ~ a central square dominated by a stunning city hall with a cathedral like central tower and surrounded by beautiful guild halls.

Antwerp, Europe’s wealthiest city in the 16th century, is an industrial city rebuilt after World War II. It contains outstanding museums and churches, a legacy of its rich past and present. Here, we stayed in an old hotel surrounded by diamond dealers opposite the central train station.

Bruges is the best known tourist destination with its 800 year old bell tower on the Market Square, and palace on Burg Square a block away. Winding rivers and historic buildings provide numerous photo ops.

Our favourite city was *Ghent*, centred on Korenmarkt, with the meat hall and old fish market to one side, and St. Michael’s, St. Nicholas and St. Bavo’s on the other. There was lots to see and not so many tourists. In each city we stayed in a modestly priced, centrally located, hotel and walked everywhere.

Between cities we travelled for six euros using seniors’ passes.



Rubens Statue, Antwerp



St. Michael’s Bridge, Ghent



Boat Tour, Bruges

Travelogue ~ Wednesday, March 22, 1:00pm

Imagine--- Renting a Real Castle in Scotland for a Holiday

By Ed Martin



Trust Ed to come up with an unique and fantastic experience for a holiday. This is extraordinarily!

If you came into a LOT of money, would you carry on as usual or remember a long ago dream and make it happen?

My Brother-in-law had a dream when he was little - "If I ever come into a lot of money I will take some of my friends to a Castle in Scotland for a holiday". The money happened, and he did follow through with his boyhood dream!!!

Come, see what a week in a Scottish Castle looks like and be inspired to dream!

16





By turns dazzling, explosive, and electrifying, Joseph is truly a Technicolour triumph! Journey back to the ancient land of Canaan for an enchanting story of faith and forgiveness as the biblical tale of Joseph is chronicled with sparkling wit, irreverence, and imagination. Don't miss the rollicking musical masterpiece packed with incredible dance numbers, plenty of laughter, and catchy tunes like "Go, Go, Go Joseph," "Any Dream Will Do," and "Close Every Door."

*Also see Page 31 for
Trip Terms & Conditions*

Date:Wednesday, March 29, 2017

Depart: ..9:00am St. Andrew's Anglican Church
2333 Victoria Park Ave.

9:15am Yorkdale Subway Station (north end)

9:45am Hurontario Car Pool (at Hwy 401)

Lunch: ...11:30am - 1:00pm

Enjoy delicious buffet lunch at the Mandarin Restaurant

Show:2:00pm - 4:30pm

Reserved orchestra seating for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*

Dinner: ..5:00pm - 6:45pm

Enjoy a four course meal at Golf's Steakhouse, Kitchener

Return: ..8:00pm Hurontario Car Pool

8:30pm Yorkdale Subway Station (north end)

8:45pm St. Andrew's Church

Price:\$145.00 per person (includes HST)

Make cheque payable to *Year Round Travel Inc.*

To Book: Call Linda Grieve at 416•498•7228 at 8:00am on Wednesday, February 8. If your booking is confirmed, **forward a cheque for the full amount IMMEDIATELY to:**

Karen Sinclair, 49 Herbert Ave., Toronto ON M4L 3P8

Cheques are payable to *Year Round Travel Inc.*

and may be postdated to February 28, 2017.

Inclusions: Return transportation via deluxe coach, lunch & dinner, reserved orchestra seating, driver gratuity, gratuity on meal, and all taxes.

Theatre ~ HMS Pinafore, Avon Theatre, Stratford



Can love really level ranks, or must lowly seaman Ralph Rackstraw pine in vain for Josephine, his captain's lovely daughter? She has, after all, been promised by her father to Sir Joseph Porter, First Lord of the Admiralty. And what of Captain Corcoran himself, and the "plump and pleasing" dockside vendor Little Buttercup who privately yearns for him? These differences of station seem insuperable obstacles to happy union – until a startling secret is revealed.

*Also see Page 31 for
Trip Terms & Conditions*

Date:Friday, June 2, 2017

Depart: ..9:00am St. Andrew's Anglican Church
2333 Victoria Park Ave.

9:15am Yorkdale Subway Station (north end)

9:45am Hurontario Car Pool (at Hwy 401)

Lunch: ...11:15am - 12:45pm

Enjoy a delicious buffet lunch at the Queen's Inn, Stratford

Show:2:00pm - 4:30pm

Reserved orchestra seating for *HMS Pinafore*

Dinner: ..5:00pm - 6:45pm

Enjoy a delicious dinner at Quehl's Restaurant

Return: ..8:00pm Hurontario Car Pool

8:30pm Yorkdale Subway Station (north end)

8:45pm St. Andrew's Church

Price:\$160.00 per person (includes HST)

Make cheque payable to *Year Round Travel Inc.*

To Book: *Call Karen Sinclair* at 416•690•4961 at 8:00am on Wednesday, February 8. If your booking is confirmed, **forward a cheque for the full amount IMMEDIATELY to:**

Karen Sinclair, 49 Herbert Avenue, Toronto ON M4L 3P8

Cheques are payable to *Year Round Travel Inc.*

and may be postdated to February 28, 2017.

Inclusions: Return transportation via deluxe coach, lunch & dinner, reserved orchestra seating, driver gratuity, gratuity on meal, and all taxes.

Theatre Daytrip Terms & Conditions

Once your booking is confirmed, please make special note of the following:

1. **Departure Times and Pick-up Locations for Both Trips.**

9:00am Pick-up #1: *Church of St. Andrew* located on Victoria Park Ave. immediately south of the 401. Approach the church from the south. Turn East (right) onto Terraview and then an almost immediate left turn into the church driveway. Park at the back of the church.

Note: There is no left turn southbound on Victoria Park at Terraview from 7:00am to 9:00am.

9:15am Pick-up #2: *Yorkdale Subway Station*. After leaving the train, proceed to the NORTH end of the platform. Go down the stairs to street level. Do not take the walkway into the plaza. The bus will take on passengers near the subway exit/entrance doors.

9:45am Pick-up #3: *Carpool Lot at Hurontario*.

From Toronto: Leave 401 via Hurontario exit - remain in centre lane, proceed across Hurontario at the traffic light.

From points South or North on Hurontario: Turn West at the traffic light (1st North after passing over 401 or 1st South of World Vision). Follow roadway to the STOP sign, turn left, follow a very short distance to another STOP sign. Turn left again. Parking spaces are to your left.

2. A **waiver form will be circulated** on the bus as required by RTO/ERO.

3. **Tickets and nametags** will be distributed as you board the bus.

4. **Cancellations:** If you must cancel please contact **Karen Sinclair** at 416•690•4961 as soon as possible.

(a) If you cancel before February 28, 2017, your cheque will be shredded.

(b) If you cancel after February 28, 2017 after cheques have been cashed, Karen will connect you with someone on the waiting list, if possible.

(c) If you choose to give or sell your ticket(s) to family, friends, etc, please call Karen with name, phone number, and pick-up location of person(s) attending in your place.

Please note: If we are unable to find someone to replace you after the cheques are cashed your payment is not refundable. In the past this has occurred in a small number of cases.

**RTO/ERO Toronto Theatre Daytrips Committee:
John Bratton, Jack DeGroot, Linda Grieve, Karen Sinclair**

Goodwill ~ Marjorie Blake

Happy New Year 2017 to all 5300+ members. Whether you celebrated Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Eid or Festival of Lights, it is hoped that it was an enjoyable holiday season for all. As I look back at what I have just expressed above, I dare to say that it is unfortunate that these words resonate to a limited number of our members. My observation over the past year has revealed that some of our members suffer the sad reality of isolation. Can this be changed? Let us hope for a positive change in this year 2017 - a year when we celebrate Canada's 150th birthday!



Welcome letters were sent to 16 new members. Cards of condolence were sent to relatives of 8 deceased members. Encouragement, Get well, and birthday cards were sent to other members.

Birthday greetings were sent to twenty-four 80-year-olds and seven 90-year-olds. Congratulations to you all.

Six Centenarians (5 female/1 male), with ages ranging from 101 to 105, received holiday greeting cards, a Christmas throw, and a poinsettia plant. We wish them continued good health and happiness at this stage of their lives. A telephone call was received from the relative of one centenarian who expressed surprise at the gesture, and wished to thank RTO/ERO District 16 for its generosity towards her mother. A planter arrangement was sent to our oldest centenarian who celebrated her 105th birthday on January 1. I spoke with her on the telephone on her birthday, and she was grateful for the arrangement received. She reported that she had a wonderful day, after having tea with others, and especially with a representative from the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario - an organization for which she was once President. I enquired re her longevity. Her response was, "*Working with children*". She related short stories during her teaching career working especially with juniors and seniors. I was asked to convey sincere thanks to RTO/ERO District 16 for the Christmas gift, as well as her Birthday gift.

Congratulations to members who celebrated special occasions - births, birthdays, anniversaries and memorials. To members who were not able to participate fully in these special occasions : shut-ins, disabled, or members in palliative care our thoughts are with you! Visits (where possible) were made to some members.

Many thanks to those members who continue to inform us about the immediate needs of other members. Your continued effort is greatly appreciated. ***Here For You Now... Here For Your Future.*** **16**

Contact:

Marjorie Blake 905•837•0874/905•837•8453 | mdblake@sympatico.ca
Valerie Mah 416•533•0445 | vmah@ican.net

Code of Conduct continued from Page 8

of inappropriate behaviour from District Executives as well as individual as individual members, and staff, and to propose appropriate remedial action, as necessary.

9. The Provincial Executive has the ultimate responsibility for the final interpretation of the Code.

B. Ethical Principles

1. The Code upholds the principles of integrity/accountability, good governance, and communication, established by RTO/ERO and approved as the Code of Ethics by Senate in 2005, namely:

Integrity/Accountability

- Demonstrate integrity when acting on behalf of the organization.
- Model the principles of equity, trust, fairness, and respect.
- Recognize the importance and value of RTO/ERO members and employees.
- Respect the time, energy and effort of the many volunteers who work on behalf of the organization.

Governance

- Uphold the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures established by the organization.
- Support the governance structures (Senate, Provincial Executive, Provincial Committees, Districts and Units) to ensure the organization's democratic strength.
- Manage time, expectations, costs and resources responsibly and effectively.
- Respect confidentiality of information that is acquired in the execution of one's role at both the provincial and local levels.

Communication

- Demonstrate open, honest communication with staff, members, other professional groups and the community.
 - Share information in a timely manner, using a variety of methods to enhance our philosophy of 'Service to Others'.
 - Value the use of both official languages.
2. The Code will operate in conjunction with and incorporate the principles in all appropriate RTO/ERO policies, including the Respect & Dignity and Workplace Violence policies.

Welcome New Members ~ Linda Sue Thomas

Contact: 416•259•8590 / lindasuethomas@sympatico.ca



Welcome to those having joined RTO/ERO in October, and November, 2016.

Contact **Dianne Vezeau** at 416•962•9463 or 1•800•361•9888 to change any personal data.

As of December 31, 2016, our Toronto District membership was 5,303.

Monique Ciupa

Robert Davis

Janice Fraser

Christine Jackson

Christine Kerr

Rhona Leith

Theresa Lennox

Marcia Lockie

Jamie MacDonald

Arn MacPherson

Suzanne Paterson

Illona Rappaport

Rodney Romualdi

Maria Saccucci

Marlene Scime

Ljuba Sehovic

Fern Spencer

Karl Subban

Choi Wong

Bess Zivanovich

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Toronto Choristers

Reserve May 24, 2017! at Sir John A. MacDonald Collegiate

We are excited to present an evening of beautiful music especially chosen to celebrate Canada's 150th Birthday as we sing our 25th Anniversary Concert.

Come, join with friends and former colleagues to enjoy a wide variety of musical selections with considerable Canadian content. A special highlight will be a medley of Canadian songs arranged by our own Doug Skilling.

Tickets are \$15 each, from choir members or at the door.

For more information please call **John Sinclair** at 647•693•4671.

Rendezvous Club ~ Celebrating 80 Years in 2017



Retired women teachers and guests are invited to join us for lunch and entertainment at the Old Mill on the last Monday of the month: September to May.



January 30: Frank Sinatra Tribute - Doug Zimmerman

February 27: Act 2 Studio - Original plays by the

Seniors' Group from Ryerson University

March 27: Influential People in Toronto's History - Brue Bell, Historian

April 24: In the footsteps of the Group of Seven - Jim and Sue Waddington

May 29: 80th Anniversary Celebration - surprise entertainment and

momentoes

Contact: **Kay Jeffery:**

416•767•8179 | catherine.jeffery067@sympatico.ca

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Social/Recreation continued from Page 6



Finances ~ Lone Smith (416•234•1969 | lonesmith@hotmail.com) You are invited to join us on the 4th Thursday of the month from 4:30-6:00 p.m. to learn about Finances. We learn with and from each other and at times have speakers.

We meet on the following dates in the spring session 2017: January 26, February 23, March 23, April 20, May 25, and, June 22.



Friday Night Movie ~ Shashi Makhija (416•892•1717 | fridaymovieclub1@gmail.com) and **Carol Seljak** (carolseljak@yahoo.com | 416•562•7404) host this activity the *second Friday of the month* at a central theatre's

early show (6:00-7:00pm) followed by discussion at a nearby coffee shop. Add your name to the notification list!



La Belle Langue ~ Si vous aimez parler en français entre amis, rejoignez-nous le deuxième et derniers lundis de chaque mois de 5h. à 6h. Nous sommes en vacances pour les mois de juillet et août, mais on recommence en septembre. Si cela vous intéresse vous pouvez me rejoindre à jtchartier@hotmail.com

ou 416•691•9547. A bientôt! **Jackie Chartier**



Monday Matinée Movie ~ Join us and we'll notify you once a month of an early afternoon movie at the Varsity in the ManuLife Centre on Bloor Street between Bay and Yonge Streets. We meet on the *4th Monday of the month, eleven months of the year*

(not December). If you are free afterwards, join us for coffee/tea/dessert./or whatever, at Scaccia, which is at the bottom level of the Centre.

Convenor for January, February, March, July, August, November is **Dale Vibert** (dvibs@yahoo.com)

Convenor for April, May, June, September, October is **Steve Feldman** (vsf@sympatico.ca)

If you would like to receive our monthly email please send an email to Steve at the above email address.

Continued on Page 40 📧

From our websites: *Scholarship Applications* now available ~ Page 27

STO Award Applications now available ~ Page 18

Read about our 2016 STO Award details on Page 19.



Super Tees Golf Group ~ The Super-Tees Golf Group plays *every second Wednesday at Scarlett Woods Golf Course, from early May to the end of October, as weather allows.* We have from 8 to 16 golfers who play regularly. We try to book 4 tee-times. You receive an email with the booked tee times, but we must receive a confirmation that you are playing, so we know exact numbers. Contact **Rosalie Parente** at rosalie10@rogers.com or **Cindy Shore-Beauvais** at shorbeau@sympatico.ca. (*Liability Waiver required.*)



Theatre Day Trips ~ **Karen Sinclair** and her committee (**John Bratton, Jack DeGroot, Linda Grieves**) arrange unique, all-inclusive, excursions each Autumn and Spring theatre season. Advertisements are announced, when arranged, in our January and May Newsletters regarding schedules and registration.



Toronto Live Theatre Group ~ **Liz Estall**: 416•925•5240 | estallelizabeth@gmail.com. Enjoy the terrific theatre Toronto has to offer and meet other theatre lovers. Contact Liz to be added to her email list. **16**

Travelogue Assistants Wanted! ~ Can You Help?

We, as Marilyn's 85th birthday approaches, have at times, contemplated giving up hosting the District 16 Travelogue which, we have enjoyed immensely for more than 10 years. This year, Marilyn received a new knee joint which involves significant recovery time and walking with a cane or two. The doctor says the other knee is also a candidate for future surgery.

We are open to working with someone who would like to explore the notion of being with us this year as a transition period. Please think about being that person! We will always be grateful to **Val and Dennis Fiedler**, who loyally supported us as we learned the ropes, and we will gladly do the same for our successor(s).

If you are interested in hosting the Travelogue, please give us a call at 416•929•8512. **Marilyn and Dick Holyer**

Your Passport: Is it suitable for Travel?

Did you know that, when visiting countries requiring a passport, the expiry date of your passport must be valid for a period of time (often 6 months) from you day of departure from Canada. You can check countries' requirements at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/>

Our November issue was the first printed in full colour and we appreciate members who took the time to acknowledge, positively, this new development.

Britannia Printers, our new printer and an FSC (Forestry Stewardship Council) certified company, has worked closely with us in preparing our first endeavour. More information about Britannia's environmental responsibility can be found on their website: www.britannia.ca

This issue contains updated information on a couple of provincial and federal government initiatives that deal with changing societal values: medical assistance in dying and the legalization of marijuana usage. Both governments have on-going evaluation procedures in place.

Bill Menagh | bmenagh@sympatico.ca **16**



Markham Little Theatre Begins Year 51

Thanks to member, **Beth Harkness**, for this opportunity!

Markham Little Theatre, entering its 51st year of outstanding theatre, offers RTO/ERO members, friends and family a special price for their February and April plays: only \$14 per person (\$28 if you see both plays) for a world-class theatre experience. We offer free parking!

Dates: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 | Wednesday, April 26, 2017

Time: 8:00pm

Cost: \$14 per person / per play

Location: Flato Markham Theatre,

171 Town Centre Blvd. (Hwy. 7 and Warden Ave.) Markham, ON

Pick up your tickets at the RTO/ERO table on the night of the play. No need to visit the Box Office.

Registration must be received by:

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 for *Arsenic and Old Lace*

Wednesday, March 22, 2016 for *Bedroom Farce*

Arsenic and Old Lace, written by **Joseph Kesselring**

Wednesday, February 15, 2017 This classic comedy introduces us to the Brewster sisters, Martha and Abby. These sweet old ladies pride themselves on their "charity work" which includes cheerfully offering lonely men elderberry wine laced with arsenic.

Bedroom Farce, written by **Alan Ayckbourn**

Wednesday, April 26, 2017 With relationships ranging from solid to rocky, four couples spend one evening in three bedrooms. Sounds confusing? It is, and hilariously so!

In Memoriam ~ Marjorie Blake

Contact: 905•837•0874 / mdblake@sympatico.ca

Condolences to families, friends and colleagues of those deceased recently. We share in the mourning of the loss and we celebrate the services they rendered.



John W. Beeston

Shirley Braithwaite

Patricia Carson

John Clarke

Chet S Ciupa

Kenneth D Herlick

Wanda Hutchings

Lucy M Meehan

Elizabeth M Riesberry



Karl Kinzinger
former teacher and Director
of the legacy North York
Board of Education.

Kay Sigurjonsson
Many of our members will
remember and appreciate
Kay's active support
for women teachers as
Associate Director of the
Federation of Women
Teacher Associations of
Ontario (FWTAO). **16**

Downtown Toronto Courtyard Marriott ~ 2017 Rates

Located at 475 Yonge St. one block north of College/
Carlton Street (College subway station).

Features: • 24 hour fitness centre • Complimentary high
speed wireless internet • Indoor lap pool • Valet parking

The Preferred Corporate rate applies to a standard guestroom, single/double
occupancy. Any group bookings (10+) will be negotiated on a request basis.

2017 Rates: • **\$145 January, February, March, December**

• **\$155 April**

• **\$165 November**

• **\$175 May, June, September, October**

• **\$179 July, August**

Note: Rates in Canadian dollars per room, per night and subject to applicable
taxes. The rates are applicable only for individuals, not groups. If necessary,
cancel any room at least one day prior to the reservation date to avoid penalty.

Rates NOT available on the following 2017 dates:

• March 5-8, May 28-31, June 23-25, August 5-8, 11-15,

• September 9-13, October 15-19, December 31.

These dates are subject to change without notice. All reservations can be
made by calling the reservation office at 1•800•847•5075. ***You must mention
you are an RTO/ERO member when booking and provide member
identification (e.g. membership card) upon arrival.*** **16**



RTO/ERO Toronto Executive 2016 ~ 2017

President: **Roger Wilson**

First Vice-President: **Joan Elliott**

Treasurer: **Robert Putnam**

Archives: **Valerie Mah**

Goodwill: **Marjorie Blake**

Membership/Recruit: **Linda Sue Thomas**

Political Advocacy: **Sheila MacMillan**

Social/Recreation: **Heather Talbot**

Members-at-Large: **Armand Gagné** (also Foundation Rep), **Ruth Baumann**,
John Bratton, **Lou Manning**, **Helen Milton**

Past President: **Lone Smith**

Second Vice-President: **Betty Lou Reynolds**

Secretary: **Herb Stover**

Communications: **Bill Menagh**

Health/Insurance: **Bill Tajer**

Pension/Retirement: **Susan Weinert**

Program: **Kay Jeffery**

Travel: **Karen Sinclair**

Executive Meetings are typically held on the second Thursday of the month and are open to RTO/ERO Toronto members. Prior notification is appreciated.

Change of Address, Status, District

To limit confusion regarding a *change in address*, other contact information, or district the **ONLY contact is Dianne Vezeau** (Provincial Office/416•962•9463 or 1•800•361•9888). On-line form at: www.rto-ero.org.

Obtaining Your Newsletter

This Newsletter is provided through your fees as a Member of RTO/ERO Toronto District 16. Non-District 16 individuals are able to obtain printed copies via subscription (\$10/annum - application form on our website). Join our email service and we'll let you know when it's posted so you can download the PDF for free.

Newsletter Submissions

Your Newsletter Committee welcomes submissions from members that may be of interest to others: travels, events, life milestones, etc. 'Letters-to-the-Editor' are also welcome. The editors reserve the right to reject, or modify, any submission to fit space available and to determine the appropriateness of any submission in a particular issue. Other RTO/ERO Districts are welcome to use any content in this document with appropriate attribution. Third-party submissions **must include all source details**.

Submission standards: Electronic TXT file preferred, (or Word DOC/DOCX, WordPerfect WPD, or PDF file) emailed to bmenagh@sympatico.ca. Save submissions created in other programs as TXT files. Typed or hand-printed copy accepted, but earlier submission is advised.

Editorial Committee: **Ian Baird**, **Ruth Baumann**, **Joan Elliott**,
Bill Menagh, **Mary El Milosh**

Publication: Submissions: First day of September, November, January, March, May
Mailings: Late September, November, January, March, May

RTO/ERO Contact Information

RTO/ERO	Benefits Service / Johnson Inc	Teachers' Pension
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416•962•9463/1•800•361•9888	1•877•406•8077	1•800•668•0105
www.rto-ero.org	www.johnson.ca	www.otpp.com

OMERS: 416•369•2400 | 1•800•387•0813 | www.omers.com



Luncheon entertainment provided by **Amberley Beatty** (right) and her back-up band. Aside from her own act, Amberley is also a tribute artist. More photos on our website. Amberley's website: <http://wordpress.ampressions.ca>.



RTO/ERO Toronto Newsletter
c/o Bill Menagh
674 Oriole Pky
Toronto ON M4R 2C5





Volume 39, Issue 3

January, 2017

Electoral Reform in Canada

Efforts to broaden participation in Canada's voting system have been ongoing since before the days of the Upper and Lower Canada rebellions. Women were allowed to vote in the early 1900s. More recently jurisdictions around the world have experimented with voting systems that would further broaden the voice of voters. Canada recently dabbled with the concept: one party promising electoral change before the next election (2018); other parties eager to participate in the process in some way - all working to support a process that enhances their particular voice.

The **Law Commission of Canada*** researched, and reported on this topic, with recommendations, in 2004. This report was a major resource for the current discussions. We include portions of that document in this supplement in an effort to provide our members with more than just partisan media reports or factless blogs.

* The Law Commission of Canada was an independent federal law reform agency that advised Parliament on how to improve and modernize Canada's laws. It was created in 1996 *'to study and keep under systematic review, in a manner that reflects the concepts and institutions of the common law and civil law systems, the law of Canada and its effects with a view to providing independent advice on improvements, modernization and reform that will ensure a just legal system that meets the changing needs of Canadian society and of individuals in that society'*.

The Law Commission of Canada had its budget cut in September, 2006. It was forced to close down shortly after the announcement. Treasury Board President, John Baird, said the government was not interested in funding an organization that had opposed the government's legislation.

Since then, a group of like-minded organizations have formed **Voices-Voix** (<http://voices-voix.ca>), a non-partisan coalition of Canadians and Canadian organizations who support a strong enabling environment for civil society organizations in Canada, robust democratic traditions, and Canadians' collective and individual rights to debate and dissent.



Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada

LAW COMMISSION OF CANADA

This Report is also available online at

<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/J31-61-2004E.pdf>, or,
http://voices-voix.ca/sites/voices-voix.ca/files/lcc_report_-_electoral_reform_for_canada.pdf

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2004

Beginning in 2001, the Law Commission of Canada conducted extended research and a multifaceted public consultation and engagement strategy to gather the insights and opinions of a broad cross section of Canadians on electoral system reform. This Report reflects many of the opinions and ideas that were expressed through this consultation process.

Executive Summary

Because elections play a central role in modern democracy, the particular formula employed to translate votes into seats in the legislature assumes special importance. Recently, some countries have questioned their electoral systems and the democratic values that they reflect, and have instituted reforms. Canada, for the most part, has been hesitant to experiment with its electoral system. However, a growing number of Canadians are interested in critically examining the existing electoral system, and many deem that it is time to change the way we cast our votes.

For the past decade or so, Canada has been in the grip of a democratic malaise evidenced by decreasing levels of political trust, declining voter turnout, increasing cynicism toward politicians and traditional forms of political participation, and growing disengagement of young people from politics. However, as the Commission heard throughout its consultation process, many citizens want to be involved, want to have a real voice in decision making, and would like to see more responsive, accountable, and effective political institutions.

While there is no single magic bullet that will instantaneously stimulate Canadians' involvement in the political system, a consensus appears to be emerging among political parties of all stripes, experts in electoral behaviour, and grassroots organizations that electoral system reform is a good starting point for energizing and strengthening Canadian democracy.

In this Report, the Commission attempts to answer several questions about electoral reform. Does our electoral system meet our democratic aspirations? Should we consider reforming the existing voting system? What alternatives could more accurately reflect the style of democratic governance that we

prefer? Are these systems adaptable to the Canadian constitutional and political landscape? What should the reform process look like?

To stimulate reflection on and discussion of our system of democratic governance, this Report has several objectives:

- to understand the historical evolution of electoral reform debates in Canada and how arguments for reform have changed over time, and to understand the factors that help characterize contemporary discussion and debate;
- to assess the concerns about Canada's voting system, and to establish criteria for evaluating electoral systems;
- to explore the potential impact of electoral reform on our system of democratic governance;
- to make recommendations about electoral reform; and
- to explore how the process of electoral reform might unfold.

Families of Electoral Systems

One of the most common methods of classifying electoral systems is based on their proportionality, that is, how closely the number of seats in the legislature won by a party mirrors that party's share of the popular vote. Using this criterion, there are roughly nine types of electoral systems grouped into three families: plurality–majority systems, proportional representation systems, and semi-PR (proportional representation) systems. This Report examines the advantages and disadvantages, in a Canadian context, of these families and their nine offshoots.

Canada currently uses a plurality–majority system, which ensures that the winning candidate in a riding obtains at least a plurality of the votes cast. It is called a first-past-the-post system because, in some respects, it resembles horse races where the winner is the one who crosses the finish line first.

For many Canadians, this system is inherently unfair—more likely to frustrate or distort the wishes of the voters than to translate them fairly into representation and influence in the legislature. It has been criticized as:

- being overly generous to the party that wins a plurality of the vote, rewarding it with a legislative majority disproportionate to its share of the vote;
- allowing the governing party, with its artificially swollen legislative majority, to dominate the political agenda;
- promoting parties formed along regional lines, thus exacerbating Canada's regional divisions;
- leaving large areas of the country without adequate representatives in the governing party caucus;
- disregarding a large number of votes in that voters who do not vote for the winning candidate have no connection to the elected representative, nor to

- the eventual make-up of the House of Commons;
- contributing to the under-representation of women, minority groups, and Aboriginal peoples;
- preventing a diversity of ideas from entering the House of Commons; and
- favouring an adversarial style of politics.

Its shortcomings can be minimized by adding an element of proportionality to the electoral system—one that more accurately translates percentage of votes won into seats in the House of Commons.

Current Reform Proposals

Contemporary interest in electoral system reform in Canada has been motivated by new Canadian realities: a more mobile and diverse population, a declining voter turnout, decreasing youth participation, and recent election results.

For an increasing number of Canadians, the imbalances in our system of democracy are unacceptable. One of the driving forces for reform is the desire for a system that better reflects the country's diverse population and ideas. Another reason is found in the skewed results of recent provincial and federal elections, which many observers claim deny effective representation. Arguments for reform are also spurred by the belief that it may help improve voter turnout, which has been declining precipitously over the past decade. In the 2000 election, just over 61 percent of registered voters bothered to cast a ballot, the lowest figure for a federal election in Canadian history. Of particular concern is the lack of youth participation in traditional political processes. For example, only about 25 percent of eligible voters between the ages of 18 and 24 cast ballots in the 2000 federal general election.

International precedents have also moved electoral reform up the political agenda in the last decade or so. Included in this Report are lessons learned from the experiences of regions as diverse as New Zealand, Japan, Scotland, and Wales.

Democratic Values and the Choice of Electoral System

What criteria should we use to judge our current voting system? What criteria should we adopt to choose between different electoral systems? How do we determine which system is “better”?

Building on the examples from other countries, existing literature, as well as feedback and input received through its consultation process, the Commission chose ten criteria for assessing electoral systems:

- representation of parties;
- demographic representation;
- diverse ideas;

- geographic representation;
- effective government;
- accountable government;
- effective opposition;
- valuing votes;
- regional balance; and
- inclusive decision making.

Canada's first-past-the-post system performs poorly on many of these criteria. The Report examines some principal alternatives and improvements to the first-past-the-post electoral system, and assesses their relative strengths and weaknesses against the same criteria.

Electoral Options for Canada

In making its recommendations, the Commission's goal was to balance the benefits of introducing some element of proportionality into the existing system with the capacity to maintain accountable government, most notably as a direct link between elected politicians and their constituents. The Report, therefore, examines alternative systems from the premise that constituencies should stay small enough to maintain the Member of Parliament–constituent relationship. The Report also accepted the premise that there is little appetite for substantially increasing the size of the House of Commons to accommodate a new electoral system. Finally, the report is based on the premise that changes to the electoral system should be made without a process of constitutional amendment. These considerations, as well as our ten criteria, guided this exploration of eight different voting systems.

The conclusion of this survey is that adding an element of proportionality to Canada's electoral system, as inspired by the system currently used in Scotland, would be the most appropriate model for adoption. Its potential benefits include:

- reducing the discrepancy between a party's share of the seats in the House of Commons and its share of the votes;
- including in the House of Commons new and previously under-represented voices, such as smaller political parties;
- electing a greater number of minority group and women candidates;
- encouraging inter-party cooperation through coalition governments;
- reducing the huge disparities in the value of votes that currently exist, in which a vote for the winning party is often three to four times more "valuable" than a vote for any of the other parties;
- reducing the number of disregarded votes, thus increasing the number of "sincere," as opposed to strategic, votes; and
- producing more regionally balanced party caucuses.

The Commission, therefore, recommends adding an element of proportionality to Canada’s electoral system, and that Canada adopt a mixed member proportional electoral system.

Implications of Adding an Element of Proportionality into Canada’s Electoral System

This Report also considers the implications of introducing an element of proportionality into the current electoral system. Of particular interest are the impacts of minority or coalition governments on political decision making, questions about regionalism, the creation of two “classes” of representatives, issues of accountability, and the administrative costs of such an electoral system. The Report contains recommendations for dealing with several of these issues.

The Process of Electoral Reform—Engaging Citizens in Democratic Change

Finally, the Report explores how electoral reform fits within overall concerns about Canada’s system of democratic governance. After all, we need to remember that democracy is more than just voting in a municipal, provincial, or federal election. Democracy is also about what happens between elections, how politicians and the electorate relate to each other, and the role that citizens play in their system of democratic governance.

How might the process of reform unfold? Drawing on the results of its consultation process, and the experiences of other Canadian jurisdictions, as well as the experiences of other countries, the Report concludes that it is crucial that citizens be included in an ongoing dialogue about electoral reform, and that the process of reform include a citizens’ engagement strategy. Many Canadians are eager to participate in democratic governance, and they need and want information. This strategy should have diverse and broad representation, including representation from women, youth, minority groups, and all regions. It should seek the views of political parties (minority parties as well as mainstream parties), Parliamentarians, and citizens’ groups. Any reform process should also include provision for formal review after implementing changes.

Conclusion

Canada inherited its first-past-the-post electoral system from Great Britain over 200 years ago, at a time when significant sections of the Canadian population, including women, Aboriginal people, and non-property owners, were disenfranchised. Throughout the first half of the 19th century and for 50 years after Confederation, the strengths of our electoral system were

evident: it fostered competition between two major parties and provided the successful party with a strong, albeit artificial, legislative majority. Territory, embodied in the direct link between the Member of Parliament and his (for they were all men) constituents, was the most important aspect of a citizen's political identity and the pre-eminent feature of prevailing notions of representation.

Canada's political, cultural, and economic reality has vastly changed; the current electoral system no longer responds to 21st century Canadian democratic values. Many Canadians desire an electoral system that better reflects the society in which they live—one that includes a broader diversity of ideas and is more representative of Canadian society. For these reasons, the Commission recommends adding an element of proportionality to our electoral system.

Furthermore, because of its many potential benefits, electoral reform should be a priority item on the political agenda. Overall, the Report recognizes that no single measure will suffice to address the complex challenges facing Canadian democracy in the 21st century. However, it has become apparent that the first-past-the-post electoral system no longer meets the democratic aspirations of many Canadians. Electoral reform is thus a necessary step to energize and strengthen Canadian democracy.

Current Reform Proposals (Report: Page 31)

Issues and factors that characterize contemporary concerns with Canada's electoral system:

1. Diversity and Representation

Despite the social gains that many groups may have made over the course of the 20th century, women, minority groups, and Aboriginal peoples still find themselves seriously under-represented among elected politicians.

...with the under-representation of different groups comes the absence of diverse voices and opinions in the system of democratic governance.

One of the principal reasons that electoral reform is currently on the agenda in Canada is the increased pluralism of ideas that other systems of representation allow. In a very diverse and rapidly changing country, from a demographic and cultural perspective, the ability of the electoral system to represent the different voices is seen as very important for the legitimacy of the system.

2. Distorted Election Results

- skewed results of the three most recent federal elections.
- Voters who cast ballots for losing candidates are not represented by people with a commitment to the same principles and ideals. Their circumstances would be no different if they had wasted or spoiled their ballots.

3. Voter Turnout

- a different method of voting might help to improve voter turnout.
- supporters of newer, non-traditional parties have little incentive to go to the polls, since their votes are, essentially, disregarded.
- the lack of youth participation in traditional political processes.

4. International Precedents

International precedents have also moved electoral reform up the political agenda in the last decade or so. (New Zealand, Italy, Japan, Scotland, Wales)

Criteria for Evaluating Electoral Systems (Report: Page 58)

- representation of parties - An electoral system is fair, or representative of political parties and the political situation in the country, if each party's contingent in the legislature is roughly proportionate to its voting strength.
- demographic representation - refers to the importance of an electoral system that broadly represents the diversity of people in society, including women, minority groups, and Aboriginal people.
- diversity of ideas - linked to the criteria of demographic and geographic representation is the notion of supporting a plurality of ideas.
- geographic representation - refers to the ability of voters to elect a representative to Parliament or a provincial legislature who is "ultimately accountable to that area."
- effective government - refers to the ability of governments to develop and implement various legislative and policy agendas.
- accountable government - refers to the ability of voters to identify policy makers, to hold them accountable for their decisions while in office and, if need be, to remove them from office.
- effective opposition - first-past-the-post electoral system promotes majority governments, opposition parties are often at a loss to challenge policy and legislation, and with the occasionally massive voter swings, some parties are unnecessarily reduced to an almost non-existent presence.
- valuing votes - If voters believe that their votes do not factor into the election results, then they are less likely to participate in elections.
- regional balance - it is important to have all parts of the country represented in the system of democratic governance and its related decision-making processes.
- inclusive decision making - the desire for a more consensual style of decision making in politics.

First-past-the-post (FPTP) performs poorly on many criteria for evaluating electoral systems, including criteria that are considered traditional strengths (geographic representation, effective, accountable government) of the first-past-the-post system.

Electoral Options (Report: Page 77)

The Commission's goal is to balance, to the extent possible, the benefits of introducing some element of proportionality into the existing system with the capacity to maintain accountable government, most notably as a direct link between elected politicians and their constituents.

Majoritarian Systems

First-past-the-Post (FPTP)

Two-round System

- ensure fairness in that the eventual winner is elected by a majority (more than 50 percent) of voters.
- fosters geographic representation by retaining single-member constituencies.
- attempts to address disregarded votes
- it attempts to encourage some consensual decision making.

Alternate Vote System

- simple to use: the ballot is relatively uncomplicated.
- fosters fairness since the winning candidate enjoys broad support.
- retains the direct link between voter and representative (geographic representation).
- encourages political moderation

Proportional Systems (PR)

Single Transferable Vote System (STV)

- Election results are reasonably proportional and, therefore, fair.
- allows voters greater choice in ranking candidates
permits choice among parties and among individual candidates within parties.
- retains the geographical or territorial link between voters and their representatives if the number of members per district is kept small.
- the ballots used in single transferable vote systems and the process of tabulating votes can be somewhat complicated.
- the vote counting procedure for single transferable vote is complex and potentially time-consuming.
- can foster intra-party competition and fragmentation, thereby discouraging consensual decision making.
- because of its use of multi-member constituencies (geographic representation), represents a significant departure from the one-member-one-riding principle

List-Proportional Representation (List-PR)

- proportionality of seats to votes
- promote demographic representation
- no or few disregarded votes,
- makes power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible
- end to have a consensual style of policy making, as opposed to the adversarial and often combative politics characteristic of majoritarian and plurality systems.
- a significant departure from our Parliamentary tradition.
- could increase the role of party organizations in determining who gets elected because they determine placement on the party lists.
- reduction of the geographic representation link between voters in a given territory and their representatives.

Mixed Electoral Systems

There are many varieties of mixed or hybrid electoral systems, but they all share one defining characteristic: in each, a portion of the seats in parliament are assigned on the basis of some plurality method, usually first-past-the-post in single-member constituencies, and the remaining seats are determined by a party's share of the popular vote (regionally or nationally). In such systems, voters usually have two votes, one for a given candidate in a riding, and another for a party list.

Mixed Member Majoritarian System (MMM)

- two tiers of seats, each determined by its own electoral formula, are independent of each other, that is, no attempt is made to use the party-list vote or proportional component to compensate for distortions in the constituency vote. Depending on how they are designed, these systems can minimize the likelihood of minority or coalition government.
- add seats from the list tier in parallel, even for parties that are already over-represented in the [plurality] tier,

Mixed Member Proportional System (Germany, Scotland)

- systems with compensatory seat linkage provide list seats to compensate parties that are under-represented" in the first-past-the-post results.
- usually highly proportional and fair.

Recommendations

1. The Law Commission of Canada recommends adding an element of proportionality to Canada's electoral system.
2. The Law Commission of Canada recommends that Canada adopt a mixed member proportional electoral system. (Page 102)
3. A mixed member proportional system should be based on giving voters

TWO votes: one for a constituency representative and one for a party list. The party vote should determine who is to be elected from provincial and territorial lists as drawn up by the parties before the election.

4. Two-thirds of the members of the House of Commons should be elected in constituency races using the first-past-the-post method, and the remaining one-third should be elected from provincial or territorial party lists. In addition, one list seat each should be allotted to Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon.
5. Within the context of a mixed member proportional system, Parliament should adopt a flexible list system that provides voters with the option of either endorsing the party “slate” or “ticket,” or of indicating a preference for a candidate within the list.

Women’s Representation The potential of the open portion of a flexible list to contribute to the under-representation of women in the legislature is a serious concern when designing a voting system for Canada.

6. Parliament should require political parties to develop initiatives and policies to promote equal representation of women in the House of Commons. Parties should be instructed to consider a range of issues, including:
 - parity on party lists,
 - the use of quotas for party lists and constituency nominations,
 - recruiting policies for women candidates,
 - incentive measures for women to participate in politics,
 - support for campaign financing, including measures to enhance access to candidacy, and
 - the inclusion of more women in cabinet, if a party is elected as the government.

Following the first general election under the new electoral system, political parties should also be required to submit reports to Parliament outlining how they addressed these issues.

7. A Parliamentary committee should subsequently review the parties’ reports on the measures they have taken to promote the equal representation of women in the House of Commons.
8. Parliament should require political parties to develop initiatives and policies to promote greater representation of minority group members in the House of Commons. Parties should be instructed to consider a range of issues, including:
 - minority group candidates on party lists,
 - the use of quotas for party lists and constituency nominations,
 - recruiting policies for minority group candidates,
 - incentive measures for minority group candidates to participate in

politics,

- support for campaign financing, including measures to enhance access to candidacy, and
- the inclusion of more minority group members in cabinet, if a party is elected as the government.

Following the first general election under the new electoral system, political parties should also be required to submit reports to Parliament outlining how they addressed these issues.

9. A Parliamentary committee should subsequently review the parties' reports on the measures they have taken to promote greater representation of minority group members in the House of Commons.

Youth Representation: Another issue that needs to be addressed is the participation of youth in our system of democratic governance.

10. Parliament should require that political parties examine options for increasing youth participation and representation in mainstream political decision making.

Aboriginal People's Representation in the New Electoral System: ... address the question of whether to incorporate separate seats for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as New Zealand does for the Maori; create an Aboriginal regional list or multi-member constituency that would perhaps overlap several provinces; or introduce a separate Aboriginal Parliament.

11. Parliament should require political parties, in consultation with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, to develop initiatives and policies to promote greater representation of Aboriginal people in the House of Commons.
12. The federal government, in consultation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, should explore the possibility of introducing Aboriginal Electoral Districts

Conclusion

This Report's survey of the various electoral options for Canada has led to the conclusion that adding an element of proportionality to Canada's electoral system, as inspired by the systems currently used in Scotland and Wales, would be the most appropriate model for adoption. This system would even out the regional imbalances in party caucuses produced by our first-past-the-post system. It would produce highly proportional results,

Two examples from other jurisdictions provide useful and relevant information—the experiences of New Zealand and the state of Maine in the United States.

Medical Assistance in Dying and End-of-Life Decisions

Editor: Following the federal legislation legalizing medical assistance in dying, the Ontario Government has set its regulations within which one may seek this service. The Ontario Government has also established alternative palliative care services. We include this information below.

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www.ontario.ca/page/medical-assistance-dying-and-end-life-decisions?_ga=1.159509172.844200669.1482496960

Doctors and nurse practitioners in Ontario can now provide medical assistance in dying. Federal legislation, passed on June 17, 2016, guides how Ontario's doctors and nurse practitioners are allowed to provide this option.

Background

In February 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the federal law prohibiting medical assistance in dying (also known as assisted suicide) in certain circumstances.

In response to the Supreme Court's decision, Parliament passed legislation on medical assistance in dying on June 17, 2016. This legislation now guides how medical assistance in dying can be provided.

This service is covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) and drugs required for medical assistance in dying will be available at no cost. Health care providers, including physicians, nurses and pharmacists, should refer to their regulatory colleges for more information and guidance.

How to access medical assistance in dying

Step 1: Talk to your doctor

If you are suffering from a grievous and irremediable medical condition, you can talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about your options for treatment and care. These options may now include medical assistance in dying.

While some doctors or nurse practitioners may choose not to be involved in medical assistance in dying, they must follow professional requirements set by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and the College of Nurses of Ontario. This includes helping patients find another doctor or nurse practitioner who can provide medical assistance in dying. Your doctor or nurse practitioner can call a referral service for help finding another doctor.

Step 2: Know your options

You can ask to receive medical assistance in dying no matter where you live or receive care. This includes:

- a hospital
- a long-term care home
- a hospice or palliative care facility
- your home

Some facilities may choose not to provide medical assistance in dying or have limitations on how they provide it. We encourage facilities to make this information available, so you know your options.

If you're already in a hospital or long-term care home, speak to your doctor or care provider about your options.

What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care refers to care for patients and their families who are facing a serious, life-limiting illness. Palliative care aims to relieve suffering and improve quality of life for patients and their families at all stages of the illness. Palliative care focuses on treating the impact that an illness has on patients, and is often provided in addition to other care that focuses on treating the illness itself.

What types of services are provided?

The types of palliative care services that may be provided include:

- Physician and nursing services to assess and manage the progression of the illness. This includes providing pain and symptom management to improve comfort and quality of life
- Personal support services (e.g., homemaking)
- Psychological, spiritual and bereavement support
- Other services, such as physiotherapy, caregiver support, pharmacy, social work.

How can I access palliative care?

Palliative care can be provided or accessed through the following channels:

- 1 Your primary health care provider (e.g. family doctor). Many types of palliative care are provided directly by primary health care providers who are already treating individuals for disease. For individuals requiring more specialized services, primary health care providers can provide appropriate referrals.
- 2 Your local Community Care Access Centre can refer you to hospice or other support services
- 3 Your local hospital
- 4 Your long-term care home

Where is palliative care provided?

- Palliative care is delivered in all care settings, including the following:
- Individual homes
- Hospices
- Long-Term Care Homes
- Hospitals

What does it cost to receive palliative care?

There is no cost to patients for medically necessary palliative care services in

their homes, hospices, or hospitals. For example, this includes any treatments that a physician may provide. While residents of long-term care homes may pay a co-payment, these funds represent the individual's contribution to food and accommodations – not palliative care services.

What supports exist for caregivers?

There are a variety of supports available to caregivers in Ontario. These may include respite care or hospice-based bereavement. The 2015 Patients First: A Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care [PDF] commits to investing more in training and education programs and developing a one-stop online source for information and resources available to caregivers to enable them to work with providers to ensure appropriate services are delivered.

Contact a local Community Care Access Centre for more information, or use <http://thehealthline.ca>, which can help individuals locate caregiver supports in their area.

What is Advance Care Planning?

Advance Care Planning is a process that encourages patients, family members and health care providers to talk about patients' health care wishes, in case there comes a time when the patient may not be able to make his or her own health care decisions. While Advanced Care Planning conversations can be difficult, they help support patient-centred palliative care and help friends and family by taking away some of the stress and uncertainty that comes at an already emotional time.

How are palliative care and medical assistance in dying related?

As of June 6, 2016, medical assistance in dying will be permitted in Canada. This will not change how Ontario patients with life-limiting illness access other medical treatments, including palliative care.

Based on the experience of other countries, only a small number of Ontarians will choose to access medical assistance in dying. Patients with life-limiting illnesses will generally choose to access palliative care and other treatments.

Federal Review of Medical Assistance in Dying

Editor: The original legislation regarding assistance in dying was considered too restrictive when matched with the Supreme Court ruling. To address some of the concerns, an independent review has been commissioned. We reproduce the government's announcement below. Italics and bolding added.

Independent reviews related to medical assistance in dying requests

Source: <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1167959&tp=930>

On June 17, 2016, legislation was enacted to allow for safe and consistent access to medical assistance in dying for mentally competent adults who are suffering unbearably, are in an advanced state of irreversible decline, and whose natural deaths have become reasonably foreseeable. It strikes an appropriate balance between personal autonomy for those seeking access to medical assistance in dying and the protection of vulnerable persons. It also addresses other important societal interests such as conscience rights of health care providers, and supporting the equal and inherent dignity and value of every person's life.

Although provinces and territories are primarily responsible for the implementation of medical assistance in dying in Canada, the legislation provides for a continued role for the Government of Canada. Ongoing federal responsibilities include working with jurisdictions to support access to and referrals for medical assistance in dying and end-of-life care, and developing regulations to establish a system for monitoring and reporting on medical assistance in dying.

*The legislation also requires the federal government to initiate independent reviews into three complex and sensitive circumstances outside the scope of the law that Parliament passed in June: **requests by mature minors, advance requests and requests where mental illness is the sole underlying medical condition.***

The reviews will be conducted by the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA), an independent, not-for-profit organization that undertakes evidence-based, expert assessments to support and inform public policy development in Canada. The CCA has extensive expertise and demonstrated experience in conducting reviews on high-profile issues in an objective and rigorous manner.

The CCA will establish one or more expert panels that reflect a range of expertise, including legal, medical, ethical, social and health sciences perspectives. As part of the review process, the CCA will consider additional evidence from national and international experts, other levels of government, health care providers, and stakeholders impacted by the issues under review. The process will also examine information already available from previous expert panels and a Parliamentary Committee, as well as domestic and international experience with medical assistance in dying.

Within two years of initiating the studies, the CCA will produce three final reports, which will be made available to Parliamentarians and the public. These reports will not provide recommendations, but will summarize the findings of the reviews and provide a basis for an informed, evidence-based dialogue among Canadians and between Canadians and decision-makers.