

# Sunset Times Ontario

## Welcome new members!

Tracey Bernie  
Paul White  
Erin Minor  
Sherry King  
Laura Farrell  
Kathy Wild  
Jason McDonald  
Ann McDonald  
Karen Cederwall  
Mary VanWalleghem

**Watch for news and  
blurbs about these new  
members in upcoming  
newsletters!**

## Together Again: Face to Face Celebrations



Retirement Dinner: "Together Again - A Celebration" September 21, 2022



19 New Retirees Attended the September 21 dinner

It was wonderful to be able to meet face to face again at two recent District 26 celebrations. In June, members met for lunch and honoured our 25 Year Members (more later!) and on September 21, the first retirement dinner was held since COVID restrictions came into play in 2020. More than 70 members and guests gathered to welcome our latest retirees to their new status.

It seems that we have not forgotten how to have a good time as we feasted, partied and delighted at being face to face again. Everyone enjoyed the musical talents of Les Filles d'Esprit while welcoming the new retirees and honouring their accomplishments during a buffet dinner with plenty of mingling.

Stay tuned for news about upcoming celebrations. A committee is working on a Christmas luncheon for **Dec. 15**.

**Save the date!**

## District 26 Executive 2022/23

**Josie Groen** – Past President,  
Benefits, Member Services Chair  
and Social Media

**Elaine Sinclair** – President

**Phyllis Eikre** – 1<sup>st</sup> VP

**Evie O’Flaherty** – 2<sup>nd</sup> VP

**Stephanie Kennedy** –  
Communications and Community  
Grant Lead

**Kathleen O’Flaherty** – Treasurer

**Louise Gale, Lenora Zimmerman**  
– Program/Social

**Beth Courtney** – Goodwill

**Mary Bawden** – Political Advocacy  
and RTO Foundation Rep

**Lori Johnston** – Secretary

**Jason McDonald** – Website

**Mary Cunningham** – Newsletter

**Ann McDonald** – Member at Large

Interested in Joining this group?  
We are looking for a Recruitment  
Chair!



## A Message from the President

Here we are into the fall season already. Hope everyone had a great summer and were able to experience the beautiful fall colours before the wind blew many of the leaves away!

We are very excited that we were able to host the Welcome to Retirement Dinner for

the new retirees and honoured guests. I want to thank the organizing committee for planning the event as well as the executive who all worked together to make the evening a success. It was great to be able to hold an in-person event and I think everyone that attended had a great time.

Our next function that we are planning is a Christmas Luncheon for December 15 so hopefully you will mark it on your calendar. The organizing committee will be providing more details in the near future.

Some of our Executive members have been attending workshops presented by RTOERO in Toronto. Expenses for these workshops are paid for by RTOERO so it is a good opportunity for our members to attend and bring back information to keep our District up to date on happenings with our national organization.

I attended the President’s Workshop at the end of September in Toronto. The main theme for the workshop was to lay out the role of the district president. This workshop was very good especially for new presidents like me. We also discussed other issues like engagement strategies and ideas for recruiting new members.

Phyllis Eikre, our Vice-President, and Mary Cunningham, our newsletter editor, travelled to Toronto to participate in the Communications Workshop at the beginning of October. Being new members on the Executive, they found it very enlightening to learn more about the RTOERO organization as a whole and what part districts play in it. They came back with some new ideas on communication within the district.

Josie Groen attended the Benefits Workshop also in October. Being our Benefits’ Representative, she feels it is important to stay informed in this field so she can keep our membership on top of any changes in the plan.

On October 25-27 we have two corporate members (Elaine Sinclair and Phyllis Eikre) and two alternate members (Mary Cunningham and Evie O’Flaherty) attending the Fall Forum (formerly called Senate) in Toronto. RTOERO pays for the two corporate members to attend and starting in 2023 they will also pay for one alternate to attend AGMs and Forums.

We would welcome any ideas or suggestions for activities you would like to see happen for our District. If you have any suggestions, please let me know at [president26@districts.rtoero.ca](mailto:president26@districts.rtoero.ca).

Respectfully submitted by Elaine Sinclair

# What twenty-five years of retirement has meant (1997-2022)

**Before the June luncheon, Beth Courtney (our Goodwill Ambassador) asked our 25 Year Members to tell us about their time in RTOERO. The following stories were shared with her and we share them with you. It is awe-inspiring to read about retirement life for these long time, faithful RTOERO members.**

(Unfortunately, Ron Bell, Bob Bond, Stan Clark, Don Fedus, Jim Irish's submissions were unavailable.)

**Laurence Gosselin:** "Retirement was spent mostly at home. I enjoyed the outdoors and spent a lot of time with family. I could be found gardening in the summer and quilting in the winter. I worked at my church as a sacristan and organized garage sales, meat-pie making and multi-cultural dinners to raise funds for church repairs. I continue to be involved with my church. I have enjoyed my retirement years greatly and have been blessed in so many ways but especially with good health."

**Huguette Novelli:** "After 35 wonderful years of teaching in Winnipeg and Kenora I entered into my retirement years in June 1997. I've been blessed with 25 years of happiness fulfilling my many dreams after teaching.

In the fall of 1997, my husband and I decided to buy a big motor home to start travelling for the winter. Great adventures were awaiting us. Travelling to Mexico through the Sierra Madres Mountains was a sight to remember. We drove to Mazatlán Mexico on the Pacific Ocean. So

much to see, we decided to make Mazatlán our winter home. We continue to go there every winter for 4 to 5 months. We enjoy the beautiful weather, walking on the beach in the sun, playing bocce in the sand and listening to beautiful Mexican music. To make my life even more enjoyable I started to take Spanish classes from the University of Pennsylvania with their program Duo Lingo. I'm in my third year and I enjoy every minute of it. I can communicate with Mexican people and make new friends.

In the year 2000 I developed a taste of adventure for travelling overseas. So, with my friend Gisele Stack who had been teaching French Immersion with me at SMB School, we started our great European adventure. We started travelling 2 to 3 weeks every year for 6 years. We joined organized tours from Winnipeg and we went to Italy, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Czech Republic, Croatia, a week at a SPA in Hungary and beautiful Greece and the Greek Islands with all their charm and beauty. Our summers are spent at home on Lake of the Woods. We travel with our boat to our cottage. Life is peaceful. I also enjoy reading, exercising, cooking and baking. I try to help out in the Catholic Women's League's Fall Bazaar every year. I enjoy my time with my grandchildren coming back from university. I also get together with family and friends at our restaurant Pizzeria Italia for delicious Italian food. "Good food and Good Friends" is my Motto.

My family is the central part of my life with my husband Enzo. We enjoy our time visiting with friends and making the most of every minute we have together."

"... BUT SINCE I'VE RETIRED, I'VE WONDERED HOW I EVER HADTIME TO WORK."

Kathy Downey, 25 Year member

**Nancy Bergman:** "Retirement has been a very positive experience for me. I've continued my love for teaching by teaching art quilt classes both locally and across Canada. Also, it's been an honour to have many of my art quilts exhibited in major shows across Canada and the United States.

Bart and I spent many of our winters in Arizona and during those times travelled extensively in rural Mexico. After joining Road Scholar, an educational travel program, we did many tours with them.

In the summers, we enjoyed spending time with our children and grandchildren on beautiful Lake of the Woods."

**Bill Rippin:** "For 25 years now I wake up every morning and pine away to be back in the classroom. Pass this along to all the hard working teachers who continue to pay my pension.

Bill

PS Just revised my will to repay all pension funds received."

**Anna Lee Gordon:** “My retirement has been interesting and enjoyable. Travel has played an important part. We began by travelling with Bert Oussoren and Betty Anderson’s group and later on our own. We have set foot in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Arctic, Antarctica, South America, Europe and U.S.A. We are proud of our three children and their accomplishments. We have watched two grandsons, born about the time I retired, grow up and have successful careers. Enjoying life at our cottage on Lake of the Woods has been a highlight of every summer. It was peaceful and quiet there. Interests I have had are the following: I joined the Sunset Country Handbell Ringers shortly after retirement; I volunteered with the Pinecrest Auxiliary, catering and working in the tuck shop. As for a hobby, I learned to work with stained glass focusing on lamp shades, small boxes and window hangings. Recently I have learned from June Stevens, the Zen tangle method of drawing. And retirement goes on!”

**Carolyn Cameron:** “Activities since 1997: Where has the time gone?”

I retired in 1997 and took up golfing that Spring, though I didn’t get “into” it until we started going to Florida in 2005. We found a lot of activities in Florida and I busied myself with quilting, golf, water colour painting classes and genealogy classes there. I researched seven family trees and appreciated the clubs that helped me continue that in both Florida and Kenora.

I did some ESL tutoring in the early years but my summers were spent sailing and gardening vegetables and flowers. I made time for travelling with my husband during these past 25 years and we visited Scotland, Ireland, Germany and Belgium, and were particularly pleased to have extended visits in Argentina, Australia and England with friends we had met before we moved back to Kenora.

Our children settled in the Calgary-Fernie area and two of my sisters settled on Vancouver Island, so there were almost annual trips out west with the arrival of seven grandchildren and a couple of family reunions which I helped organize and, oh yes, in 2011 I helped organize a wonderful class reunion of my Grade 13 class in Kenora.

I loved my career but I have to say I am also thankful for my 25 years of retirement.”

**Val Holm:** “Travelling has always been part of my life and over time I’ve visited all of the mainland provinces and Mexico in North America while spending our winters in Edgewater, Florida.

My longest running volunteer stint of 25 years has been with the Longbow Lake Firehall Brigade yard sale with proceeds going to the Volunteer Fire Brigade.

I love sailing, Court Bocce, Bridge, Euchre, Music, Reading, Brain Teasers (Sudoku, Wordle) and have begun coin collecting with our grandson. Another new pursuit has been organizing and enhancing photos to present to family.

Our kitchen is currently under construction so

that’s presenting many new challenges.

I seem to have less leisure time in retirement than I did while I was teaching. Maybe I’m just slower now or having too much fun!!”

**Kathy Downey:** “For much of my 25 years of retirement I’ve been volunteering at The Senior’s Center and with Arlene Nelson - Litt’s persuasion have also been part of the bell ringer group. I enjoyed being a volunteer in my grandchildren’s classrooms and helping with field trips but also the camping times and adventures that having grandchildren affords. They range in age from 27 to 4 months and I actually have a daughter retiring this Spring who is planning to be a member of RTOERO.

For many years I was involved with the Kenora Scottish country dancing. I developed a keen interest in genealogy, met cousins and have travelled extensively with them in Scotland and to the eastern townships.

Bill and I did a lot of RVing mainly in retirement but we also travelled in South America, Africa, Australia and while on a cruise veered close to Antarctica.



I love reading and doing stained glass but since I've retired, I've often wondered how I had time to work."

**AND.... Featuring Our 30 Year Member:**

**Marjorie Onyska**

Seen here with Beth Courtney, Marjorie was honoured at the June luncheon for reaching the milestone of 30 years in RTOERO!

**Congratulations, Marjorie!**



**Bill Maffey: (as shared by his wife Gwen)** "Bill has been an avid golfer up until recently, with the senior men's group at the Kenora Golf and Country Club. He also loved bike riding, cribbage, reading and playing bridge. Six months following my retirement in 2003, Bill was in a very serious car accident, the effects of which still plague him to this day. We try to walk regularly and he loves watching sports like hockey, curling, football and golf. We became grandparents in our retirement. We have five grandchildren, two of whom grew up in Kenora so we've loved cheering them on in their pursuits which included soccer and hockey. We have loved being able to attend the RTOERO luncheons and are looking forward to those again."

**Barb Lundy:** "My first thoughts about retirement were how much I would miss the kids and the excitement of seeing them learn. This was quickly followed by how much I would miss the fellowship of

my colleagues and the opportunities of professional growth.

My second thoughts were about what I would not miss. They included not having to get up in the dark on cold winter mornings, yard duty and meeting report card deadlines.

The most significant part of retirement for me is having the time to be closely involved and participate in the lives of my two grandsons.... a joy and a blessing that only grandparents can understand.

I recently experienced a very moving event. A friend and I were out for lunch in a local restaurant. When we were ready to leave, the waitress informed us that our lunch had been paid for by a young man at another table who told her that he had been in one of my grade two classes at King George School. How special is that?!"

**Marlene Gordon:** "For seven years following my retirement, my husband Bob and I co-managed the beautiful summer home of the Nethercutts who were fabulous to work for and were very generous to causes in the Kenora area.

In 2005 we bought an unfinished cabin on Brule Point and gradually made improvements over the years so that it is our "happy place" now

Our winters are spent in Surprise, Arizona where we golf but also joined the Sun City Power Riders, a motorcycle group, and have done many trips around Arizona, California, New Mexico and Mexico. Here in Canada Bob and I have led the "Ride for Memories" fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Society event for many years and I volunteer at the Alzheimer table at the summer Wednesday Markets.

To celebrate special milestone events, we've taken a Caribbean Cruise, one to Panama, Alaska and the Danube/Rhine River. To celebrate a 75<sup>th</sup> birthday we travelled to Brazil, Argentina and Chile- a definite highlight.



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The most important component of my life is family! I'm fortunate to have both our children and their families in Kenora and being "Grandma's Taxi" over the years when the grandsons were younger and involved in various sports was my favourite time. I always treasure family get togethers making memories that will last.



# I am looking for pictures of your pets!

I would love to do a feature that focused on your furry, feathered, or otherwise clothed pet friends!

I'm sure it will give us all "paws" to see those cute pictures of your pet!

Send me pictures at [mary@kmts.ca](mailto:mary@kmts.ca) and watch for an animal kingdom article! I'd gladly take short stories, poems or captions to add to the story!

Bee creative!

It's "ruff" to say good-bye "fur" now, but I'll hope to see you again, soon!



## In Memoriam

*You will be missed!*

Helga Wilson September 2021

Bart Bergman October 2021

Bob Bartolo November 2021

Phil Girard November 2021

Dan Bouvier February 2022

Dave Roberts February 2022

Adriana Schulz August 2022

Stan Clark August 2022

Phil Fafard August 2022

Marnie Lundin September 2022

Tom Shura September 2022

*"Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another."*

G. K. Chesterton

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

We will miss the power and presence each of these educators shared with us all!