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CHAPTER 13/16 NEWSLETTER

ARM

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3

JUNE 2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Iain Beaton, President, District 13/16

By the time you read this, we will have held our 2021 Annual General Meeting. There is a report on the AGM later in the newsletter. While vaccinations signal that the pandemic is coming to an end, our AGM, like most meetings, will be virtual. Case numbers are in decline but still high, as is the number of patients in intensive care, and COVID deaths still frequently exceed twenty per day in the province.

Ontario's "staged" re-opening should be underway as you read this, but we must be careful that we don't relax too much and prolong the pandemic. Still, there are positives to point to. This past spring was much nicer than last year, not just due to the arrival of vaccines but also to the fine weather and beautiful displays of spring flowers. Those who like the heat have already enjoyed a few hot days, with doubtless more to come.

The prospect of patio gatherings and small social events with vaccinated

friends is heartening. (This might even include a non-virtual ARM event in the autumn!)

Less positive are the plans for education. York Region District School Board will continue using the Hybrid model despite calls from many quarters to abandon it. The model, combining in-class and online learning simultaneously, has been stressful for both students and teachers, and has made attention and focus more difficult - especially for students at risk or with special needs. Mental health experts have been pushing for the reopening of school buildings during the pandemic to address the stress and depression many students are experiencing. Clearly, the goal should be to have system-wide in-class learning as soon as possible, so that teachers can better assess students' learning and well-being after the last 15 disruptive months that education has faced.

Provincial funding of education for next year is underfunded by hundreds of millions of dollars, contrary to claims made by the Ford government. This government is explicitly pushing for expanded online education, as a misguided effort to cut costs and reduce the number of teachers. Staffing levels and supports that existed pre-pandemic will be impossible with the current funding. This, along with the disastrous handling of Long-term care and of COVID generally, is why Ford and the PCs need to be defeated a year from now.

Finally, I would like to say a big THANK YOU to Colleen Ireland for her diligence and expertise as founding President of Chapter 13/16. She is stepping away from the Chapter Executive, but no doubt will remain active in ARM. Her example has, and will continue, to inspire us.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Election Countdown

Durham Region *By Cyndie Jacobs*

Durham Region has 5 electoral districts (ridings) and one in the north part of Durham that is shared with District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge. With the exception of Oshawa, currently held by Jennifer French (NDP), all of the other ridings are held by the Conservatives. The 6 incumbents are all seeking re-election in the Region of Durham. None of the ridings have nominated candidates for the other parties at this point, although a few names have been suggested for a couple of the ridings.

Even though MPP Rod Phillips (Ajax) suffered a significant fall from grace when he resigned from cabinet after vacationing in St. Barts over Christmas, the Premier has chosen him to be the minister responsible for children, community and social services. This is one riding that could be vulnerable, providing his past disgrace and lack of sensitivity is kept front and centre.

MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy (Pickering-Uxbridge), as the past President of the Treasury Board and newly minted Minister of Finance, should be a target as well. The budget from March 2021 was heavily criticized by opposition critics, unions and many stakeholders because it failed to meet the immediate needs of so many suffering through the pandemic. The budget also did not include any environmental considerations or spending on adequate in-school safety measures.

Those members in Chapter 13/16 wishing to help elect ABC (Anything But Conservative) candidates on June 2, 2022, could focus on re-electing Jennifer French in Oshawa and/or becoming involved through District 13 PAC over the next 11 months.

York Region *By John Pownall*

There are ten electoral districts in York Region all currently held provincially by the Conservatives. By all indications the incumbents are all seeking re-election with the exception of Thornhill riding where the Conservative is retiring. That happens to be the only riding where a Liberal has been nominated for the 2022 general election. She is Laura Mirabella, presently the treasurer and CFO of York Region. She was formerly the CFO of the City of Vaughan.

There is an intriguing choice in Markham-Stouffville. Kelly Dunn, currently a history teacher at Cedarbrae CI in Scarborough, is running for the Liberal nomination. She has competition. If you have friends or associates in Markham-Stouffville, invite them to look at her website <http://www.kellydunn.ca> If you live in Markham-Stouffville, please go to her website and wish her well. She will let you know what you can do to help her get to Queens Park.

There is hope for a reversal of Conservative fortunes. Six of the ten ridings chose Liberal MP's in the 2019 federal election.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Living in a Fog *By Colleen Ireland*

There is a sense that we will "break out" soon, with an increasing number of people being vaccinated across the country. While we wait for the "starting gate" to open, many struggle with a general state of malaise. All of those tasks we thought we would complete with all of this time off remain unfinished. Numerous radio broadcasters, print media outlets and journalists have highlighted the issue of COVID fog, languishing, or brain fog. Many are experiencing the sense of being stuck. Our general sense of context has been lost in many ways. Regular routines such as exercise classes were cancelled, volunteer work has slowed to a trickle, and parents/grandchildren struggle through a tentative educational setting. No wonder we are befuddled.

In a recent CBC radio interview, Dr. Roger McIntyre described the impact of this pandemic on our well being. He noted that "daily, unpredictable, malignant stress" can have a damaging impact on the brain. He also stated in an interview with CBC's Stephanie Hogan (April 2021) that such stress will have an effect on "key brain areas that are responsible for what you and I need to do each day: think and feel." Dr. McIntyre is hopeful when he discusses brain plasticity and the brain's way of bouncing back. Other experts (Canadian Dr. Norman Doidge being one) have written about the brain's way of healing itself. There is light at the end of the tunnel according to Dr. McIntyre. One way we can help ourselves is to set new routines which give our lives context. Exercising, getting outside regularly, developing better sleep habits, and setting small goals can all help to keep you focused. According to Dr. McIntyre, once the source of so much stress - from the pandemic - recedes, "brain recoverability" will ensue. It may take some time for the mind and body to get back into the groove but we will get there.

(Dr. Roger McIntyre is currently a Professor of Psychiatry and Pharmacology at the University of Toronto and is the Head of the Mood Disorders Psychopharmacology Unit at the University Health Network, Toronto, Canada. Dr. McIntyre is also Executive Director of the Brain and Cognition Discovery Foundation in Toronto, Canada.)

For more guidelines regarding your well being see the links below which reference sleep hygiene and exercise :

Helpful Links:

[Seven Types of Rest: CBC](#)

[Exercise: Good Times Newsletter](#)



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Late Comer to Blood Donation *By Cristal Diemer-Ewles*

Yes - I finally did it! I became a blood donor in my 60s. Perhaps you wonder what took me so long. I have an aversion to needles...don't like them. I don't watch them going into me or anyone else. I have figured out how to not watch when I get a vaccine (yes I did!) or when I have blood work done. But the idea of seeing blood draining out of my arm was eeeew, no! So, what changed? I kept hearing those ads about donor shortages and the need for blood. I don't have a time excuse anymore and the good folks at the Durham Muay Thai Kick Boxing Club that I belong to were organizing a donation drive. So I screwed up my courage and went.

I was astounded at how easy it was. Yes, there was the long list of questions about my health status and risk areas including travel questions. But once clear of those, I was ready to be hooked up. I have to say the staff - volunteers and technicians at the local Canadian Blood Services donation center - were amazing. I hopped up on the donation bed and when I said I preferred not to watch, a paper towel was placed over my arm to help. The staff were chatty just enough. I was provided with clear instructions about every step of the process and a regular count as to how much longer the donation process would take. As it turns out, I was a pretty good bleeder - it only took 8 minutes for me to fill the donation bag! Apparently the average time is between 10-15 minutes. Whoa ya! I was so impressed with the ease of donation that I've been back to donate again. This time I drank lots of water ahead of my donation appointment and it only took 5 minutes to fill the bag. I am rocking this now! I can donate every 3 months. In addition, my daughter and son-in-law have become donors too.

Now I feel guilty that I didn't donate earlier in life but I am happy to be a part of Canada's lifeline now. As it turns out there is no upper age limit for me as long as I continue to meet the eligibility requirements. I'm hoping to donate for years to come. If you haven't donated yet, it is time! Here's my Public Service announcement from Canadian Blood Services:

The need for blood is constant. Every 60 seconds, someone in Canada needs blood. That makes your commitment to saving lives so impactful.

As you may know, blood donors are needed more than ever. If you haven't done so yet, please consider booking your next donation appointment. Donation appointment spots are currently available in the evenings, weekends and long weekend holidays.

Go to the Canadian Blood Services [website](#) for more information and see if you meet the eligibility requirements to become a donor like me!



Canadian Blood Services
it's in you to give

THE REVIEW

Neglected No More by André Picard *By Colleen Ireland* (Journalist on Medical Issues - Globe & Mail)

André Picard offers a "no holds barred" look at the health care system with a focus on Long Term Care in his new book *Neglected No More*. Historical references explaining elder care in Ontario and examples of current pitfalls provide stark reminders that our system has failed our elders. Picard offers very specific cases of the failures (from Elizabeth Wettlaufer to COVID) but also offers alternatives to make it all work more efficiently and compassionately. He cites programmes such as "Aging-in-Place" initiatives, "The Butterfly Model for Dementia Care" (first adopted by Peel Region a few years ago) and support efforts from various countries. André Picard leaves room for hope if there is political will to fix this mess.

Neglected No More also lays bare the matter of caregiving at home. Family members represent a forgotten work force literally crumbling under the pressure. Family home support is precarious work. Resources are stretched to the limit with poorly paid support personnel or inconsistent supports at home. Those health care gaps are backfilled by families.

Below are some suggested supports and/or links should you find yourself or a friend in need of assistance.

Please note: this is not a comprehensive list but a suggestion of groups that are mentioned in *Neglected No More* or have been accessed by this review author.

"First Steps for Care Partners": A caregiver course offered by the Alzheimer's Society. Both York & Durham have chapters with 28 other Alzheimer's Society chapters across Ontario.

[Alzheimer's Society Spring Guide](#): The latest information about Alzheimer programming and education in Durham Region.

[Dementia—Canada.ca](#): Government of Canada Public Health Services

[Ontariocaregiver.ca](#): This organization offers many supports and has an excellent newsletter for caregivers.

Love Always *By Maureen Graves*

Donna Corrigan was a former DDSB high school teacher. She taught at Vanier, Pickering and Brock. She was very well loved and respected by both students and staff. Shortly after her retirement she succumbed to triple-negative breast cancer. Her husband, John Corrigan, wrote the book, *Love Always*, chronicling the many efforts and lessons learned on a journey that consumed the Corrigans for eighteen months.

All royalties from the sale of *Love Always* go to support the health care facilities mentioned in the book.

To purchase a copy of the book and to find out more about John and Donna Corrigan visit [Friesen Press](#) and John Corrigan's [website](#).



PANDEMIC PASTIMES

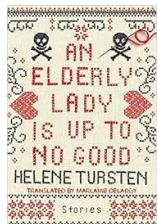
Books

[Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine](#)

By Gail Honeyman



[An Elderly Lady Is Up To No Good](#) By Helene Tursten



Bites

[Colorful Strawberry Arugula Salad](#)



[Sheet Pan Everything](#)

by Montreal Chef Ricardo Larrivee (aka Ricardo)

My favourites to date are the Cheddar, Bacon, and Baguette Strata, Classic Brownies, and the Giant Chocolate Chip cookies.

Binges

- The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel on Prime
- Clarkson's Farm on Prime
- New Amsterdam on Netflix
- The Kominsky Method on Netflix

- West Coast Customs on Netflix
- High on the Hog: The Enslaved and Food Culture in America on Netflix
- Bridgerton on Netflix
- This is Us on Netflix

More Pandemic Pastimes for you to explore....

- Go on a road trip and enjoy travel around the best of Ontario
- Join a textile guild (most meetings have been virtual in 2020 & 2021):

[Burr House Spinners and Weavers Guild in Richmond Hill](#)

[Trillium Embroidery Guild in Whitby](#)

- Go camping
- Join the [52 Hike Challenge](#) - one hike every week for one year
- Listen to an audio book

OTIP

Introducing how-to videos

Looking for answers to some of your most frequently asked questions (FAQs)? In addition to FAQs, OTIP's Help Centre now includes our first [how-to video series](#)!

Whether you are a new or experienced OTIP member, check out these step-by-step videos to help you find information about your benefits coverage and using OTIP's secure member site.

Our first three videos answer questions related to the following common topics:

- Where can I find details about my benefits?
- What are available balances and how can I find them?
- How do I attach a document related to my claims?

We will continue to create and post videos to our website as we identify other common topics. Check out OTIP's [how-to video series](#) today!



COVID-19 update for ARM members

Travel update

The Government of Canada has continued to maintain a Level 3 global travel advisory which recommends avoiding all non-essential travel outside of Canada. Visit the [Government of Canada's website](#) for the latest travel advice.

As an ARM member, if you book a trip to a location with a Level 3 (or higher) travel advisory, you cannot claim trip cancellation or trip interruption. Please review your benefits booklet for a list of reasons that can be claimed under trip cancellation or trip interruption.

We're here to help

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely and are here to support you. We have compiled information to help keep you informed. Visit [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) : Information for plan members](#).

Questions? You can contact OTIP Benefits Services at [1-866-783-6847](tel:1-866-783-6847).

EDUCATORS FINANCIAL GROUP

Low-fee Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP)

Now you can stretch
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Are you looking to save for your grandchild's future?

We believe education opens the doors to infinite possibilities.
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Educators Financial Group is proud to introduce our new Low-Fee E-series mutual funds available only within our Educators RESP. These funds feature our popular Educators Monitored Portfolio family of funds and our Balanced Fund. For this new E-Series the **management fee has been discounted by 20%*** so that even more of your money goes into saving for your grandchild's education. You can take advantage of lower fees to help your grandchild achieve their dreams!

Members can speak to a financial specialist at 1.800.263.9541 or by visiting:

<https://www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/ARM/F2106/get-started>

To learn more about our low-fee RESP, visit: <https://www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/ARM/low-fee-RESP>

Educators Financial Group
2225 Sheppard Avenue East,
Suite 1105, Toronto, ON M2J 5C2
Tel. 416.752.6843 or 1.800.263.9541



[educatorsfinancialgroup.ca](https://www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca)

*20% lower management fee than our A Series Educators Monitored Portfolios and Balanced Fund. Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses may all be associated with mutual funds. Please read the prospectus before investing. Mutual funds are not guaranteed, their value changes frequently and past performance may not be repeated.

HELPFUL LINKS

OSSTF

[OSSTF/FEESO](#)

[District 13](#)

[District 16](#)

[Active Retired Members \(ARM\) Council](#)

Educators' Links

[Edvantage](#)

[OTPP](#)

Insurance and Financial Providers

[RTO/ERO](#)

[OTIP](#)

[Educators Financial Group](#)

Government and Municipality Vaccine Information Links

Free COVID vaccines will be available to everyone in Canada over the course of 2021. Click the graphic below to access public health services related to COVID-19 for Canadians.

York Region is following the provincial lead with respect to re-opening businesses, services and public spaces during COVID-19 in accordance with the Government of Ontario's plan. For a complete list of health and Covid-19 resources, from York Region, click below.

Click the graphic below to find out how and where to book a COVID-19 vaccination.

Learn about Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen, the province's three-step plan to safely and gradually lift public health measures based on ongoing progress of provincewide vaccination rates.



Every Child Matters *By Colleen Ireland*

With the recent discovery of the remains of 215 children on the grounds of a Residential School in Kamloops, BC, there is a renewed focus on First Nations. Many groups across the country are demanding 'ReconciliACTION' from leaders and elected officials.

Here's a sampling from Colleen Ireland's bookshelf. These books are just a sample of resources for gaining more understanding of the historical plight of Canada's Indigenous peoples and the horrors of residential schools.

21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act by Bob Joseph

Indian Horse by Richard Wagamese (also made into a [film](#) in 2017)

Up Ghost River by Edmund Metatawabin

The Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King

The Reason We Walk by Wab Kinew

Call Me Indian by Fred Sasakamoose

Five Little Indians by Michelle Good (winner of the Governor General's Literary Award and the Amazon Canada First Novel Award)

Seven Fallen Feathers by Tanya Talaga

Educational Resources

Produced in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the publication [*Every Child Matters: Reconciliation Through Education*](#) by award-winning Indigenous author Monique Gray Smith is available as a PDF download from History Canada's website.

CBC news has information about [Canada's Residential Schools](#).

‘She Believed She Could So She Did’- Ironman *By Delfina Onisto*

I was never considered an athlete. In 2009, at a friend’s suggestion, I tried a triathlon. Almost 50, I had a few months to learn to run. That ‘Try-a-Tri’ event got me hooked! The following year I built up my distance through the summer, completing my first ‘Half-Iron’ distance triathlon on the 2010 Labour Day weekend. I was elated to have trained for and completed such an event and I set my sights on completing a full Ironman: 3.8km swim, 180km bike, 42.2km run – yes, all in one day!

I ran my first marathon in 2011. In 2012, a bad case of plantar fasciitis in both feet took almost all year to heal, and a stress fracture wiped me out for half of 2013. My life became more complicated for a few years: the work resulting from the nonsense of Bill 115, a new relationship, my Mum’s passing, my ex’s sudden death, the mental health needs of both my daughters, selling my house in Aurora and moving to a farm in the country near Zephyr and helping to move my new in-laws to a more senior-friendly home. These and so much more took precedence.

It was only after deciding to take early retirement as of June 30, 2017, that I returned to my dream of Ironman. For a couple of years, I trained and participated in a few triathlons, and then in October 2018, I signed up with a coach and registered for my goal event: Ironman Arizona, November 2019, in Tempe (near Phoenix).

I chose to do IMAZ for three main reasons: the timing, the course and the weather. A November destination event works well with Ontario’s short triathlon season, allowing me the full summer to prepare. IM Arizona is a flatter course, and the other event I considered was Ironman Florida, but November weather there has been so unpredictable (including hurricane Michael in 2018), that Tempe’s consistent expected sunny 22°C seemed perfect.

After a few training events in 2019, charity runs, various cycling events and a progression of triathlons, including two half-ironman events, I decided to train to walk the marathon. That took a huge weight off my mind, because it gave me confidence that I could complete my event. My new mantra during each training Ride or Walk became: “All it takes is time”. My preparation for the race also included training to fuel, especially during the bike. And, I had to figure out by trial and error what kit to wear for maximum all day comfort. I had to learn to pack my transition bags to quickly access my gear before the bike and before the run.

My husband and I flew to Tempe a week ahead of the race and stayed a short drive from the Expo. We had time for a few excursions, including a day trip to Sedona and the Grand Canyon, a couple of museums, my mani-pedi (!), driving the bike course, as well as the practice swim and bike check-in on the day before the race. We tried to stay on Toronto time (two hours ahead) to make it easier to get up early on the morning of the big day.

Race day started very early, with a light breakfast, bodymarking (it is fun to see everyone’s age on the back of their leg) and dressing to keep warm before the swim.

At the swim start, hundreds of athletes gathered in the dark before dawn. Loudspeakers rocked very loud music and blared announcements no one could decipher, as we filed into the water five at a time. The water in Tempe Town Lake was 16°C, and underwater visibility was so bad I could not see the ends of my fingers. At the end of the swim, volunteers helped me up the ramp, and the wetsuit strippers were amazing! I only found out after the end of the race that I had come out of the water 3rd in my age group. Yay me! Then it was a long dash back – about 700m – in 9°C air to the change tents.

Out to the bike course: three loops of 30 km out and back each for a total 180km. A flat portion led out of town to a long steady uphill with a short steep climb just before the turnaround, with a headwind on that entire uphill portion. That meant the return leg was downhill back into town, so I could push fairly hard and still not be too wasted for the marathon. Finishing the bike in just over seven hours felt fantastic.



The marathon course consisted of two fairly flat loops on both sides of the lake. As I had trained, I walked the marathon (still averaging 9 min/km). The second loop was after sunset and the last 3 km of each loop went through a very dark industrial area, with no spectators, which felt much longer than it should have, but I could hear the finish line announcer and see lights in the distance.

And then it was all over. I saw the finish chute, I pumped my arms high and strode to the finish line, grinning as my name was called over the loudspeakers.

After the finish I was in a daze. My family got me back to our flat for a quick warm shower and tucked me into bed with a hot cup of sweet tea. I had a few blisters in odd places under my feet, but remarkably no lasting damage.



Delfina Onisto after the marathon course



Delfina Onisto with her IMAZ medal

My overall time was 15:21:55, finishing 27th of 57 in my age group.

Personal Best? Absolutely! Will I do that again? Probably not: there is no more need for me to compete in any events involving running (or walking).

Up next? Not having to run will cut my training time in half. Since I 'age up' this year, my goal will be the Barrelman Swim/Cycle (2km/90km) in Niagara this September, where I could finish on the Podium!

ARM Chapter 13/16 AGM By Cyndie Jacobs

On Wednesday, June 23, 2021, Chapter 13/16 held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) via Zoom, for the second time. Hopefully, there will be opportunities for in-person meetings in the near future.

After the welcoming remarks from President Iain Beaton and the standard meeting statements were read, members in the meeting introduced themselves. Iain provided a brief recap of the last year, with very little activity within the Chapter, other than attending the occasional Zoom meeting and continuing to support food banks, youth shelters and the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC).

Our only source of revenue is from the Provincial Office and is in the form of a rebate, which is generated by the number of members in our Chapter. This year, the rebate total was \$3,870. With in-person meetings and social events impossible to hold this year, the Executive decided to increase the financial support by way of donations to the food banks and youth shelters. A larger donation was made to the OHC to support their work holding the Ford government accountable for the many failures related to the pandemic.

All positions on the Executive were acclaimed:

- Iain Beaton as President
- John Pownall as Treasurer
- Cyndie Jacobs as Communications Chair
- Cristal Diemer-Ewles as Executive-at-large.

With the increase in virtual meetings, Bylaws 3 and 4 required amendments to allow for electronic meetings, electronic voting and a more flexible timeline for holding the AGM. These were passed unanimously. A constitutional amendment to Article 6.2 allows for 2 Executive-at-large members and we currently have one. If interested in being more involved with the Chapter and being on the Executive, please [email](#) us.

Finally, we thanked the support staff in both District 13 and 16 and acknowledged their ongoing support.



Final Word

This is the third and final newsletter for this year. Despite being in lockdown for most of the last 15 months, we have been able to share some interesting information with members through the newsletter. We are always looking for articles about issues of concern to our members, interesting ways members are occupying their time while staying home and more of the best of Books, Bites and Binges for our enjoyment.

UPCOMING EVENTS

As more Ontarians become fully vaccinated, ARM 13/16 will be planning more in-person events such as workshops, meetings and social get-togethers in the Fall when it becomes possible to gather.

Stay tuned for more information in this newsletter and via email.

Consider passing this newsletter on to a recently retired colleague who may also be interested in becoming an ARM Chapter 13/16 member.



Happy Summer!
Stay Safe and
Eat Out & Get a Haircut!



ARTICLE AUTHORS FOR THIS ISSUE:

Iain Beaton, ARM Chapter 13/16 President (President's Message, ARM Biennial Meeting)

Cyndie Jacobs, ARM Chapter 13/16 Executive, Communications and Recording Secretary (Election Countdown, ARM Chapter 13/16 AGM)

Cristal Diemer-Ewles, ARM Executive Member, (Provincial News, Health & Wellness)

John Pownall, Treasurer, ARM Executive Member, {In the News}

Colleen Ireland, ARM Member, (In the News, The Review, Health & Wellness, Every Child Matters)

Maureen Graves, ARM Member, (The Review)

Delfina Onisto, ARM Member, (Ironman)

SUBMIT YOUR RETIREMENT PHOTOS

If you have a photo you would like to showcase in the next issue of ARM, please contact chapter13and16@gmail.com.

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Copy Editor: Cyndie Jacobs

Layout Editor: Marilyn Girndt

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions regarding any of the material published in this issue, or if you have any suggestion for future articles, please do not hesitate to contact us via email at

chapter13and16@gmail.com