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CHAPTER 13/16 NEWSLETTER

ARM



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SUMMER 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Iain Beaton, President, Chapter 13/16

As the school year ends, there is cause for both optimism and concern. The arrival of summer, and the prospect of schools getting back to normal in September, are positive things to look forward to. And for those about to retire, the reasons to smile may be even greater. But the recent election result is disheartening, and the prospect of disruption to education, and more, looms large.

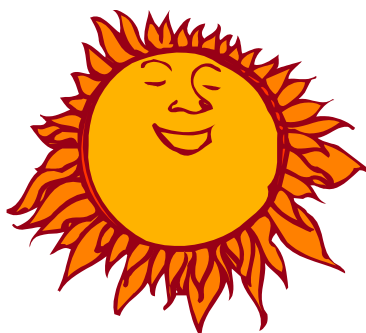
Members of ARM Chapter 13/16 took part in election activities supporting candidates in both York and Durham Regions. Unfortunately, none of the Liberal challengers to Conservative incumbents in York were successful. Regardless, ARM will continue to fight in defence of public education, public health care, and other societal issues.

If Ford calls a summer session of the Legislature, and there is a flurry of bills reminiscent of 2018, all of us will need to be ready to step up and speak out.

The Chapter's Annual General Meeting (AGM), held Wednesday, June 8, had on its agenda a discussion of home care, which is an aspect of health care that has been neglected for too long. The Chapter will be pushing for better, and increased, home care instead of expanding for-profit Long-term Care, which is what the Conservatives are already in the midst of doing. We are starting a Home Care sub-committee, and will be inviting members to participate.

Signs that society is putting COVID in the past are all around us. However, recent wastewater studies show that infection rates are on the rise again, and daily deaths have fluctuated despite downward hospitalization numbers. And Convoy Conspiracists plan to disrupt Canada Day and possibly the rest of the summer in Ottawa. (This infection looks to be as persistent – and dangerous? – as the original virus.) Enjoy the summer weather and social events, but please, employ caution. We're not out of the (medical or political) woods yet.

That said, I hope you find many enjoyable things to do, see, and read in the next couple of months. We will be in touch with you when we have an activity in which we invite you to participate.



The ARM Newsletter is a publication of OSSTF ARM Chapter 13/16.



The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views/policies of OSSTF District 13 or District 16.



DISTRICT 13/16 NEWS

Teachers Caring for Teachers

By Cristal Diemer-Ewles, Executive Member-at-Large, Chapter 13/16

Over a decade ago, District 13 began an initiative to help support educators who were absent from work as a result of a prolonged illness. A prolonged illness meant they were absent from work for a month or more. The District Officer would be in contact with the educator helping them through the employer's disability management processes and other assistance as required. These members frequently expressed that they felt they had stepped into a void where no one from school called anymore.

The Teachers Caring for Teachers (TCT) initiative began as a way of demonstrating that the union was thinking of them in a caring and meaningful way. A handwritten note of well wishes was sent to the educator along with a gift card to help order a meal, or perhaps a book or coffee, or even flowers. The gift card was generally valued at \$50. It is incredible what such a gesture meant to those who were struggling with an illness.

For the last 8 years, District 13 has run a golf tournament in June (except for a 2-year Covid hiatus) at Lynbrook Golf Course in Whitby in support of the TCT initiative. The tournament is usually sold out with over 50 golfers participating. The tournament is sponsored through Provincial and District funding and Educators Financial Group. This year, the golf tournament was renamed the Shelley Page Memorial Tournament in support of TCT. Shelley enjoyed playing in the tournament. We believe that Teachers Caring for Teachers spoke to some of Shelley's core values. The golfers this year enjoyed a beautiful late afternoon of golf and raised a beer in Shelley's memory!

District 13/16 Supporting the Community

By Cyndie Jacobs, Communications, Chapter 13/16

Since its inception, our Chapter has supported several registered charities each year - youth and women's shelters, food banks and other organizations supporting those in need. The pandemic has affected everyone, but has been especially challenging for those living in shelters and those who have faced food insecurities.

As we mentioned in the March newsletter, and with our in-person events and activities curtailed once again this year, the Executive donated much-needed funds to the following charities:

In Durham:

1. The Community Food Box program of Community Care Durham
2. North House

In York:

1. 360 Kids
2. Blue Door

On the next page are some pictures of the Community Food Box Program of Community Care Durham (CCD). The food boxes contain essentials for healthy eating and are delivered at no cost to vulnerable individuals. These boxes are prepared and delivered by volunteers and Community Care Durham staff every Friday.



Community Food Boxes ready for delivery



*Three volunteers at CCD from left to right:
Cecilia, Alice How and Doreen Sacchett*



*Cristal Diemer-Ewles, Executive member,
presenting a cheque to Alice How,
Community Food Box Service Coordinator*



*Cyndie Jacobs, Executive member, presenting
a cheque to North House*

June 2 Election - Advance Poll Selfie Contest

By Cyndie Jacobs, Communications, Chapter 13/16

To encourage Chapter 13/16 members to vote in this very important election we had a contest for the 10-day period of advance polls - from May 19-28. An email was sent to all members in mid-May suggesting that they take a selfie at an Advance Poll and email or text it to us. We offered four \$50 gift cards as prizes and the winners were announced at our AGM on Wednesday, June 8. Here are some of the selfies that were submitted.

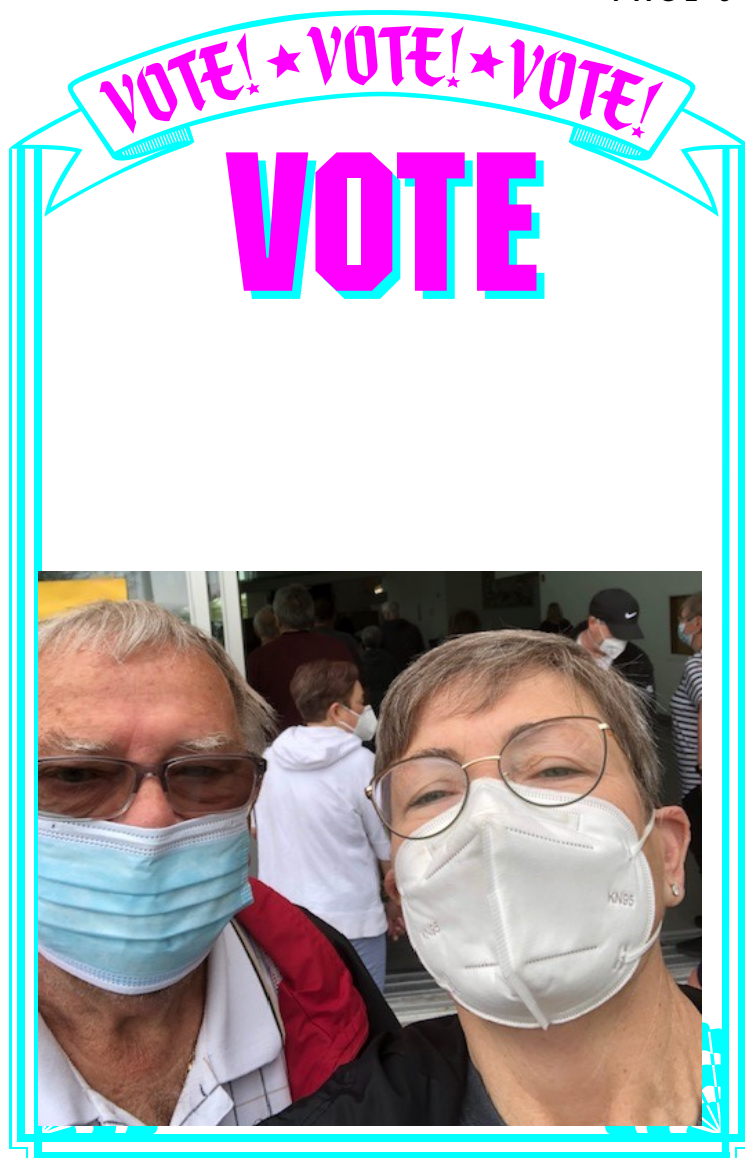
Delfina and daughter



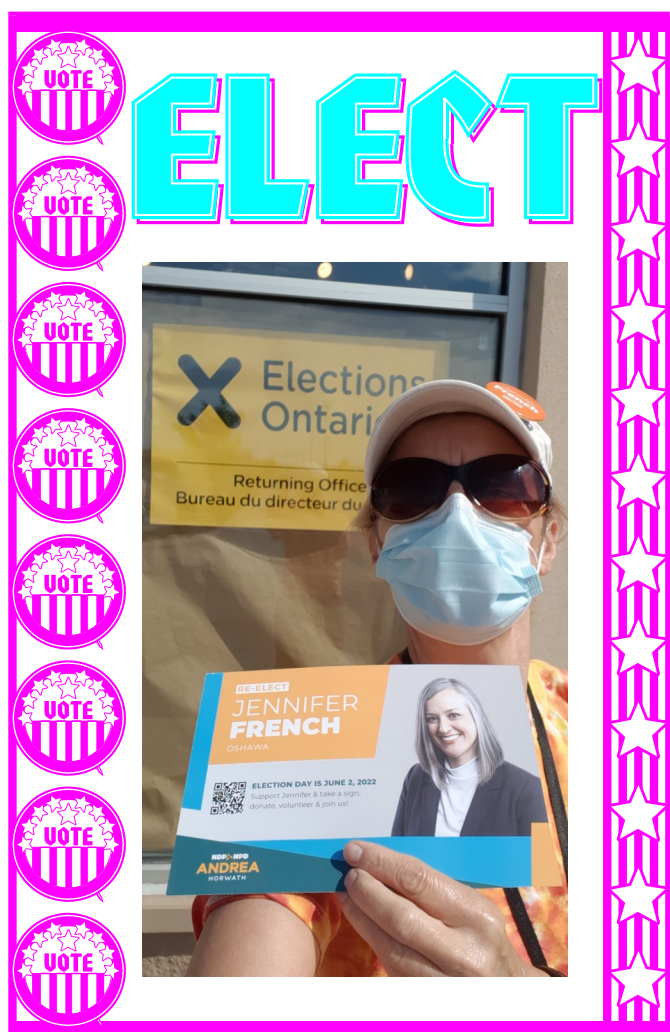
Cyndie Jacobs



John Pownall and Judith McCutcheon



Cristal Diemer-Ewles and Dad



Julia McRae

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Key Learnings from the Home Care Crisis

By Colleen Ireland, Former President, Chapter 13/16

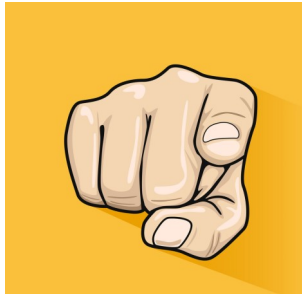
1. There is a serious disconnect between hospital discharge, Home Community Care Support Services (formerly LINH now HCCSS) and the number of PSW supports which may be available.
2. Caregivers, primarily women, provide home care services free at an estimated savings of \$28.5 B for the government (The Ontario Caregiver: "Spotlight Report 2021"). The minimal tax credits available do not compensate for time, physical/emotional strain and additional support that may be needed.
3. PSWs cannot be removed arbitrarily if difficulties arise such as the quality of service or how the contracted agency interacts with the client. These agencies contract to HCCSS. As a result, any removal of a PSW from a home must go through Home Community Care Support Services, not the contracted agency. Many families fear that they will lose support if they complain or air any concerns. Always keep HCCSS Case Workers in the loop.
4. Document, copy, keep a version of all communications.
5. No matter what their glossy ads may imply, private health care agencies are businesses. Recently, a private care agency we used to provide one day's respite for me as caregiver, set a minimum number of visits at 3/week with each visit a minimum of 4 hours. This meant forcing us to pay \$528.00/week. One full day was all we needed in order for me to attend medical and dental appointments. We were told that the full day would count as one visit, not two. We cancelled our contract with them. Private care amounts to a minimum of \$17-25 K/year. Of the \$44/hour to the company, PSWs earn \$21/hour under very strenuous conditions.
6. Private retirement settings, with tiered supports such as Independent to Assisted Living to Memory Care will set families back \$3600 at a minimum with each additional service required having an hourly fee attached to it. No one wants support for nothing, however, after investigating five places (4 in Ontario and 1 in New Brunswick), and after tallying the costs, it was going to be a base cost of \$5-6000/month to support my spouse.
7. In spite of the government's swagger about training PSWs to cover the shortfall, home care agencies which contract to the HCCSS are still looking for personnel. How do we know this? I am entitled to 6 more hours of respite given the 24/7 care required for my spouse and have never been able to receive that many hours because the agencies do not have the personnel. They have been looking for a year to fill our family's respite needs.

Summary:

- * ARM, Status of Women committees and OHC members need to voice their concerns as groups - one voice does not seem to resonate with those in political power.
- * Parkinson Canada, C.A.R.P. and OHC must all continue to lobby for improved access to home care.
- * Aging in Place with Dignity in Ontario, under the current system, is impossible unless families have funding that will cover \$17-25,000 per year. Even more staggering is the cost of retirement living in private settings with support.

Call Out to Chapter 13/16 Members

We Would Like To Hear Your Story



Are you caring for a parent or spouse or someone else at home?

Have you had this experience?

Some members are providing primary support to loved ones at home. This commitment can be occasional up to full time and then some. Some are reluctant to move their loved one to long-term care while others want their loved one to age at home. There are many financial issues as well - support at home is expensive.

Sharing your experience as a caregiver with fellow retirees could help to prepare them for possible challenges ahead.

Please send an email to:

chapter13and16@gmail.com and share your experience.

Links and other Resources

Vibrant Voices Webinar—Human Rights Denied: Canadians Against Ageism

<https://vimeo.com/722323949/d3866ca6a4>

Member Activities

Hosting Refugees

By Rita Moore, Member ARM Chapter 13/16

As I write this, I hear on the radio that it is World Refugee Day. There is so much need in the world now and we hear regularly that because of violence or climate change, people need to flee their homes.

In 2017 when the world, or at least North America, seemed to be moving in a very inhospitable direction, my husband and I wanted to do something that would, in some small way, work in the opposite direction. I had been retired for a while and my husband would be retiring soon.

We had heard about [Romero House](#), an organization that works with refugees. They have a 'Community Host Program' and so we applied. We were accepted and then we waited.

The need was for short term hospitality as refugees wait to find a place in a shelter or some other more stable housing. Usually a stay of about three weeks. Then we got our first call. "Can you welcome a family of four?" Parents, a teenager and a four year old. That first experience was a very positive one. They were Spanish speaking and our Spanish is very rudimentary, but with a mix of English, French, Spanish and a lot of help from online translation, we managed just fine and by the time they left, we had bonded in a way that happens when you share an intense time with others. They have moved three times since they were with us and are making their way through work and education.

Since then we have hosted three more times. Each experience was distinct and each one was a moving experience for us. We understand, at a much more fundamental level, the challenges facing refugees in Canada. We have shared, at least briefly, the difficulties of dealing with bureaucracy that is doing its best but is wildly understaffed and under-resourced. We have had a glimpse of what it is to be in a bewildering situation that you never expected, in which you and your children are very vulnerable. We have new friendships with people who have enriched our lives in ways we could not have foretold.

The need for hosting has increased due to the pandemic and the shortage of housing and shelter space in the GTA. With recent influxes from Syria and Ukraine, there are more news stories of refugees arriving and needing shelter. Many groups have responded to this need. There are others, of course, who arrive from places not so much in the news, but who nevertheless need help. Community hosting through a place like Romero House is one way to respond to this need. If you are interested, you can get more information at the Romero House website or email: laura@romerohouse.org.





Join Us to Celebrate 50 Years of Community Building!

“Decade Rooms” Displays Open Each Day of The Anniversary

Friday, October 21:

- Open House and Registration at GL Roberts, 6:00 PM in the Main Foyer.
- Golf at Kedron Dells, AM start - only 144 spots, shotgun start, prizes. Registration required via website.

Saturday, October 22:

- Official Opening Ceremony 10:00 AM.
- Sports in the Gyms, 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Food trucks will be available, so spend the whole day.
- Pub Night at The Tribute Centre, 6:00 PM until midnight. Tickets required.

Sunday, October 23:

- All Teaching, Custodial and Secretarial Staff, 10 AM coffee and social time in the Pit, followed by a complimentary brunch in the Cafetorium at 11:00 AM. Chat with former and current staff.

Donations and Surplus proceeds will establish a Legacy Fund to support special programs and bursaries.

There will be a dedicated Registration Website, including reservations and ticket sales. Additional information about the Reunion will be sent to Chapter 13/16 members in the Fall.

Arrangements have been made at local hotels for 50th Special Rates - information at the Reunion Website.

Further information and link to the **Reunion website** available at the [G. L. Roberts website](#)

ARM Chapter 13/16 Executive for 2022/2023



L - R Back: Cyndie Jacobs, Communications; John Pownall, Treasurer; Iain Beaton, President; Cristal Diemer-Ewles, Member-at-Large

Front: Judith McCutcheon, Member-at-Large

NOTICES



Have a safe and happy summer!

ARTICLE AUTHORS FOR THIS ISSUE:

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

Cyndie Jacobs, ARM Chapter 13/16 Communica-
tions, (District 13/16 Supporting the Community,
Advance Poll Selfie Contest)

Colleen Ireland, ARM Chapter 13/16 Member, (Key
Learnings from the Home Care Crisis)

Cristal Diemer-Ewles, ARM Chapter 13/16 Execu-
tive Member-at-Large,

John Pownall, ARM Chapter 13/16 Executive Mem-
ber, Treasurer, (Call Out to Chapter 13/16 Mem-
bers)

Rita Moore, ARM Chapter 13/16 Member (Hosting
Refugees)

SUBMIT YOUR RETIREMENT PHOTOS

If you have a photo you would like to showcase in the
next issue of ARM, please contact
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Newsletters will be published:

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