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**Monday, May 11**

**Westfield Heritage Village  
1049 Kirkwall Road Rockton  
Lunch 1:00 pm then a tour.**

**Thursday, June 4, 4:00 pm**

**Retirement Social  
St. Naum's Church  
1150 Stone Church Rd East Hamilton**

**Tuesday, June 16**

**Fun at the Beach  
Lunch at the Cove Room  
12:00 pm  
19 Walker St. Port Dover  
Tour of Harbour Museum to follow  
Guests Are Invited**

**Editors Chester Faulknor & Ruth Giles**

### The Next Two Months

#### May 11

May 11, we are having lunch and a tour of Westfield Heritage Village, 1049 Kirkwall Road, Rockton. It is just South of Cambridge and North of the City of Hamilton. Westfield Village is used quite extensively by Murdoch Mysteries so it will be an interesting place to tour. We will meet at Westfield at 1:00 pm and have lunch and then a tour. It should take a couple of hours. **The cost of the lunch and the tour will be picked up by the executive but could you email me if you intend to come, as Westfield wants an idea of the numbers.**

[armchapter21@gmail.com](mailto:armchapter21@gmail.com)

#### June Retirement Tea

Make sure to put the District 21 2015 Retirement Reception on your calendar. It will be held on June

4, from 4-7. It is at St. Naum's Church at 1150 Stone Church East. It is just off of Nebo Road. The food is great so come on out and honour our retirees.

#### Fun at the Beach

Join us Tuesday, June 16, at the Cove Room, 19 Walker St. Port Dover, at 12:00 for lunch. After lunch, weather permitting, we will then enjoy either a tour of the Harbour Maritime Museum or just a lovely walk along the beach. Don't feel you have to do the walk; just join us for the meal.

We cannot book this venue until May so we are taking a chance that the Cove Room will be available; therefore, email me at [armchapter21@gmail.com](mailto:armchapter21@gmail.com) to let me know you are going and I will let you know early in May if there is a change. We have never had an issue with availability of space on a Tuesday afternoon so we should be good.

#### Where we were in March and April



**Green beer and Irish fun**

## March 17

On Tuesday March 17, we gathered for an 11:30 am lunch to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Our meeting at the newly opened pub, Ye Olde Squire, on Upper James was a huge success. We had a large crowd, drank green beer and ate authentic Irish food. We even made Snap Magazine.



Green Beer and Guinness

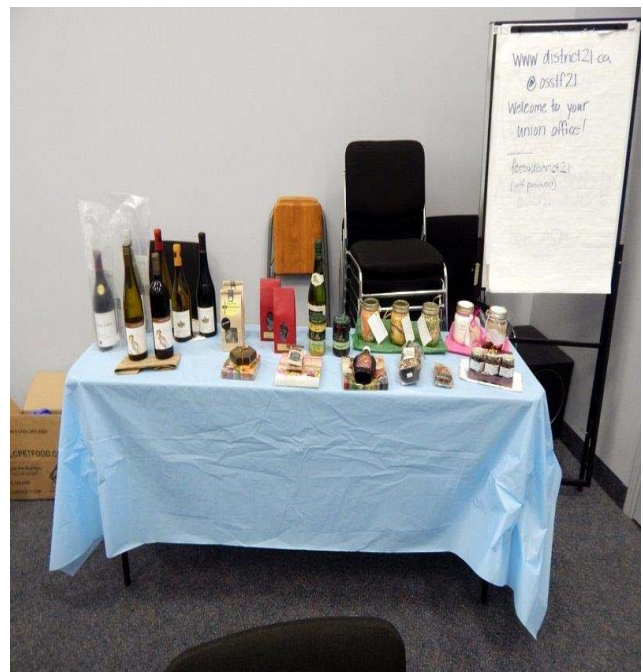


## April 21 AGM

On Tuesday, April 21, we held our Annual General Meeting. At the meeting, elections for our executive were held. For the second straight month we had over 20 people. Chantal Mancini, the District's illustrious president talked to us about the state of negotiations, both provincially and locally. I'd like to thank Chantal for running our election which gave us a new executive to organize next year's many activities. There were a few changes. We would like to welcome Pat Lachapelle who will be a great addition to our group. Pat has attended our executive meetings and we already know that he will be a great asset. Also, Tony Viola will be taking over for me as an editor of the newsletter. I'm sure we will see a huge improvement there.

Your new executive is: President: Chester Faulknor, V.P. Murray Kilby, Benefits Officer: J. Parekh, Secretary: Colleen Wray, Treasurer Bob Thompson, Membership Secretary Barb Brown, Editors Ruth Giles and Anthony Viola, Members at Large: Malcolm Buchanan, Warren Johnson, Milt Payne, Norm Urhig, Suzanne Burchill, Anna Misiti, Frieda Smyth(Ch.18), Jan Lukas, Pat Lachapelle.

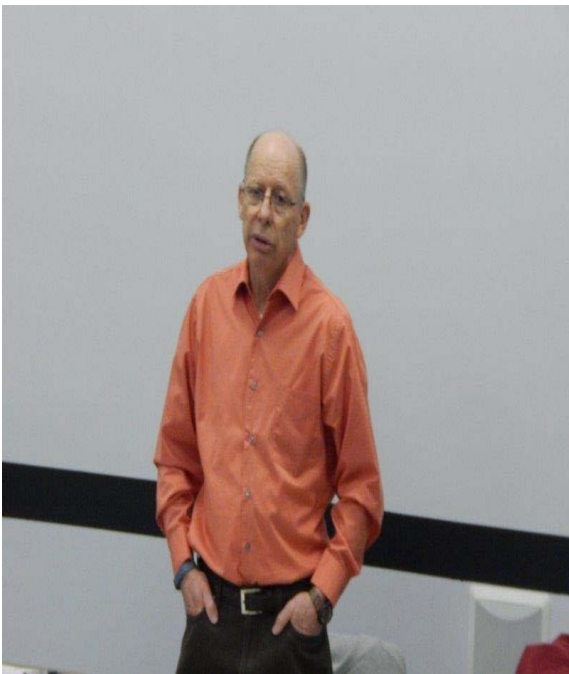
Thanks to Bob Thompson for arranging our great draw prizes and running the draw.







**Chantal Mancini our illustrious leader**



**Our president for one last year**

## **Other News**

### **CURC News**

The next CURC meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 13 at 10:00am at the OSSTF Office, 1423 Upper Ottawa Street.

There will be a presentation by a representative from the Hamilton Chapter of the Council of Canadians focusing on the forthcoming federal election.

There will also be a discussion about the United Nation's International Day of Older Persons and how ARM and CURC will be involved. CURC has formed a coalition with other retiree/senior organizations called Seniors Vote. The International Day of Older Persons will be recognized on Thursday, October 1, 2015.

Seniors Vote is a collaboration of seniors, retirees, professional and advocacy groups raising common concerns which particularly resonate with older Canadians-financial security in retirement and healthcare reform.

ARM members are encouraged to attend the CURC meeting since ARM is an affiliate of CURC.

### **An Interesting View of Standardized Testing**

Our provincial government, pushed by groups, such as the Fraser Institute, has for years now burdened or blessed our system with our EQAO testing. I thought this article on a New York State revolt against State testing interesting.

**Tens** of thousands of students in New York boycotted the annual state-mandated English Language Arts exams this week in a grassroots challenge to Governor Andrew Cuomo's controversial education agenda.

Organizers, including educational advocacy group United to Counter the Core, said at least 155,000 students **opted out** of the tests on Thursday, with only half of the state's districts tallied. That figure is up from 112,763 on Wednesday—and up from 49,000 last year. Testing began on Tuesday.

The revolt is in response to what parents, students, and activists say is a political takeover of educational standards—seen at the national level as well—that pushes a focus on standardized exams and a Common Core curriculum, developed by a secretive for-profit company, that compromises learning for test preparation.

In late March, Cuomo **approved** a budget that included many divisive revisions to the state education agenda, including teacher evaluations based partly on test scores,

which critics say take too long, are too vague to be accurate, and fail to measure real learning.

Investigative journalist Juan Gonzalez explained the concerns over the increased focus on testing in his column for the *New York Daily News*:

The politicians created a test that says all schools are failing, not just the ones in the big cities, then declare a crisis, so they can close more neighborhood schools, launch more charter schools, and target more teachers for firing.

Meanwhile, the private company that fashioned this new test, Pearson, insists on total secrecy over its content.

As *Democracy Now!* reports, in January, as Cuomo held town hall meetings with parents in New York who voiced a number of frustrations over the proposed curriculum, special education teacher Jia Lee testified before U.S. Congress about the growing number of parents opting their children out of the yearly exams.

"In New York state, at least, these tests have changed from year to year," Lee said during her testimony. "When parents and educators have voiced concerns, they've been accused of coddling. I want to challenge that assumption."

"The great crime is that the focus on testing has taken valuable resources and time away from programming, social studies, arts and physical education, special education services and ELL [English language learners] programs," Lee said.

Toni Smith-Thompson, a New York parent whose child opted out of the tests this week, spoke with *Democracy Now!* on Friday, explaining why this year's protest reached its unprecedented size.

"[W]ith the addition of these high stakes attached to the teacher evaluations, really just took it over the top," Smith-Thompson said. "Kids started talking about, 'If I fail, my teacher will get fired.' And kids should not be put in that position."

Once Smith-Thompson and other parents in her district "had the information about what was in the

tests, the length of the tests, like eight hours—plus, you know, for most schools, months of test prep—it was a no-brainer," she continued.

Cindy Rubino, a parent in Lakeland whose children also boycotted the tests, told *USA Today* that she was "thrilled" with the turnout.

"I do believe this is a historic day in New York state, as we try to regain local control over the education of our kids," Rubino said. "These refusals are meant to protest a system that is currently failing our children and educators."

A new round of testing, focused on math, is set to begin next Tuesday.

## A Bit of Humour

This is for all of us who struggle to stay up with the ever changing world of computers. It is sung to the tune of the Beatles' song "**Yesterday**":

YESTERDAY

Yesterday,  
All those backups seemed a waste of pay.  
Now my database has gone away.  
Oh I believe in yesterday.

Suddenly,  
There's not half the files there used to be,  
And there's a milestone hanging over me  
The system crashed so suddenly.

I pushed something wrong  
What it was I could not say.

Now all my data's gone  
and I long for yesterday-ay-ay-ay.

Yesterday,  
The need for back-ups seemed so far away.  
I knew my data was all here to stay,  
Now I believe in yesterday.

**Farmer wisdom:**

Life is simpler when you plow around the stumps.