

LIAISON

August 2024

How to optimize your summer harvest



If you have been gardening this summer, August is a good time to start thinking about how to best utilize your gardens bountiful yield. As we approach the later part of summer, consider these creative ways to maximize and enjoy your summer garden harvest well into the cooler months.

- **Crafting herbal salves and lotions**
Transform garden herbs like lavender, chamomile and calendula into soothing [salves and lotions](#). These DIY projects not only make great gifts but also bring the healing power of your garden into your home.
- **Canning and preserving**
Savor the taste of summer by [canning](#) your fruits and vegetables. Think Jams, sauces, pickles. These are excellent ways to preserve the freshness of tomatoes, berries and cucumbers. This also helps reduce waste and have delicious homemade goods to enjoy year-round.
- **Drying and Storing Herbs**
[Dry herbs](#) like echinacea, sage and mint to retain their medicinal properties. Use these dried herbs to make teas, infusions, or ointments that can help soothe and heal throughout the year.
- **Infused Oils and Vinegars**
Create flavorful [oils and vinegars](#) by infusing them with garden herbs. These infusions can be used in cooking or as delightful homemade gifts.

Give these activities a try and invite your grandkids, friends or loved ones to join in. Happy harvesting!

Navigating seasonal change



Seasonal change can be similar to retirement in many ways. While they can both be associated with excitement and leisure, they can also be stressful as they require shifts in activities and routines. As we start to prepare for autumn, here are some tips to get ahead of the transition between seasons.

Review and organize your schedule.

It can be tricky to manage logistics, so use a planner or notebook to stay organized. If you already do this, take some time to review it – is this schedule still working for you? Or does it need to be adjusted? Do your best not to overschedule and to stay consistent. Regular wake-up, bedtimes and mealtimes, can help reduce last-minute scrambling and contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Prioritize your self-care.

It's OK to say no when you feel overwhelmed. "Me time" is allowed, and even recommended. Activities like meditating, exercising, reading, or taking a bubble bath are great ways to unwind, but whatever your self-care preference is, remember that it is much easier to face the world when once you've paid attention to your own needs.

Embrace the new season.

While you might feel that seasons are fleeting, each one offers its own opportunities for fun and activities. Take some time to consider what you enjoy most about the upcoming season rather than dwelling on what you least like about it, and pencil it into your schedule!



RTOERO Foundation announces its 2024 fall granting cycle

The RTOERO Foundation is thrilled to announce that the 2024 granting cycle will once again take place this fall. The [granting program](#) is at the core of the Foundation's work and is supported solely through the generosity of our donors, most of whom are RTOERO members.

We award grants to projects that improve seniors' health and wellness, promote social engagement and pursue innovative research in geriatrics and gerontology.

We focus on funding projects from all across the country, not just Ontario, that provide valuable research and create practical tools for seniors to use every day, including:

- **Health and wellbeing**
Initiatives that have as their primary focus, improved physical, mental and/or social health among older adults.
- **Social engagement**
Initiatives that have as their primary focus, improved social engagement for older adults.
- **Geriatrics research**
Initiatives that take a scientific approach to an examination of healthy aging, health services and the quality of life for older adults.

For more information regarding the RTOERO Foundation's granting program, including an extensive FAQ section, please visit our [website](#) or email Deanna Byrtus at dbyrtus@rtoero.ca.



How grassroots movements help create better future for aging

Life can sometimes take unexpected turns, leading individuals to new paths. DY Suharya, Regional Director of Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) Asia Pacific Region, experienced this firsthand when she left her studies abroad to care for her mother, who had been diagnosed with dementia. Finding little support for dementia caregivers in Indonesia, she founded Alzheimer's Indonesia to address this gap.



This article shares key insights from Suharya's presentation at RTOERO's 2024 Future of Aging Summit, sponsored by Johnsons Inc., emphasizing the role of grassroots advocacy in driving systemic change.

How to go from grassroots advocacy to systemic change

Community-led initiatives are essential for raising awareness and initiating local actions that can influence broader policy changes. Here are some of Suharya's tips:

- Define a **clear vision** of the desired behaviour change.
- **Form alliances** with government agencies, non-profits, and international organizations to pool resources, share knowledge, and enhance advocacy.
- **Use personal stories** to highlight the real-life impact of the issues, making them more relatable and urgent.
- Combine compelling stories with **data-driven strategies** to persuade policymakers and stakeholders. **Identify data gaps** and advocate for research to better understand needs and develop targeted interventions.
- Increase your influence by **training and educating others** to take on the cause.
- **Commit to the long-term** because systemic change takes time. Celebrate small wins along the way.

[Read more on our blog](#)

Dialogue continues on proposed new organizational name



It's been two months since we unveiled our proposed new name for RTOERO – Entente. Generally, members appreciate how this simple bilingual word sums up the spirit of our organization without restricting us to a specific geography, job title or job status.

This inclusive approach is the whole impetus behind our search for a new name.

Our renaming journey has involved extensive consultations over many months. Read about the renaming journey on our website page – Renaming RTOERO.

[Making a name for ourselves](#) – We started the renaming journey in 2023.

[Who we are, in five words](#) – District presidents identified top words they associate with our organization.

[If RTOERO were a multiple choice quiz](#) – Members provided feedback through a creative online survey.

[Four ideas our new name must express](#) – Four main themes summarize the feedback from thousands of members.

[We've found a new name – together](#) – The proposed new name, Entente, was shared in May.

[What's in a name](#) – Martha Foster, who recently wrapped up her tenure as chair of the board, reflects on the need for the organizational name change.

[Revealing our true identity](#) – CEO Jim Grieve writes about the ways in which the proposed new name fits with our organizational identity.

Our conversations continue, as everyone tries out the proposed new name – Entente – in various contexts, getting used to it like a new set of clothes.



5 ways to make your home safe and age-friendly for autumn



There's no place like home— and taking steps to make your home more accessible can help you live comfortably for many years to come. Here are home improvement tips to prepare for the upcoming season:

1. Gardening upgrades

For our gardeners, consider self-watering systems and transitioning to raised garden beds or vertical gardens to make fall veggies like spinach and beets easier to tend to.

2. Upgrade lighting

With shorter daylight hours in fall, adding brighter bulbs and motion-sensor lights, especially in hallways and staircases, can be a great addition for convenience and safety.

3. Prevent slipping

Falls are the leading cause of injuries among older Canadians. Autumn often brings wet and slippery conditions, so ensure your walkways and steps have non-slip or absorbent mats to prevent wet floors and falls.

4. Ensure warmth

Before it gets too cold, have your heating system serviced to ensure it's working

efficiently. Use heavier curtains to help keep the heat in and the cold out. Ensure they can be opened without strain during the day to let in natural light.

5. Accessible Storage

As the season changes, reorganize cabinets or lower shelves to keep frequently used fall essentials like blankets and warm clothes within reach.

A little preparation now ensures a cozy autumn ahead.

Promote equity through children's books



Books help to shape our thinking and perspectives—this is true for children and adults. It's no secret how important the early years and childhood are to learning and development. Introducing young readers to books with diverse characters promotes acceptance, respect and empathy for others. Reading can help children learn to appreciate the range of perspectives and identities in their classrooms and communities.

If you read children's books – to your students, children, grandkids, or other children in your life – why not seek out stories from a more diverse perspective. Here are a few children's books that celebrate diversity:

Humor

I Am Famous, Tara Luebbe

Please Clean Up Your Room!, Itah Siddu (*Cdn)

Love/identity

Hair Love, Matthew Cherry (*)

Malaika's Winter Carnival, Nadia Hohn (*Cdn)

Say Something, Peter H. Reynolds (*)

Grandparents

Granddaddy's Street Songs, Monalisa DeGross

Pop Pop and Me and a Recipe, Irene Smalls

Things I Like About Grandma, Francine Haskins

*available in French

Choosing books featuring characters or by authors from equity-seeking groups is a realistic action you can take to promote inclusion, self-affirmation and equity through children's literature.

For more great book suggestions and to read the full blog post, visit [RTOERO](#).

Road trip essentials



Road trips are an ideal way to take some time and discover your own part of the country. Here are the essentials we suggest you prepare and pack for a more than pleasant stay on the road!

Travel in total security

Like any vacation, a road trip requires a minimum amount of planning. For smooth travels, remember the following:

- Registration papers, [vehicle insurance](#) and driver's license
- A [roadside assistance number](#)
- First aid kit: small band aids are very useful
- Booster cables
- A gallon of gasoline and/or windshield washer fluid, depending on the accessibility of your destination
- GPS or road map
- Phone charging cable, especially if GPS is your only option

Organization 101

Tip #1: Install hooks behind headrests. Visit a hardware store to find little hooks that secure easily to the metal headrest rods. Then hang a bag, fabric organizer or even your personal items, such as water bottles, towels and more, directly on the hooks.

Tip #2: Optimize space by placing organizer bins in your trunk. Creating separate sections allows you to store everything in its place without losing your mind.

Tip #3: Install a small built-in garbage bag. You can attach plastic hooks with removable adhesive strips to the dashboard or to a vehicle door for the bag.

[Click here to read the full Belairdirect blog on Road Trip Essentials.](#)

2023 Annual report highlights: Be the trusted voice of the broader education community

As an organization of dedicated members and volunteers, RTOERO continuously strives to achieve our three strategic goals –To be the trusted voice, improve the lives of members and seniors and to broaden the membership base.

Below are key highlights from the [2023 Annual Report](#) on our goal, to be the trusted voice of the broader education community. Our aim is to ensure RTOERO is viewed as a national authority on retirement and seniors-related issues.

Webinars—Over 7,000 members and community friends attended 11 RTOERO webinars on healthy aging, the retirement journey and our key advocacy issues—senior strategy, geriatric healthcare and environmental stewardship.

More than 90 per cent of webinar attendees view RTOERO as a trusted voice. Members can access webinar recordings by logging in to the [Learning Management System](#).

Government meetings—In 2023, RTOERO’s advocacy focus was on increasing awareness of the organization’s issues and building relationships with Canadian government officials. The RTOERO board of directors and members of the Political Advocacy Committee participated in 53 in-person and virtual meetings with government officials across the country. Some meetings took place at our annual [Queen’s Park Advocacy Day](#) event in Toronto and at our first [Day on the Hill Advocacy event](#) on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

RTOERO members are lifelong learners and game-changing advocates. For more information, check out some [advocacy-related articles](#) or [explore the full annual report online](#).

Liaison is published by RTOERO. Copyright 2023.
Publication of an advertisement does not constitute an endorsement
by RTOERO of any product or service.

www.rtoero.ca