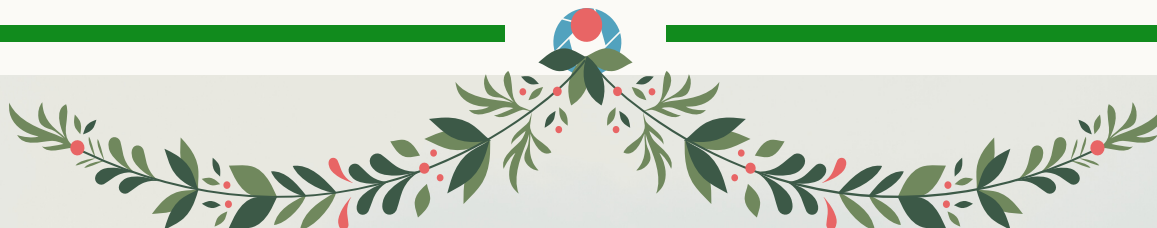


ONEIG NEWSLETTER



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Warm Greetings for 2020

Happy New Years! We hope your holidays were filled with amazing memories with friends, family and great food! A new year brings new opportunities to strive for a healthier environment. We extend our gratitude to all ONEIG members for your commitment and passion for the environment.

President - Elise Skinner
Social Media - Andrea Baumann
Policy & Political Action ENO - Katharine Harrison
Communications ENO - Josalyn Radcliffe
Treasurer - Margarita Salvatore
CANE Liaison - Hilda Swirsky
Membership ENO - Mahnoor Javed, Newsletter Editor
Past President - Kerrie Pickering
Policy and Political Action (2nd position) - vacant
Student Liaison - vacant

Executive Update

The new year brings about some exciting changes to the ONEIG Executive team. We have three new members joining us: Josalyn Radcliffe as the new Communications ENO, Margarita Salvatore as the new Treasurer, and Katharine Harrison as the new Policy and Political Action ENO. It is a privilege and pleasure welcoming these amazing, passionate leaders into their new roles. We would also like to express our gratitude to Susan Munro, who held the role of the past Policy and Political Action ENO. She will continue to mentor new executives and lend her support to ONEIG. It has been a great pleasure working with Susan and seeing the extent of her passion for environmental health. Thank you from everyone!

ONEIG Executives have been busy this year. From attending forums to creating resolutions to presenting at Queen's Park in front of the standing committee, this newsletter will bring you along on a journey of a successful and rewarding 2019!

Taking Time for 2020

ELISE SKINNER, PRESIDENT

As the calendar page turns to a new year and decade, my thoughts turn to the importance of taking time and experiencing gratitude for the many gifts of life. Taking time, the act of slowing down, can seem counter-intuitive when we are faced with so many local and global challenges demanding urgent collective attention. At the same time, in the midst of lives busy with family, friends and work, we are challenged ever more by social media forces engineered to commoditize our [in]attention. Taking time to reflect, to be with what is now is needed and requires deliberation.

The last year found ONEIG active on many pressing issues. As a group, we worked on important initiatives, including speaking out to support bike lane corridor expansion in Toronto as well as mobilizing the climate action vote in the federal election.

More recently, ONEIG members represented the RNAO at Queen's Park in speaking out on Bill 132. Bill 132 brought about many changes undermining environmental protections in Ontario. This broad-sweeping legislation passed through the Ontario legislature with alarming speed, particularly considering the wide-ranging implications of the bill for Ontario's environment and the health of its residents.

A lingering sadness remains with me in realizing what we stand to lose when we are not paying attention, when we are not awake to what is our true collective wealth—water, air, land. Taking time is essential to reflect on what is important and how we want to orient our life in consequence. For me, it is often in the outdoors that I most easily find a flowing feeling of taking time; I always gain perspective, strength and resolve when I step outdoors.

As we step into this new year, I invite you to reflect on what is important to you. Consider joining our outreach committee or our executive if you want to become more involved in health and environmental issues.

Wishing you health and heart in 2020!



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Reflect on what is important to you in this new year.

ONEIG: Quarterly Executive Meeting:

MAHNOOR JAVED, EDITOR

On December 11, 2019 - ONEIG executive invited members to join in on ONEIG's Annual General Meeting held virtually via Zoom.

Several areas of importance were discussed at the AGM.

- Bill 132: although the bill was passed despite Action Alert, the importance of raising awareness and speaking out were discussed.
- Interest in putting forward a resolution regarding Blue Communities was introduced. A plan was created to go ahead with creating the resolution.

MEMBERSHIP Report: ONEIG proudly represents 796 student members and 60 nursing members.

ONEIG WEBSITE Update: RNAO IT department have been hard at work revamping the ONEIG website. Mid-January is the projected completion timeline. We can't wait for you to see our fresh new website!

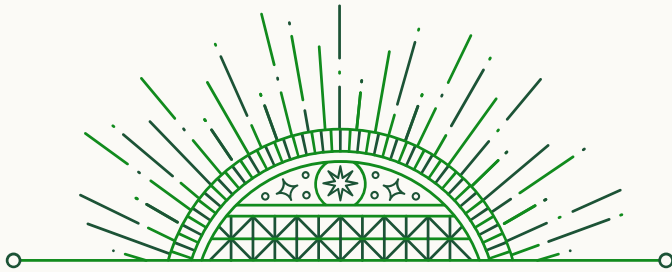
BOOK GIVEAWAY WINNER: Sarah Reynolds is the winner of the contest receiving 'Whose Water is it Anyway' by Maude Barlow. Congratulations Sarah!

UPCOMING 2020 RNAO. ONEIG EVENTS:

- Feb. 19 - Queen's Park Day
- Feb. 20/21 - Assembly/ Meeting
- June 12 - RNAO AGM

Get to Know ONEIG's Newest Communications Executive Network Officer:

JOSALYN RADCLIFFE



When I was young, my favourite places were tucked inside a forest or at a blueberry patch on a cliff in Kenora, Ontario. In the 90s I was part of “Kids for Saving Earth” and loved watching “Captain Planet.” As an adult, I crave being outside and deeply enjoy helping my plants grow in my indoor and outdoor gardens. It took me a long time to embed environmental health into my work, however.

My first degree in English and Psychology drew me to a curiosity about people and an interest in social justice. Community health nursing was a natural fit; soon after I completed my nursing degree, I began working in Public Health in 2014 as part of our Vaccine Preventable Disease program and have been there in some capacity ever since.

Two years ago, I began the multi-disciplinary Master of Public Health program at the University of Waterloo and told everyone around me that the biggest crisis facing the field was climate change. As a Public Health Nurse with an undergraduate degree in English and Psychology, earth sciences were outside my comfort zone but were essential for understanding this crisis. In 2018, I took a chance and took an environmental sciences course named “Fundamentals of Climate Change” that changed the course of my career. This was when I decided to transition into a thesis-based Masters program to explore climate change and health as a researcher.

After being a member of ONEIG for a number of years, I decided to become an executive member in 2019. I aspire to use my voice as a nurse to emphasize the importance of the Ecological Determinants of Health. We are part of a beautiful web of life and every person relies on it for survival. I hope that with ONEIG, we can complement the work of nurses at the frontline and bedside with prevention efforts focused on the ecological systems that sustain us.

ONEIG Presents at Queen's Park RE: Bill 132

SUSAN MUNRO

ONEIG representatives Hilda Swirsky, ONEIG's CANE Liaison, and Susan Munro, ONEIG Member, together with Kim Jarvi, Senior Economist of RNAO, had the privilege of presenting at Queen's Park on November 25, 2019 to the Standing Committee on General Government regarding Bill 132. This omnibus bill impacted over 80 pieces of legislation.

In view of environmental concerns, the government was urged to use the precautionary principle:

The Precautionary Principle

According to Kriebel et al (2001), it is a guideline in environmental decision making that uses preventive action in the face of uncertainty; shifts the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity, explores a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions, and finally, increases public participation in the decision making process.

This principle is important to use because the environment is intimately connected with human life and human health.

ONEIG representatives specifically spoke to Schedule 9 and Schedule 16. Hilda addressed Schedule 9 which dealt with pesticides. RNs and health organizations have long backed stronger protections against pesticides for a number of reasons: many epidemiological and laboratory studies link a range of health problems to pesticide exposure. The risk to health comes not only from active ingredients, but also from untested so-called inert substances, which are intentionally included in pesticide products.

As nurses, we know that extra precaution is needed for children's health and safety. Synergistic and cumulative effects can heighten the damage due to pesticides. Detection of pesticide damage in individuals is difficult and is often only apparent after many years.

Primary prevention is thus essential as, without early warning signs, people often cannot take timely action after exposure. Despite risks to health, schedule 9 of the bill has the potential to weaken pesticide protection.

Also noted by Hilda were the concerns about the impact on proposed amendments on pollinators. Neonicotinoid pesticides affect bees, and RNAO has fought hard for restriction on the use of neonics. More needs to be done to restrict use, not less.

Susan (Sue) Munro is all too familiar with the effects of aggregate mining as there is a proposal for a quarry expansion in her home community. She addressed Schedule 16 and reminded members that 18% of Ontarians rely on wells that fall outside the protections of municipal water supply requirements.

She noted that in the last Aggregate Resource review, language was changed to include "all drinking water sources," and that legislation needs to strengthen, not weaken protections.

As well as water concerns, Sue addressed air pollution caused by fine particulate matter produced both from mining itself and from heavy trucks transporting the aggregate.

To specifically mitigate risks in Aggregate Mining, the following were requested:

- To consider the impacts of aggregate mining on air quality both with mining and transportation.
- Subject any applications to extract aggregate from below the water table to a full environmental assessment and dismiss outright those that necessitate "pumping in perpetuity".
- Take into account climate change and the effects on low yield aquifers.
- Reconsider the plan to remove municipal authority over their own groundwater resources through zoning restrictions on depth of extraction.
- Hold all NEW licenses pending inventory for additional need for more quarries.

The presentation at Queen's Park was a wonderful experience, and although the Bill went on to be passed without substantive amendments, we believe our voices were heard and set the stage for the future.



The 50th Anniversary of Earth Day:

April 22, 2020

HILDA SWIRSKY, CANE LIAISON

Not only is 2020 the Year of the Nurse and the 200th birthday anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the first nursing environmentalist, it is also the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. There are exciting plans underway for world-wide celebrations to commemorate this historically special day.

Leonardo DiCaprio is Co-Chair of the Global Advisory Committee. The first Earth Day, on April 22, 1970 was the beginning of this current environmental advocacy. Millions of people world-wide were engaged in positive actions for our planet.

Today climate change is the biggest challenge impacting our world. Changes must be made so that we can continue to inhabit a comfortable world: a world that is not too hot, where food and water are usable. Earth Day's 2020 theme is climate action. We have enormous opportunities to become involved and to demonstrate our climate actions.

I am a member of the world-wide team who is planning for this day.

Long before the world ever heard of Earth Day, Judaism and the Jewish people perceived the importance of our Earth and had a holiday dedicated to this; Tu B'Shevath, the birthday of the trees, which has been celebrated for many years.

The Tree Canopy project is one of the events being promoted for Earth Day. Trees have both numerous environmental and health benefits.

As the Chair of the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue's Greening Committee; we will have a program on that day that will begin with Greetings from our Councillor James Pasternak on behalf of the Mayor. A component of our program will be about energy efficiency. Beth Emeth is one of several synagogues involved in the Benchmarking Energy Program. We will share that information.

The other half of our program will be about being resilient, especially in preparation for and during extreme weather events in the upcoming years. We will continue to share further information about the upcoming Earth Day celebrations.

APRIL 22

2020

EARTH DAY - 50TH ANNIVERSARY



- > Earth Day - April 22
- > Florence Nightingale's 200th Birthday - May 12,
- > The Tree Canopy Project

Climate Change and Health in Ontario: Voices from the Field at the OPHA Fall Forum

JOSALYN RADCLIFFE, COMMUNICATION

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) Fall forum was held in Toronto this November. I was naturally drawn to the theme of Climate Change and Health and was thankful that I was supported by my supervisors at the University of Waterloo. While I couldn't attend every session, the forum gave me both a taste of the research, activities, and conversations happening now and a dose of inspiration to help me move forward.

Dr. Sherrilee Harper was the first to discuss how climate change affects population health. She started with research in the fastest-warming area on the planet. In the Arctic, climate change exacerbates high food insecurity, creates new hazards with unstable ice and unpredictable weather, increases wildfire risk, and stresses mental health as culturally vital practices are threatened. In southern climates, populations also face more heat stress, changing vector-borne diseases, and higher risk of food poisoning. Dr. Harper emphasized that adaptation strategies won't be enough in high emissions scenarios; we need action at all levels for mitigation.

Much of the day had a very pragmatic focus on learning about adaptation planning and vulnerability assessments that are underway across the province with Public Health Units. Presenters in one session introduced www.climate-data.ca, a tool anyone can use to access climate data for their area. In other sessions, presenters discussed the need for intersectoral collaboration and gaps in research on policy effectiveness (what are the 'best buy' approaches?) and the mental health impacts of the climate crisis.

Climate change is a justice issue. Pemma Muzumbar spoke about equity at the forum as part of her role at the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (NCCDH). She highlighted the centre's 2018 guide for Public Health Units titled "Climate Change, Health, and Equity." Our policies in all sectors need to recognize that climate impacts are more severe for those who are pushed to society's margins. By integrating knowledge about the determinants of health and intersecting disadvantages, we contribute to the equitable adaptation and 'just transition' away from fossil fuels that is key to a healthy and sustainable future.

The last words of the forum were given to a youth activist, Samantha Casey, and two Indigenous voices, Dr. Deborah MacGregor (Canadian Research Chair in Indigenous Environmental Justice) and her son Hilary MacGregor, a youth leader and advocate. They spoke about language and climate conversations being critical to our response to this crisis.

Dr. MacGregor described how Indigenous ways of knowing and connections to the land are vital sources of knowledge that can lead us forward in responding. She spoke about seeing carbon emissions within the context of colonialism and consumption. Climate change action was considered as an act of reconciliation and an act of love.

Hilary drew the forum to a close with a powerful message that seems a fitting way to end this article as well: **we have all the evidence and the knowledge we need to move forward; we must now demonstrate our wisdom by acting on this knowledge and facing this crisis together.**

Green Tips: Brought to you by Hilda Swirsky

1. Donate old clothes, especially coats and jackets to **Out of the Cold** programs.
2. During the cold weather, keep your tires appropriately inflated.
3. Walking outdoors and enjoying the scenery improves mental, social and physical well-being.
4. A regular walking regimen can lower the risk of heart attacks by 35%.
5. While walking in the sunlight, your skin's exposure produces necessary Vitamin D.

Dark Waters: An Excellent Movie with Which to End this Holidays!

MAHNOOR JAVED, MEMBERSHIP ENO

Once in a blue moon a movie will be released that takes your breath away and reaffirms every ounce of passion and inspiration living in the recesses of your bones. I introduce you to a powerful film based on true events about fighting a seemingly endless battle with courage. I urge you to watch not only for the knowledge you will surely get, but also for its excellent cinematography; heartbreaking, raw and hopeful.

DARK WATERS, Released Nov. 22, 2019
Directed by Todd Haynes



This environmental drama follows corporate lawyer Robert Bilott (portrayed by Mark Ruffalo). He embarks on an investigation to find the link between Parkersburg, West Virginia's increasing rates of illness and sudden unexplained deaths of local animals and DuPont, a large industrial chemical corporation.

“

It's a David and Goliath story with a central figure who knows what's right and keeps chipping away, bit by bit, until he gets to the truth.

- Adam Graham
Top Critic at Detroit News

This movie watches like an eerie thriller with layers of urgency and unease that reflect the reality of the situation. Even more baffling is that Dark Waters is based on true events. The movie's screenplay is based on a 2016 New York Times Magazine article written by Nathaniel Rich titled 'The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare.' The article profiled corporate lawyer Robert Bilott's story investigating DuPont's impact on the environment, and his fight for justice.

Dark Waters does a wonderful job portraying the principle of causation, the importance of primary prevention and the need for evidence-based knowledge prior to approving new interventions, products or actions.

With a realistic story line showing the struggles of fighting against a powerful giant, Dark Waters reminds us that our environmental pursuits are not mere whims but rather huge commitments, and that each single effort is worthwhile and imparts a collectively powerful message.

We want to hear from you!

Your ONIEG executive would love to hear your opinion on Dark Waters. Did you have a movie you'd like to recommend to ONEIG members? We'd love to hear about it!

We welcome any feedback on the newsletter. Don't hesitate to contact us if you would like to be featured in the next issues of the ONEIG Newsletter.



oneignao@gmail.com



RNAO - ONEIG



Student Contribution

A NEW YEAR OF NEW REALIZATIONS

GORPU FARLEY
BScN '21



Late last year in 2019, in the comforting silence of the middle of the night, thick clouds opened up and released a frenzy of fluffy snow flakes that coated the earth in a fresh, new coating. The air was crisp, the wind was biting, but the snow sparkled under the morning sun. I have never been particularly happy at the sight of snow, the bitter cold, the sludge, the salt stains on everything brings about feelings of *ugh*.

My son Missa, on the other hand, absolutely adored the special surprise as he glanced out the window. The cold didn't bother him as he rushed outside, clad in all of his winter gear. His grin was as wide as his cheeks would let him. As I snapped a few pictures of his happiness, a sudden sadness overcame me.

Earlier that morning, I had switched on the news and sighed in relief as the newscaster promised no more snow. The temperature would also rise and the snow would melt off, leaving behind wet puddles of sludge. This to me was excellent news.

It was different for Missa, who had never experienced a proper snow-piled high day in his young life and had never had the chance to make a snowman in the last 4 years, I was suddenly struck by the frightening prospect of his future. Would his winters become another fall? Would snow become a rare occurrence?

My childhood was filled with snow - piles of it, thigh deep piles of snow, that we would dig into and make otherworldly creations. Many children in today's age may never experience that in their own backyards.

This realization has urged a renewed urgency in me to spread the word about global warming to my family and friends so that we can do our part to give our kids a normal future. Although I appreciate the mild weather, I would trade my warmth and comfort to give the children of the future a snow day to remember. A winter to never forget. A season that makes sense. A winter wonderland.

Student Contributions

WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL WORK MEANS TO ME

MISBAH NOOR
M.A Sociology '20

My understanding of Global warming is flawed
I understand the necessity, appreciate the urgency
But it fails to register in real time
It is not compatible with the way I see the world run

We say one thing
But do quite the opposite
We find a solution
Then create a dozen more problems

It's a cycle that seems hopeless
A million odds
A million trials
A million battles
Against a single dream

My resolve often weakens with time
But I take comfort in the small sights of change I see
In the paper straws I sip my coffee from
And the compost bins in my shopping mall
From the advertisements strung on walls at my campus
And groups like ONEIG that fight for our earth
My resolve strengthens, grows

And though it may not make sense to me
To see the disruption and damage we've caused, pile up effortlessly
I will hold off my despair
And remember the little things we've done all along
And hope that we can create our own pile
Of all our excellent efforts

To say to Mother Nature that
We hear
To say to future generations that
We care
To say to ourselves that
We can.