



# PROBUS CLUB OF COLLINGWOOD

P.O. BOX 601 COLLINGWOOD, ONTARIO L9Y 4E8

## NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 2016

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY MAY 5, 2016 – BEAR ESTATE HALL - 10 A.M. - 12 NOON

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: JOHN MEGARRY

VICE PRESIDENT BOB MACNAIR

SOCIAL: GREG GEEN

SECRETARY: AL WALLACE

TREASURERS: MIKE MARTYNUIK

SPEAKERS; RUBEN ROSEN

MEMBERSHIP

GERRY DeLESKIE

PAST PRESIDENT: PAUL NATALE

NEWSLETTER: ERIC SKEOCH

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Megarry called the meeting to order and immediately reported that his holiday in Florida had been pleasant and fulfilling. His attempt to register as a Republican while there had not been successful, but Mr. Trump won the primary even without John's support. John was happy to see that during his absence, VP MacNair had not orchestrated a palace revolution.

We were introduced to some guests in the personages of Kerry Baskey, Colin Esterbrook and Terry Wilkinson, all of whom were given membership forms in case they became so moved by what was to transpire that they would cough up \$45 and become card-carrying members.

And speaking of CCMs, John extended the right hand of fellowship to a new member, Mike Mills. Two other joiners, Don Whalley and Paul Tranquada were welcomed in absentia.

The members were informed of the recent deaths of two of our Probos members, John Neilsen and Jack Taylor. Contributions were made to the hospital and the hospice in their memory.

Thanks were extended to John Miller for filling in for Hal Keiser at the I.T.desk.

### SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Greg Geer informed the members of the following social and educational events on the calendar.

April 16 – Earthship Collingwood visit at 10.00 a.m. (Jack Marley contact)

May 12 – Honda plant again

May 16 – Bike ride to Thornbury leaves Tim's on 1<sup>st</sup> Street

May 24 – Golf begins at Shelburne

May 28 – Stag and Doe at Theatre Collingwood

May 31 – Rock and Bowl challenge (i.e. bowling)

June 22 – Blue Jay game –only \$75, so Book fast!

July 27 -Mama Mia at King's Wharf Theatre

Some special new items may be of interest to members. The Scandinave Spa still offers us a reduced price. Just mention Code 6064.

Ron Hartlen announced the creation of a Probos bridge tourney, organized by the Beaver Valley Club. Contact Ron at [ron.hartlen@sympatico.ca](mailto:ron.hartlen@sympatico.ca)

And the motorcyclist enthusiasts are ready.

### SPEAKERS REPORT

Ruben Rosen reported that our speaker for May will be Brock Godfrey on Fraud.

### PROFILE AL FRASER

Al spent his early life in Truro Nova Scotia, where he had some health issues with Whooping Cough and Polio, but still managed to make a name for himself in curling. He won the High School Curling championship on one occasion and went on to further successes in Moncton, Mississauga and Stayner. Clearly attracted to the cold, Al soon established himself in the refrigeration business. There was a brief foray to Chicago in these early years, where he roomed at the YWCA. His stay featured bullet holes in the wall adjacent to Al's room. Chicago, Chicago, clearly not always a wonderful town.

Anyway, Al scuttled back to Moncton where he met Joan and they have been married for 60 years.

Al started his own refrigeration company and spent many long hours at it for the next 24 years. There was little in the way of training available in

the service industry in those early days, and this was a source of much frustration in terms of finding staff. Eventually a local trade school addressed this problem, but not before Al's dissatisfaction with equipment design and training led him into a crusade for improvements in the trade. He spent the next 34 years establishing a reputation throughout North America in product design.

In 1996, Al retired to the Mississauga area where he lived until his move north to Wasaga Beach in 2001, and eventually to the Chartwell retirement residence.

In 2010, while recovering from a serious operation, Al was in an induced coma for three months. His physician was apparently not optimistic that he would recover, and when he did come around he faced a difficult year returning to full health. He mentioned casually that he remembered having a great many interesting memories while he was under, but just when we felt he was going to share a few with us, he announced that his allotted ten minutes were up and he left us dangling! I think Al should return and provide more details.

#### MINISTER OF CULTURE

Wayne Caswill shortened up on the allocated time set aside at this point in the meeting for his monthly moments of mirth and merriment. Instead he provided us with a description of what is available all the time in our Probus Collingwood web site. Wayne's talented son set up the site several years ago and Wayne, equally talented, now manages it. His offspring "built the house; I rearrange the furniture." I won't describe all the features of the web site, but I urge, urge, urge you to just google Probus Collingwood and you will be amazed at what you will find.

#### SPEAKER BASIL KALYMON

Towards the end of his presentation, Professor Kalymon was asked if there was anything positive he could see in the future for Ukraine. His response was "I wish I could say yes.."

In the preceding 45 minutes or so, Professor Kalymon presented us with a quick summary of

Ukraine's political and economic history in the past 25 years.

The dominant feature is corruption, a corruption which had its origins in the Soviet period and has persisted into the period of independence since 1991. In a recent summary of *Transparency*, Canada ranks 10<sup>th</sup>, and Ukraine 141<sup>st</sup>. Since the days of Gorbachev systemic corruption has become "deeply engrained". Assets were initially part of the state during the Soviet years, and when privatization began these assets were mostly bought for next to nothing and there was thus a massive transfer of wealth into the hands of an oligarchy consisting of Putin and his entourage.

Elections in 2010 returned a pro Russian leader who in turn was ousted in 2014. Two years later, his successor resigned when his attempts to introduce austerity reforms were unpopular.

Throughout the various political wrangling, corruption continued or even grew. Putin's intentions seem clearly to focus on the recreation of Russian influence in eastern Europe

For the average Ukrainian, life is "horrible", with inflation at 45% and the average income \$1700.

The rule of law and the existence of an independent judiciary are absent. Though there have been some attempts at reform, the reformers usually quit in frustration. [The prime minister just this week resigned.] Again and again, the presence of corruption at all levels appears to present an insurmountable obstacle to reform. And as the events in Crimea and eastern Ukraine have shown in the past two years, the economic disarray is compounded by political and the social chaos.

Professor Kalymon recommended three readings for those who are interested: The Man Without a Face, (Masha Gesse), Red Notice, (Bill Browder), and Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin, (Timothy Snyder).

It was a fascinating and disturbing presentation. Professor Kalymon was thanked by John Megarry and presented with a Gerry Deleskie pen set.

The 50 50 winners were Tom McConnell and John Lennox and they will man the tables next month.



