



Probus Club of Perth

The Probian

April 2019 edition

May Presentation:

“Stewart Park Festival – How It Began and Why It Survived.”

The Stewart Park Festival is designated one of the top events in the Province of Ontario. **John McKenty** will present a behind the scenes look at this community event and the volunteer base that keeps it going. The Festival is a local celebration with friends, family, fantastic music, workshops and activities. It is held in our magnificent Stewart Park under mature trees and alongside the meandering Tay River. July 19-21 will again draw a huge crowd of enthusiasts who will bring chairs, blankets and picnics as they join with others in celebration of excellence in music.

Behind every successful event is a dedicated team of volunteers with an excellent organizational team. John McKenty has tirelessly provided leadership and direction to this group and has created an event that thrives on local volunteerism, partners with local organizations and gives back to the town of Perth. John was awarded the 2018 Perth Medal for contributions to the community, a much deserved honour.

Membership:

Club President, Craig Greenwood welcomes new member David Kroetsch. Membership now stands at an impressive 197. (Don't forget that you can access the fully protected Membership List on the club website. Your username and password can be found in the email that linked to this Probian issue.)



Special recognition:

Recognising his dedicated efforts as Editor of the Probian for the last two years, the club presented Bill Kennedy with a spiral-bound collection of all the Probian editions that he edited, together with "Thank You" messages from each member of the Management Team.



Coming events:

May 1st Lunch:

Join us at the Hot Wok on Wilson Street for lunch following our May meeting! Please sign up by 10:45 a.m.

<http://www.thehotwok.ca/>

May 30

Dinner/Theatre – Dinner will be at the Stone Cellar at 5 p.m. followed by "The Ladies Foursome" by Norm Foster at Studio Theatre at 7:30 p.m. If you haven't yet signed-up, you may do so at the May meeting, indicating your meal choice and picking up your \$18 theatre tickets.

June 5

Our Probus meeting and lunch will be held at The Cove Country Inn in Westport.

<http://coveinn.com/>

Refreshments will be available at 9:30 a.m. followed by the regular meeting and a presentation by Paula Stagg, entitled "Looking at Wetlands".

A prosciutto wrapped, stuffed chicken dinner with pie and coffee will be served at noon. All-inclusive cost for the event is \$30. Seating for 100 is available with a sign up opportunity at the meeting on May 1st.

Following the lunch, we have planned an afternoon visit to Scheuermann Vineyard and Winery for wine tasting and relaxation overlooking Sand Lake.

<https://www.scheuermannwinery.com/>

This is a pay-as-you-go activity.

Sept 11

Our annual Gananoque trip to the 1000 Islands Playhouse will be early in the fall to see "Ring of Fire: The Music of Johnny Cash".

<http://www.1000islandsplayhouse.com/ring-of-fire/>

Fifty seats will be available, and tickets will be sold at the meeting on May 1st. We are planning to go for lunch prior to the theatre at a soon to be announced location.

Theatre cost will be \$30 each.

Nov 1

Mark your calendar for our Prince Edward County Wine Tour! This full day outing will include bus transportation to PEC, four estate visits (with two tours) and lunch at the Waring House Inn, Picton.

<http://waringhouse.com/>

This package tour will go on sale at our September meeting.

Personal Profile: Gary Waterfield

Gary commenced his personal profile story in the year 1983.



We are fairly certain that he first saw the light of day long before that date, but since 1983 is the year he met Marg White, one senses that is when his life began!

In 1983 Gary was a successful sales representative in the Pharmaceutical Industry in St. John's Newfoundland, his home town and Marg a successful sales representative with Xerox Canada. One year later, there were wedding bells, Gary was offered a senior sales role in Western Canada and so they moved to Winnipeg, where they lived until 1989!

Those years were remarkable for the cold Winters, when friends and neighbours would be sure to be first to issue a dinner invitation in order to avoid going out to someone else's house on a Winter's evening and by the separation Gary and Marg endured as he spent every second week on the road. The upside of all that travel was an accumulation of thousands of Aeroplan points, enabling the couple to travel extensively, exploring 40 countries including India, Senegal and Australia.

1990, more significant changes in store as Gary was transferred to Head Office in Richmond Hill Ontario and moved from Sales to Human Resources! Marg found a job with Ontario Blue Cross and they made their home in Aurora.

At a time of mergers and rapid growth in the Pharmaceutical industry, Gary led the company's strategy to integrate and redesign their human resource systems.

In 1994 his company too was part of a merger, the plant in Richmond Hill closed and with the new Head Office being in Laval Quebec yet another significant "uprooting", this time to a new home in St Lazare, West of Montreal.

1999 saw yet another Company merger which came with the jolt that after twenty years with the company Gary was "downsized", receiving a handshake and a nice big cheque to cushion the blow!

2000, moving on, Gary became a consultant for a Global Human Resources Consulting Firm, working in both the Montreal and Ottawa offices, with responsibility for projects in Eastern Canada and North Eastern United States.

Marg continued with her career with IMS Canada and Telus Health.

During those years in Quebec, every summer Gary and Marg would take a road trip to Ontario to visit a music festival, meet friends and explore the area. In 2008, they discovered Perth and the Stewart Park Festival. They fell in love with the town, its architecture, atmosphere, amenities and geography enough to draw them back to Stewart Park for every yearly festival since!

When it came time to consider where retirement would take them, clearly Perth was at the top of the list ! They moved here in 2017, settling in easily, revelling in their situation and becoming active in several community organisations. It is no surprise that Gary is on the Stewart Park Festival organising committee!

Gary's plans his retirement years on the three pillars of Growth, Exploration and Community Service, so he and Marg, buoyed by their contentment here , continue to explore, fuel their curiosity, acquire new skills and volunteer their time and efforts to the Community.

Perth Probus welcomes you both!

Report written by Liz Leonard

April Presentation: "It's a Dog's Life"

Don, a very handsome Black Labrador (brother of the Sens' "Rookie") was to have presented our March meeting with the story of the CNIB Guide Dog programme. However, as a 7-month old, he decided that a nice lie down would be preferable and so the presentation was left in the very capable hands of Andrew and Karen Hanlon.



Armed with many years of experience of guide dog training in England, Andrew emigrated to Canada in 2006, where he found that although there were five training schools across the country, the waiting time for a Canadian guide dog could be a year. As a result, 72% of Canadians went to the USA for their dogs.

With that in mind, Andrew approached the CNIB with a proposal to establish CNIB guide dog training schools. Two years ago that became a reality with schools here in Lanark County, in Winnipeg, in Halifax and soon in Regina.

Understanding that 50,000 Canadians lose their sight each year, the aim is to expand from coast to coast.



Karen's role in the operation is the puppy raising scheme, which takes 8 week old puppies through to 12-15 month old dogs ready for training. Pure-bred Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers are preferred, with the vast majority coming from Career Dogs Australia. Volunteers (200 have been recruited) raise the puppies through this period, by providing a safe home and socialising them, and by taking them to various environments and into different situations to prepare them for a future career as a guide dog. Get-together puppy classes are held throughout this period. And then, after about a year, the dog leaves the volunteer home and enters Andrew's world of intensive training.



Guide Dog trainers, who work solely with the dogs, do the initial training, after which Guide Dog Mobility Instructors (GDMI's), who have undertaken a 4-year apprenticeship, take over and work with both the dog and the client. Care is taken to match the personalities of the dog and the GDMI.

Currently, there are 8 dogs in advanced training, with the goal being to train 200 a year. However, 50 would be considered a success!

An in-depth application, including a 4-5 hour interview, is required for a new client who, if successful, will not incur any financial responsibility, as the CNIB covers all costs, including food and veterinary fees. Nonetheless, contributions are always welcome and some clients do help out.

Approximately one month of serious training is typically spent with the client gradually expanding their experience, with the aim of having fun and making the client happy with the dog. End clients are encouraged to be in contact with the volunteer who raised their guide dog as a puppy.

The typical working life of a guide dog is 10-12 years, but should a dog be separated from their client after 4 years it is too late for them to be re-trained and so they are found an appropriate home. In addition to Guide Dogs, there are Buddy Dogs who work with young children as companions, rather than guides, and Ambassador Dogs who for some reason can no longer guide, but are used to spread the word at events and presentations.

An exciting development for the CNIB Guide Dog programme is the establishment of an indoor training facility off highway 7, just east of Carleton Place. This will be equipped with mock-ups of many of the obstacles that a dog could encounter through it's working life, including stairs, escalators, aircraft and train interiors and so on. The silence of electric cars is becoming a difficulty and so some means of alerting dogs to that problem is also being considered. In addition, it will be possible to expose dogs to environmental situations such as rain and thunder. Aiming to meet the demand for trainers and thus decrease the previously mentioned waiting times, apprentices from across the country will learn at the new facility.

At present, there is little co-operation between Canadian schools, but the plan to invite other schools to use the new facility should help overcome that situation.

The International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF), based in the UK and with 90 member organisations, maintains standards worldwide.

In Canada, The Blind Persons Rights act states that someone with a guide dog is allowed anywhere that a regular member of the public is allowed.

Andrew, Karen and Don gave us a thoroughly entertaining and informative presentation which, despite the occasional translation difficulty, left us all feeling a lot more aware of the trials, tribulations and joys of those who train and those who use guide dogs.

A Thought...

If you can keep your head when all those about you are losing theirs, perhaps you've misunderstood the situation.

Edited by Rob Leonard

The Perth Probus Club meets at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, 26 Beckwith Street,
Perth on the first Wednesday of the month, September through June.

President: Craig Greenwood (613) 267-4694

Further information on the club and contact details for the other members of the
Management Team can be found at: www.probusperth.ca/board.htm