



The PROBIAN ~ September 2009 Edition

~ Contributing Editor Audrey Cole ~



**THE PROBUS CLUB
OF PERTH**
P. O. Box 2164,
Perth, Ontario
K7H 3M9
www.probusperth.ca
Probus meets the first
Wednesday of each month,
Sept. to June.

President
Bruce Gourley
613-283- 5967
brucegourley@sympatico.ca

Past President
Ernie Trischuk
613-283-8112

Vice President
Mike Else
613-267-2302

Secretary
Sheila Clark
613-267-4939

Treasurer
Don Sherwin
613-264-0759

Program
Ian Doig
613-264-2707
and Glen Pettinger
613-267-9747

Special Events
Glen Pettinger
and Mary Kilgour
613-264-0024

Membership
Jean Crowley
613-267-3306
and Rod Woolham

Member at Large
Keith Brown
613-264-0206

Facilities
Bill & Kathleen Lea
613-264-0972

Webmaster
Colin Stephenson
613-264-2609
info@probusperth.ca

Pro-bites.....a Probian's point of view.

Palliative care is one of many life situations demanding scrupulous protection of personal decision-making rights. When capacity might be diminishing decisions are vulnerable to external and possibly conflicting interests.

Guardianship is society's response and Powers of Attorney enable choice of one's own substitute decision makers. Both remove the fundamental right to make decisions, destroying the individual's legal status. People with intellectual disabilities face this reality from the age of majority with devastating and soul-destroying consequences.

Their hope lies in the federal government's statement last week at the U.N. that it is "giving priority consideration to ratification" this year, of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which provides for "Supported Decision Making" an alternative to guardianship.

We should be watching this. It would be good for us old folks too!

Vignettes from the September Meeting



Doug Burt talking
about Dignity House

Palliative Care, specifically Dignity House of Perth Hospice, was the topic on September 2nd. Now volunteers, guest speakers Douglas Burt and Stephanie Smart brought to their presentation a wealth of personal commitment and professional experience: Doug from 44 years of health care administration and Stephanie from her nursing career, latterly as head of the area Bayshore Health Services unit. Their message was both disturbing and exhilarating.

It was hard for this listener to accept that, almost ten years into the 21st century, palliative care is better known by its inconsistent, disconnected and limited availability than as a fundamental, social and ethical obligation of a caring society. The paucity of government funding is inexplicable. One can only hope the explanation does not lie in the limited electoral threat of citizens unlikely to remain on the voter's list long enough to defeat a government of the day.

Thankfully, volunteer movers and shakers such as those involved in this Hospice project are working to fill the glaring gap in social consciousness at least in Perth and its surrounding area, where the closest current day or residential hospice care is over 80 kms away in either Brockville or Ottawa.

Our speakers provided startling facts. Although Community Care Access Centres provide in-home palliative support, hours are limited. Once families can no longer manage necessary care, hospitalisation remains the only option. Last year, 125 palliative care patients spent, on average, their last 30 days in our local Perth/Smiths Falls hospital. At \$800 per day, their care in a setting designed for acutely ill and post surgical care was a less than optimal personal or economic solution. Had it been available, a fully operational 10 bed residential hospice would have provided a less hectic and more intimate and family friendly care environment for those patients at less than half the (estimated annual) cost.

Vignettes contin.....

But the efforts of the Dignity House group are not about money. They are about fulfilling the ethical imperatives of appropriate, personalised end of life relief from suffering in environments chosen by the individual and designed to accommodate not only immediate medical needs but also the emotional, psychological and spiritual needs of the individual and his or her loved ones.

A 2-phase plan is proceeding. First, a Day Hospice Programme and, ultimately, a Residential Hospice Programme. It will take much effort. With a team as committed as our speakers, one's sense is that the money will be raised and this will happen.



Speakers' Corner

- **October** ~ Dennis Dwyer on "Will there be a Church for our Great Grandchildren"?
- **November** ~ General Clive Addy ~ topic TBD
- **December** ~ Elaine Turner with a presentation on [Perth and District Community Foundation](#), which has provided more than \$100,000 in grants in our area in recent years.

Special Events

- **October 5, 2009** ~ Fall Foliage Excursion on the [Wakefield Steam Train](#). See the Summer edition for details or [click here if on-line](#).
- **October 31, 2009** ~ [Mississippi Mudds Mystery Theatre](#) at the Heritage Inn in Carleton Place. Cost is \$40 per person for dinner and you also get a big helping of a murder mystery. Don't forget to bring your money to the October meeting. The fun begins at 6pm. Glen Pettinger will arrange car pooling so that no couple or person will be going alone. So far 21 people have signed up and that there's lots more room.
- **December 10, 2009** ~ Annual Christmas Dinner at the Perth Links O'Tay Golf Club. You can sign up at our next meeting. Cost is only \$35 per person and that includes the very popular "Saints and Sinners" musical group.
- **May 2010** ~ play at Gananoque Playhouse

Guests and members of other Probus Clubs are welcome to join our special events. If you have an idea for an activity you think other Probus members might enjoy, please talk to Mary Kilgour or Glen Pettinger, or one of the other members of the Management Team. We are always looking for new and creative ideas, as well as people to take the lead in organizing events.

AGM Highlights

It was that time of year again – the Annual General Meeting proceeded as it should!

Finances are in good shape. Despite a drop in the year end balance (see below for by-law solutions), we are solvent. The Treasurer, Donald Sherwin, was congratulated by Financial Reviewer, Don McNaughton, for a "fine job!"



The handover of the Presidential gavel.

The on line intro to the Constitution warns us that constitutions, are "excruciatingly boring," an opinion not shared by this writer whose passion for constitutions and by-laws is the subject of much ribbing in other circles. Despite the anticipated gloom, the proposed by-law amendments were approved. And there you go...! By-laws that make sense are not boring!

The Nominating Committee did its job well – no rush of nominees from the floor and nominees as printed in the summer edition of the Probian acclaimed. In fact, it was admitted that we might not know what to do were there to be nominees from the floor!

Past President Ernie Trischuk reported that it had been "a joy" to work with the Management Committee. He paid particular tribute to the work of Denise Mullins and Rod Woolham and also gave credit to Ian Doig for the notable speakers he had been able to attract.

Incoming President, Bruce Gourley, thanked Ernie for his year in the Presidency as he took up the reins as President for the coming year.



Management Team Notes

- A DVD has been made of Peter Craske's moving account at the June meeting of his personal experiences on D-Day and it is available for viewing. Please contact contact Colin Stephenson if you would like to borrow this DVD.
- Just a reminder that Probus Perth membership fees of \$20 per member for the year 2009-10 are now due. There was a renewal form attached to the Summer edition, or [click here if online](#). Please fill out this form and send it together with your cheque to Probus Box 2164, Perth, Ont., K7H 3M9, or take it in to the next meeting.
- The Personal Profile for October is scheduled to be given by John Hauraney.
- Many thanks to Audrey Cole for her contributions to this edition. The contributing editor for the October Bulletin will be Peter Craske.

