



PROBUS Club of Guelph & District
Our Strength is Fellowship, Our Success is Participation

SPECIAL NEWSLETTER APRIL 2022
DISTRICT 4 PROBUS PRESIDENTS MEETING UPDATE

About four weeks ago our District Director, Martin Capper, convened a Zoom meeting of the clubs in our district. There were 18 Presidents in attendance. Each President was allotted 3 minutes to give an update on what has happened over the past two years as well as where things currently stand. All clubs have faced the same Covid challenges but they have done so in a wide variety of ways. I believe it's important for our members to know how some of the other clubs performed in order to put our experience in perspective.

Several clubs did not meet at all for over a year. Eventually, they all worked their way into a Zoom format. We were one of the first clubs to adopt Zoom.

Hybrid meetings are another story. The Cambridge club was among the first proponents of hybrid meetings in PROBUS Canada and produced a video on how to conduct them. However, they abandoned the idea as too complicated and not worth the effort. We have had four successful hybrid meetings. Only three or four of the clubs have had any and no other club in the district has had more than two. Several clubs planned to have hybrid meetings but they have not yet figured out how to conduct them. To their credit, Cambridge has had several live meetings but those meetings have not been offered via Zoom. Most clubs are planning a return to some form of live meeting in April, May or June.

While all the clubs lacked activities for quite a while, we ran our 'stay connected' series of online activities last year and have had a number of excellent live activities throughout this year. Once again, we were ahead of the curve. Now most clubs, but not all, have restarted activities as of January 2022.

Like us, several clubs have had to change venues during Covid.

PROBUS Canada put out the question on whether individual clubs should incorporate. This was rejected by all 18 clubs as being unnecessarily complicated in terms of reporting requirements for no significant benefit.

Overall, our club and our committees have performed very well when compared to the

other clubs.

By far the most serious problem for the majority of the clubs is finding volunteers especially for the three executive positions. Most clubs are significantly worse off than we are and one club may even be forced to fold over this issue. Suggestions on how to encourage new volunteers included:

- a. Hold a new members orientation lunch with the management committee to explain roles, find out abilities and interests. We are planning an orientation luncheon in June.
- b. A few clubs have co-presidents to share the load and attract more volunteers. This is under consideration by our club. I do feel that the prospect of two friends or a couple acting as co-presidents would be very effective and may encourage more people to consider the roles.

I would also like to put the volunteer issue into proper perspective. Our club has done well because we do have a group of proactive volunteers who share the workload and are determined to keep the club vibrant and interesting. To operate smoothly, we need to replace three or four positions most years including this year. But let's be clear, these positions while valued and essential are not overly onerous. Most positions require 2 to 3 hours a month or less. There are certainly exceptions for key people who have put in more time particularly during Covid. This can be easily avoided in future with the help of a few more volunteers.

Our committee system is very effective as evidenced by the quality and scope of our programs and activities. Serving on our management committee is a fun, satisfying diversion, a chance to make new friends and make a small but significant contribution to our collective social life. I know retirees, after a life full of responsibilities, often wish to avoid commitment. But let's not allow all your talent go dormant. Please contact someone on the management committee for more information and put that talent to work briefly each month for the ten months a year that we meet. You can start by replying to this email at: probusguelph133@gmail.com

In the meantime, stay safe, get that fourth shot and plan to come to our May meeting either live or by Zoom.

Fred Dawkins
President
PROBUS Guelph

PROBUS Management Team

Our goal is to provide Fellowship, Friendship and Fun for men and women in their retirement years. We are a volunteer-based, non-profit, non-sectarian fellowship group

with over 4,000 clubs worldwide, 255 being Canadian clubs made up of over 38,000 members who are all about encouraging healthy minds and bodies and socializing with other retirees in the community.

You are welcome to join our energetic and enthusiastic Management Team. We are always looking for fresh ideas.

President; Fred Dawkins
Past President; Donna Sunter
First Vice-President; Kathryn Greenaway
Second Vice-President; Graham Ford
Treasurer; Judy Carrick
Secretary; Beth Harris
Membership Chair; Jacquie Geall Seabrook
Program Chair; Kathy Stephens
Activity Co-Chairs; Barb Moldenhauer & Linda Denny
Speaker Support; David Churchill
Webmasters: Judy Carrick
House Committee Chair; Jarka Rasper
Newsletter Co-Editors; Ruth Slavin & Linda Yates

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