



The PROBUS Pilot



Probus Club of Western Ottawa – serving the western half of the National Capital Region

January 2022

Vol: 13 No: 5

Tuesday, January 11, 10am, via ZOOM*

Michele Vinèt: WRITING BEHIND BARS



Come hear the story of a unique penitentiary experience. Find out how detainees and writers negotiated workshops and prejudice to publish their literary works. Learn about surveillance and on-site protocols. Feel the pain and fear that led to the joy and redemption of writing behind bars.

In this presentation the award-winning author brings us an account of her work at the federal penitentiary in Joliette, Québec, and anecdotes of life-changing incidents with officials and women inmates.

Connect with this edge-of-the-seat story of incarceration and creative writing events and find out how literary skills can be empowering for everyone.

Michèle Vinet is an award-winning Canadian writer and educator from Ottawa. Her first three works, written in the French language, earned seven nominations and won three literary awards: the local award, *Le Droit*, the provincial, *Trillium Book Award*, and the pan-Canadian award, *Émile-Ollivier*. She has also published a collection of poems, *Tendrils*, written in English.

The author offers lectures and creative writing workshops for the general public, schools, and publishers. She has also worked at the University of Ottawa, l'Université Laurentienne, in the Penitentiary system and in the field of mental health. Her work has been featured and reviewed on radio, television and newspapers. She was recently the guest of honour at the Outaouais Book Fair. Her latest novel, *Le malaimant*, was published in early 2021.

* ZOOM meeting details will be emailed to members on January 9th.

The Prez Sez



The purpose of Probus is to act as a vessel for seniors to stimulate thought, interest and participation in activities at a time in life when it is easy to become complacent or isolated. In short it is to provide an opportunity to socialize and broaden our horizons.

The purpose of COVID and now Omicron, is to prevent seniors from doing those very things.

So, what to do? A year ago, we started using Zoom to do an end run on the pandemic. As restrictions eased, we had lunches and some outings. Zoom wasn't for everyone, but we were able to hear from a variety of stimulating and knowledgeable speakers.

Not being able to hold in-person meetings has dissuaded some past members from renewing their memberships. We understand and hope they will return when our regular activities resume.

Last fall we thought that restrictions were going to be relaxed and that we could soon go back to all our normal Probus activities. In the short term that plan looks to be unlikely.

We ask you to bear with us. The pandemic and wintry weather will move on. In the meantime, we have an appealing array of monthly speakers via Zoom. At the same time, we will keep investigating luncheon

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December in Review

Speaker: Our speaker in December was James Jordan, an amputee since birth, speaking on “*Celebrating over 100 years of The War Amps in Canada*”.

James, an animated and engaging speaker, is a Public Awareness Officer for the War Amps and an amputee since birth. He provided a fascinating overview of the organization and its growth from its inception in World War 1 when only war amputees were assisted, to the many services it now provides to any amputee in need.



He then discussed his own personal journey and demonstrated some of the amazing varieties of prostheses that he personally uses.

James is a new father and his 6 month old daughter has a similar arm amputation. As birth amputations are not considered hereditary, this is quite surprising.

A recording of James’ presentation was posted on YouTube (see link issued in our December 11th email) and will be available until Tuesday, January 11.

Due to the uncertainty and concerns regarding the Omicron Covid variant no outings were held in December.

Please submit any requests or suggestions to outings@probuswesternottawa.ca

December 8th Luncheon

Sixteen members enjoyed an extended lunch at Milestones in Kanata Centrum. Welcome to new members Bob & Carmel Griffin.

Please submit requests or suggestions to lunches@probuswesternottawa.ca



Welcome to the new members who joined since our last newsletter:

Joan & Jim Hemlin

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Prospective new members: please first contact Barbara Bole at membership@probuswesternottawa.ca

We Need Your Help!

To keep our Probus Club going we have a Management Committee that does a lot behind the scenes to keep our club going during the pandemic. Unfortunately, we have been shorthanded and will need help so that we can resume a more active program as we prepare to open up. Specifically, we urgently need to fill the positions listed below.

As a volunteer, you will have lots of support and will enjoy the opportunity to interact with a select group of people at our monthly executive meetings.

- Vice President | Job descriptions for these roles can
- Outings Coordinator(s) | be found in our June 2021 newsletter
- Another Member-at-large | or on our web page [here](#)

Please let any member of the executive know if you are interested or if you know of someone who might be.

ZOOM GLOOM

by Charlie Boole (your friendly Program Person)

This endemic malady so far has not been detected by scientists beyond the membership of Probus Western Ottawa. But they fear it may spread further, especially amongst the retired population. What are the symptoms that we should be on the look out for?

- Little planning for the future
- Sense of isolation leading to loneliness in some
- Loss/increase in appetite
- Depression
- Fewer kilometres on the car
- Shopping only for the essentials
- Decrease in the application of makeup
- Longer/greyer hair

I am sure that from our own personal experience we could add to this list!

But may I suggest a remedy? On the second Tuesday of each month at precisely 9:30 A.M. or a tad latter click on the Zoom link that Ray will send to all of us and devote the next hour and a half to listening to the fabulous speakers that our Program Staff (namely me) has lined up for us. The ordering of these speakers may change based on when Kanata United Church will allow us to meet in person. One or two speakers are not comfortable with using Zoom and prefer to appear only in person. You will be notified of any changes in speaker scheduling.

January 11 - Michèle Vinet. Writing Behind Bars. She will present an exciting project she initiated with female prisoners behind bars. (Non alcoholic that is)

February 8 - Ben Bazinet. The Bees of Beechwood. Ben will present a project that he initiated at Beechwood Cemetery on the bees that are found on the roof of the main building. With Zoom, no EpiPens are required ☺. Ben will definitely bring honey sweetness to this February morning.

March 8 - John & Jan Milnes. The British Home Children. Never heard of them? These children, aged 4 to 14 years, 100,00 of them came to Canada between 1869 and 1939 to work as farm labourers and domestics. These two Probus Club members will present this fascinating story to us!

April 12 - Geneviève Leduc Boole. Risk Management. Geneviève is an expert in the field having had a career in the Security and Intelligence fields. She presently is employed with the Bank of Canada and will speak to us on the tools that are used in the field of Risk Management. Believe me, it goes beyond masks and vaccines. I know from personal experience!

May 10 - Michael Boole. Someone I have known personally for many years (since 1977) will present on the topic of Money Laundering, Human Trafficking & Child Exploitation. All three are in the news today even if they have been drowned out by Covid and its variants! He is a fascinating speaker and can even teach his old Dad a thing or two!

June 14. - Paul Allen. When Tobacco was King. The Big Lie is not new! The earlier big lie that many of us may have forgotten surrounded the tobacco industry. Remember when the scientists began to tell us that cigarette smoking led to cancer but the industry said it was cool and sexy to smoke. The Marlborough Man came riding in on his horse with a smoke screen of misinformation!!

The malady of Zoom Gloom. Do you like the remedy I'm suggesting? The cost to attend is a mere \$2.50 already paid to hear these scintillating speakers. As members we owe it to them to come out and participate. After all, they are devoting their time and energy to be with us.

End the Gloom and start the Cure!

Please pass ideas on to Charles Boole via program@probuswesternottawa.ca.

For past speaker info, see our newsletters at: www.probuswesternottawa.ca

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and tour opportunities. These occasions may come up on short notice, but we will do our best to keep you informed.

We had planned to resume our Euchre Group in January, but that is no longer possible. We will try to make that happen as soon as possible in the months ahead.

Our club is one of 255 Probus clubs in Canada and all are experiencing the same frustrations.

We ask for your patience as we try to get back to some kind of normal. Safety of our members is a major concern but so is the need to keep our minds active and to socialize with friends.

Peter van Boeschoten,
president@probuswesternottawa.ca

January Outing?

A "Pop up" nature walk sometime in January during one of the thaw days is being considered. It would need to be held on short notice. A separate email will be issued to the membership should we decide to proceed. The Old Quarry Trail across from the Hazeldean Mall would be a great spot with the opportunity to see lots of birds and perhaps deer. We could bring hot chocolate from Tim Horton's.

Please submit any outing requests or suggestions to outings@probuswesternottawa.ca

Due to the difficulty of making restaurant reservations in the holiday season, as well as Omicron concerns, no lunches are currently planned for January.

Please submit any luncheon requests or suggestions to lunches@probuswesternottawa.ca

Chuckle Corner

When I was young, I was poor. But after years of hard work, I am no longer young.

Q: What is a New Year's resolution?

A: Something that goes in one year and out the other.

BREAKING NEWS... swimming pools to re-open from the 4th July, but due to continued social distancing regulations there will be no water in lanes 1, 3 and 5.....



Cold weather is here. Had to scrape ice & snow of my windscreen this morning. Used my supermarket loyalty card. Only got 10% off.



**Wishing all of you a
Happy & Healthy 2022**