

PROBUS CLUB OF SAINT JOHN
MONTHLY MEETING
January 15th, 2014

The monthly meeting was held at 10 am at the Boys and Girls Club. Ralph Wood chaired, and about 35 members were in attendance. After welcome and O Canada, a moment of silence was observed in memory of Sandy Gregory who died January 7th. Ralph recalled Sandy's spearheading of donations from members to buy a miniature Olympic Torch for the Boys and Girls Club in 2010. Gordon "1 - 2 - 3" (even when it's 4 to a bar!) Moulard led a sing-along, including songs for Robbie Burns Day, which elicited a grunt of approval from George McCaughey.

Minutes of the December 20th meeting were read and approved: moved by Robert Taylor, seconded by Gordon Graham.

Finances: Treasurer Don Mitchener reported a bank balance of \$787.72. He was besieged today by at least two more members (see below) paying their dues. He noted he distributes a list of paid-up members to the Executive each month if people wonder if they've paid. He's paid the Probus assessment for 62 members (\$2.50 each).

Phoghorn: Ralph Wood reported some computer glitches as we undertook our first issue on our own this month. Copies are available on the back table. He asked all members to please update their e-mail addresses in his special Campfire notebook at the back.

Website: Ralph reported the website has been updated. There is a new section for notices. Members are asked to visit www.sjprobus.ca often to keep caught up on Club news.

Member News: It was reported that Barry Beckett has recently had back surgery and is doing physiotherapy treatments. George McCaughey, who secretly hopes we'll become a mixed Club, will be a guest at Ladies' Probus next week as they "bring in the haggis".

Constitution and ByLaws: Willard Buckley and Tor Bordevik have reviewed these in the fall, and proposed revisions to bring them in line with Probus Canada were made available in November. Tom Jarrett moved and Ron Lister seconded that we adopt the Constitution revisions; motion carried. Ron Lister moved and Tom Jarrett seconded that we adopt the ByLaw revisions; motion carried. The revised documents will be available on the aforementioned website. Trust a Scotsman (George McCaughey) to not only circumvent Robert's Rules of Order by raising a discussion point *after* approval, but also to seize upon the only money matter mentioned in the ByLaws, namely a new \$20 initiation fee.

The Jokes Department was manned (note I didn't say capably or otherwise) by Ralph Wood, Gordon Graham, Carl Tompkins and Gordon Moulard.

Program: Jim Shillington announced that Mayor Mel Norton will speak today, and representatives from the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation in February.

New Members: Jim Shillington introduced David Price and Ralph Furness, who were welcomed and pinned by Ralph Wood.

60 / 40 Draw: The Mayor drew Don Mitchener's name; he won \$102.

Guest Speaker: Jim Shillington introduced Mayor Mel Norton. Always positive and upbeat, he spoke about Saint John as the Renaissance City, striving to fulfil the vision of being the best in Atlantic Canada. Topics and issues that he covered:

- The pension crisis of 2012: Interest was costing the city more than any department. The shared risk model saves the City over \$10 million per year to go back into city services, programs, and facilities.
- He has visited surrounding towns as a proponent of regional cooperation and economic growth.
- Water: He acknowledged federal and provincial contributions totaling \$114 million of the \$250 million that it will cost to give the city clean water by 2018.
- About \$7 million per year is being spent on improving roads in the city.
- Recreation: \$1/2 million is being invested to install a turf field at Shamrock.
- Pipeline: Saint John has been busy lobbying other cities to support this project. There is a slogan, "You bring the Pipeline, we'll bring the Alpine".
- 3000 net new jobs have been created in the city in the past year.
- Natural gas: The City supports exploration for natural gas, especially as it is used in lots of our industries.

Topics brought up in question and answer period included:

- An increase of \$1 million in the police budget, and the wish to cost-compare with the RCMP.
- Planning traffic flow: should we keep installing more lights, or consider more roundabouts?
- The number of oil tank cars under the new One Mile overpass, in light of recent derailments and fires.
- We need a better airport, including a US airline and an attached hotel.

Ralph Wood thanked the Mayor for his presentation.

Adjournment was moved by Robert Taylor. Members enjoyed shephard's pie. Next meeting will be February 19th.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Taylor, Secretary.