



THE COBOURG PROBIAN

Volume 15, Number 3, December, 2008
The Probus Club of Cobourg and District
P.O. Box 63, Cobourg, Ontario K9A 4K2
Next Meeting: December , 18th, 2008

Vice President's Message:

Our President, Mary Ryan, is not well and as we write this, undergoing evaluation in Kingston. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mary and her family.

During this Advent Season we prepare to celebrate Christmas. It is a time to be thankful for our blessings and share friendship and love with one another! This morning there is a light snow on the ground and the trees have a lovely covering, (at least in the hills outside of Baltimore), reminding us of the beauty of Northumberland. We are looking forward to our **BIG party on December 18th** and hope to see you all there.

NOTE: There will be NO meeting January 1st. Parking would be a major headache with the left over cars from the hotel's New Year's Eve party, so; our first meeting of 2009 will be on January 15th. Looking further forward, *Spring Fling 2009* tickets will be on sale in January (*see more in the write up*).

Jim & Joanne Domine

SPEAKERS AND EVENTS

Dec. 4th Pat Hamilton
Tap Dancing Class

DEC. 18th CHRISTMAS PARTY. Mark your calendar for this festive party being planned by your Committee. Watch for details.

JAN. 15th Tara Borwick
Stream Steward Program

JAN. 30th ON GOLDEN POND dinner theatre at the Best Western. A touching, funny, and warmly perceptive study of a spirited and lovable elderly couple facing their twilight years.

Spring Fling 2009

Our committees have the *Fling* well in hand. Set aside May 20th, 2009; we'll have the party at the Keeler Centre in Colborne, Marie Chisholm has secured our humourist, William Thomas, a scriptwriter and radio & television commentator. His topics include cats, cars and curling. What will he add this time?! The Adams, Buntins, Pat Gummer and Elaine Elliott are working on a "vintage spring" theme for decorating and have lined up some helpers for setting up! Our catering chairs, Margarete Easton and Doreen Irwin will be looking for 37 hosts/hostesses and Ron Fraser is starting to line up people for registration.....so things are well in hand. We'll get more energy going in January!!!! Tickets will be \$35.00 each and for sale January

15th, **bring your cheque book!** As there are **15 clubs vying** for them, there will be a limited number available. **Get yours early** – if you are going away, make sure a friend has the \$\$ to get your tickets.

PROBIAN WINNERS

Congratulations to our Probus members who won prizes at the Royal Winter Fair in November. John Lyons and his son Chris came in 3rd with a 1,343 lb. pumpkin, the third biggest in all of Ontario. They also came in 2nd with a 121” gourd. If you’ve ever visited John’s pumpkin patch, you know everything grows **BIG**.

Leon Silk was the proud winner of his pampered bovines prizes, taking home the Reserved Champion Senior Bull and Reserved Champion Intermediate Bull Calf ribbons. I expect these animals got an extra helping of goodies and a big pat on the rump.

CANADA WAS NOT IMMUNE IN WW2

World War 2 veteran, Ian Tate of Port Hope, spoke on his naval career and being one of 38 pulled from the frigid waters of the St. Lawrence after a U-boat strike. Although he claimed he never saw a German U-boat, he certainly felt one’s wrath. 130 men died in the attack.

In describing the attack on May 6th, 1944, he said he heard a noise like the fast-ticking of a watch then a “hell of an explosion”, breaking the ship in two, but says, he never spotted an enemy submarine. It took only 4 minutes for the ship to sink. Mr. Tate was sucked down into the 32F water and had to swim hard to reach the surface and tried to keep his legs moving and hanging onto the side of a carley float, only to find men on either side of him succumbing to the cold and sink from sight.

Following rescue, he was taken to St. John’s hospital for treatment for shock and hypothermia by Dr. Charles Best of insulin fame. All the rescued survived without loss of limbs and he did find his life-long partner whom he described as a beautiful nurse, while recuperating.

Navigating the waters of the St. Lawrence and along Canada’s east coast proved deadly. Over a period of 5 months, German U-boats sank 22 ships and nearly 300 people lost their lives including women and children. Minesweepers carried out the dangerous duties to escort ships carrying much-needed supplies to support the war effort.

HOLIDAY CHOICE FOR SOME

When John Smith, a free lance travel writer, spoke at our November 20th meeting, we realized why we should never miss a Probus meeting. Elephant riding in Zambia, sounded like an experience of a life time and he said winter is the best time to visit and Victoria Falls is spectacular. The down side was the 19-hour flight on one plane that was fumigated while passengers were on board. Surviving 51 hours between bed-to-bed. He said he did get some sleep on the plane.

This all began by meeting a young lady from Vancouver who was running an elephant business in Zambia, Africa as “Zambeze Elephant Rides,” near Livingston, Zambia.

The elephants are only stabled at night and are free to roam during the day once their “trek activity” is over. They can go swimming in the Zambezi River and out to a near-by island, which is unheard of in a zoo. Most of their elephants have been rescued from zoos or other places where they were not well cared for. Baby elephants begin training in their first year and reach graduation at 5 years of age.

Large areas of wild life roam free and if you share your space with the wild life, you do not go walking after dark. Hippos are looking for food and being extremely territorial, kill more people in Africa than any other animal. Crocodiles also lay in wait for the next meal. Snakes are a common hazard. Not only are they lying in the grass, but often, green or black mambas, cobras and puff adders can be found under your bed, behind the refrigerators, in sheds, or just trying to get into your home.

It's nothing to see giraffes, zebras, lions, crocodiles, elephants or hippos wandering in your back yard and monkeys watch for open windows. You just learn to live with them.

As for the elephant ride, the elephants are trained to get on their knees or on their rump so you can slide off. Riders were told to take off their shoes and socks, but were not told about crocodiles and hippos, and thorns were the worst, as elephant hides don't feel the thorns as they brush past the thorny growth. An elephant ride will set you back about \$80. for a ride that lasts about 1½ hours, but one you will never forget.

NOTE: Alma Draper sends this info for those of you who enjoyed John Smith's presentation at our November 20th meeting, perhaps you would like to read all or some of the 24 articles he has written for the Shield Newspaper, Belleville. Just go onto the Internet and either Google Shield Newspaper, or click on www.shieldmedia.ca then scroll down the list on the left of the page until you reach COLUMNS. Then click on John Smith's listing and up will come his articles. Lots of really good ones to read.

A DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

A guided tour of the Legislature Building at Queen's Park and Victorian Tea was arranged by Dorothy DeLisle with a full bus making the tour November 27th

The beautiful pink sandstone, Legislative Building opened its doors to the public, April 4th, 1893, and suffered a bad fire in September, 1909, due to carelessness of workmen. Many valuable documents, papers and over 100,000 books were destroyed in the fire. The government did not have insurance to cover the \$700,000 loss. Since then, restorations and additions have improved the building to 21st century standards, but retaining the original cast iron columns, mahogany railings and oak wainscoting.

The Legislative Chamber where Ontario's 107 members sit and where the province's laws are made, was extensively renovated in 1999. This room is 79' X 59' and is 48' high, surrounded by the press and visitor's galleries. A significant change to the Chamber occurred in 1986 when TV cameras were installed.

This addition was done discreetly as possible and visitors hardly notice the 5 cameras around the room. Today, the service is offered in French and English and closed-captioning is provided for the hearing impaired. A number of smaller chandeliers were added to accompany the 900 pound chandeliers to improve lighting for broadcast.

Community museum exhibits adorn the halls along with portraits of previous premiers and dignitaries. Large marble plaques inscribed with the names of former legislative members of each parliament are featured in the hallways.

At 2:00 p.m. we had our ample Victorian Tea, served by waitresses in Victorian aprons and we were entertained in Victorian style.

We would like to commend Dorothy DeLisle for arranging this tour. She came in on time and on budget all the way. Thanks Dorothy.

A CHRISTMAS POEM

(By Doreen West)

A few years ago I made great quantities of candy at Christmas time and doled out to all and sundry. It was stored in the refrigerator and had a 'mysterious' habit of disappearing. So.... one night after making two batches of fudge, I posted a sign on the refrigerator.

**THE CANDY IN THE REFRIGERATOR IS POISONED
DO NOT EAT OR YOU WILL DIE !**

The following morning when I got up, there on the refrigerator door was the following:

**YOU LIED
I TRIED
I DID NOT DIED
SHOULD'VE HIDE**

DON'T MESS WITH GRANDMA

An elderly Florida lady did her shopping and upon returning to her car, found four males in the act of leaving with her vehicle. She dropped her shopping bags and drew her handgun proceeding to scream at the top of her voice, "I have a gun, and know how to use it! Get out of the car"! The four men didn't wait for a second invitation. They got out of the car and ran like mad. The lady, somewhat shaken, then proceeded to load her shopping bags into the back of her car and got into the driver's seat. She was so shaken that she could not get her key into the ignition. She tried and tried, and then it dawned on her why.

A few minutes later, she found her own car parked four or five spaces farther down. She loaded her bags into the car and drove to the police station. The sergeant to whom she told the story could not stop laughing. He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale men were reporting a car jacking by a mad, elderly woman, described as white, less than five feet tall, glasses, white hair and carrying a large handgun. No charges were laid.

- The Tattler

SMILES FOR THE DAY

Q: Where can men over the age of 60 find younger, sexy women who are interested in them?

A: Try a bookstore under fiction.

Q: What can a man do while his wife is going through menopause?

A: Keep busy. If you're handy with tools, you can finish the basement. When you're done, you'll have a place to live.

Q: Someone has told me that menopause is mentioned in the Bible. Is that true? Where can it be found?

A: Yes. Matthew 14:92: 'And Mary rode Joseph's ass all the way to Egypt.'

Contributions to the Probian welcome: Elma Parker elmapar@eagle.ca or 534 Lakeshore Rd.