



THE NEWSLETTER

The PROBUS Club of Simcoe & District
Meets second Tuesday of each month at St. James United Church hall



MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, June 14, 2022

**10 a.m., Muriel Bridge Room, St. James United Church, Simcoe.
9:30 a.m., Book Exchange and Socializing.**

Guest Speaker

**Samantha Pacheco
Norfolk County Paramedic Services.**

Who-Am-I?

Tom O'Neill.

You and your guests are invited to lunch!

PROBUS members and guests are invited to lunch together following our meeting on June 14. We have reservations at the **Blue Elephant restaurant**, 96 Norfolk St. S. Order from the menu. Pay individually.

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Review of May 10, 2022, meeting

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed new members **Tom O'Neill** and **Bob Proracki**. President **Murray** led us in our national anthem.

PROBUS business

President's report: **Dick Pearson** is home following surgery. **Gus Takacs** will move to a nursing home. **Stuart Rusk** is feeling better. **President Murray** will arrange a greenhouse tour.

Treasurer: **Dave Montross** reported our finances are in good shape.

Constitution: **David Judd** reviewed the proposed constitution and club bylaws. Acceptance was moved by **Gerald Kott** and seconded by **Dave Montross**. Vote by 16 members was unanimous in favour.

Guest speaker: Howard Crocker

Howard Crocker and his wife **Corry Curtis** bought Bonnieheath Lavender Farm and Winery in December 2020. The farm had been developed by **Anita** and **Steve Buehner**. The Buehners gave our club a tour in July 2018.

Howard does not come from a farm background. He is an entrepreneur, who formerly owned a successful swimming pool distribution business and pool component manufacturer. In 2002, his wife **Corry** went to Sri Lanka to help folks recover from the tsunami. Unfortunately, she caught a disease and the treatment killed the microbes in her digestive system. **Howard** and **Corry** looked for a farm to grow their own food without chemicals.

They bought and fell in love with Bonnieheath, 130 acres of lavender, grapes and other crops south of Waterford at 410 Concession 12 of former Townsend Township. They have started the leap toward farming without pesticides, fungicide, herbicides and even fertilizers.

Howard spent two months researching the latest science on a permaculture approach to farming that uses arrangements found in flourishing natural ecosystems. Part of this is regenerative agriculture, which focuses on topsoil regeneration.

Howard and **Corry** are carrying on with 10 acres of lavender and 10 acres of grapes for wine production. They're also branching out with a bed and breakfast business and their own chef who will grow vegetables for meals.

Sixteen acres are becoming a food forest of diversified fruits and vegetables. Permaculture focuses on perennial food, bushes and plants that produce year after year. A variety of fruit and nitrogen-producing trees will shade a mix of vegetables and berry bushes. Over time, the food forest will build up organics in the soil.

Profits already are good and more should be known in two or three years, Howard told our club.

The public is invited to visit Bonnieheath anytime. **David Judd** introduced **Howard** and **Murray Uren** thanked him.



Howard Crocker and Corry Curtis

Farewell: Alex MacDonald and Fred Wassmer

Alex MacDonald, 90, was an original member of Simcoe PROBUS Club. He passed away on May 5, 2022, at St. Joseph's Hospital, Hamilton.

Fred Wassmer was a longtime member. He passed away May 1.

We extend our condolences to their families and friends.



Alex MacDonald



Fred Wassmer (centre) with Cal McDougall (left) and Jack Beamer on a tour of Titan Trailers in April 2016.

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