



THE NEWSLETTER

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



MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

10 a.m., Muriel Bridge Room, St. James United Church, Simcoe.

9:30 a.m., Book Exchange, Socializing and Coffee.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Amber McKnight,

Eye health for seniors.

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Review of April 10, 2018, meeting:

President **Murray Uren** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. **Keith Rumble** led us in our national anthem. **President Murray** introduced new member, **Bernd Mueller** (see Page 2.) **Bruce Bowyer** introduced his guest, **Dennis Wright**.

PROBUS business

President Murray suggested members who have done Who Am I talks do further talks about their hobbies, community work or other interesting things they do. He also suggested encouraging members' sons to join our club. **President Murray** asked members if they would be interested in euchre or other games following meetings.

Treasurer: Dave Montross reported our club is in good financial shape. He said longtime member **Ken Keegan** and his wife, **Margaret**, are living at Norview. Ken would appreciate visits from his friends.

Special events: Dick Pearson is planning visits to the Bonnieheath Estate Lavender and Winery and to a tobacco farm.

House: Rick Middaugh reported all is well.

Newsletter: David Judd has **PROBUS** lapel pins for members who want one. He said longtime member **Jay McKiee** would welcome visits at his apartment at Cedarwood Village.

Guest Speaker: Anita Buehner

What do you do with a tobacco farm after it no longer grows tobacco? For **Anita and Steve Buehner**, the answer was to replace tobacco with two new crops — first lavender and second grapes. The result is **Bonnieheath Estate Lavender and Winery**.

The farm is on Concession 14 of former Townsend township, just north of Simcoe, between Cockshutt Road and the Blueline Road. The name, Bonnieheath, comes from the house next door, which 100 years ago was owned by **Col. Walter Heath**. The sandy soil grew tobacco for 60 years until 2008, when the tobacco quota system ended. Anita's parents purchased the farm in 1974 and passed it along to Anita and Steve in 1990.

In 2009, Steve attended a lavender conference in Washington State. He decided to give the crop a try, starting plants in the Bonnieheath greenhouse and transplanting them under landscape fabric in the fields. Today the farm has 12,000 lavender plants, all planted and harvested by hand.

Lavender blooms from mid-June to early August. The Buehners sell a variety of lavender products, including soap, candles and tea, all made on the farm. A distillery produces lavender essential oils.

Bonnieheath is an estate winery, which means its wines are made from grapes grown on the property. Currently, the Buehners sell five red varieties of wine and four white varieties. There's even a lavender ice wine. The Buehners have created a wetland planted with native vegetation. Prairie grasses grow two metres tall.

PLEASE NOTE: PROBUS will tour Bonnieheath in place of our regular meeting on July 10. **Dick Pearson** will ask at our May meeting how many members and guests would plan to attend. The basic tour is free. A wagon tour of the farm costs \$6 per person.



Anita Buehner.



Meet our newest member: Bernd Mueller

Bernd and his wife, Sandra, live in Vittoria.

He is a retired pressman, who worked in Guelph.

Please welcome Bernd to our club.