



PROBUS Global Newsletter



A Word from our President

Welcome to our December Newsletter and we wish to thank the many PROBUS Global members from around the world who contributed to our newsletter. In assembling the content, your PROBUS Global team developed a process to make sure it came together. The PROBUS management team requested input from PROBUS Global members around the world, the article would be sent to the President located in Canada, who then sent it to our editor Patrick Whittick in UK, who then sent it to our Publisher Rob Neary in Australia for assembling, then back to our webmaster Peter Jennings in Canada for distribution, so well traveled prior to reaching your hands. Enjoy the global content and PROBUS Global.

As mentioned in our September release, we will continue to restructure the management team, we added Marlene Pearce in the third quarter of 2021 and Jacques Pierre Nollet, France, recently joined our team. We continue in our effort to structure PROBUS Global to be the voice of PROBUS members around the world, and we plan to continue to recruit team members from other countries.

Our Question of the Week has proven a success, with numerous replies for each question and the last question 'What does your club do to celebrate Christmas?' will be used to format our Christmas page.

The Country or Regional Coordinator program, a method to establish communication within your country or region, has had a successful start, Marlene Pearce, the Canadian Coordinator, has made many presentations across Canada which contributed to a significant increase in Canadian membership. Rob Sproul and Nick French from South Africa promoted the benefits of PROBUS Global while Nick was also restructuring the South Africa Counsel and saw the PG membership in South Africa triple.

Jacques Pierre Nollet has volunteered to be the Coordinator for Europe and with the support/assistance of Gauthier De Brabandere, Belgium, they will be contacting PROBUS organizations, clubs and members in other parts of Europe. PROBUS Global has been invited to participate in the January meeting of the French Presidents' annual meeting. On our PROBUS Global website, you can find very informative presentations which Jacques Pierre and Gauthier made about PROBUS in their countries. As the Coordinator Program continues to evolve, we need volunteers for other parts of the world; an incredible way to increase your fellowship both in your country and internationally.

We did get some unfortunate news: the only club in Cyprus, Probus Club of Larnaca, folded recently. They just

could not overcome the negative impact of Covid-19. Probus Global will maintain contact and make sure they receive our newsletter and any other help they may need.

THE ARMCHAIR TRAVEL Coordinator program got off to a slow start, after picking Wales as our first country, with Robert Scott and Rufus Adams being your host. Robert is a long-time PROBUS Global member and Rufus is his Welsh speaking cohort. We ran into logistics issues and we delayed kickoff until 2nd quarter 2022. We are looking for technical expertise to support this program. If you like travel and can help with formatting the program, please contact PG management or Robert through our members' email program.

The PROBUS Day celebration on October 1st was a success; a Virtual meeting on the Zoom platform, and we plan to make it bigger with the addition of more countries in 2022. Canada has moved PROBUS Month which was in March or April to October 1st.

The October 1st 2021 presentation which highlights the celebrations in Australia and New Zealand can be found on our website. The October date is not only significant for PROBUS but is also, since 2010, United Nations International Day of Older Person and, in Canada, National Seniors Day.

PROBUS members from around the globe are looking forward to when we can all return to in-person meetings. Virtual fellowship has been a great experience, which will continue to be part of the PROBUS program, but in-person club meetings is where fellowship is at its best.

To all our world wide PROBUS Global members and their families, enjoy the festive season, have a Merry Christmas and look forward to a PROBUS Happy New Year.



Regards and stay safe.

Richard Furlong
President



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PROBUS Global seeks articles from members and Probus Clubs and organisations from around the world. To assist our editor (volunteer) and layout person (volunteer), your articles should be submitted in MS Word format with double line spacing and no styles. Photographs should be high resolution JPEG versions - not the small email versions - and sent as attachments not embedded in the document.

Because of space limitations in the newsletter, PROBUS Global cannot guarantee an article or photograph will be published.

The Future of Probus in The United Kingdom

A couple of years ago I wondered what was 'out there' in the way of Probus organisations, and subsequently contacted and joined PROBUS Global. It was one smart move to make as, through PROBUS Global, I was introduced to Probus clubs all over the globe, in particular Canada.

I would firstly like to say a few complimentary words about some of the Canadian clubs. In particular PROBUS Bradford; PROBUS Bradford #2; PROBUS Bobcaygeon, PROBUS Newmarket and PROBUS St Catharines.

All the above clubs have been exceptionally welcoming to me, even after I did a shortish talk about my club and local area, on Zoom, to the various clubs. Between all the different clubs, including PROBUS Global, I have made some good friends who have promised me that they will visit if they ever manage to get across the 'pond' again - I hope they don't all come at the same time!

What I really would like to 'talk' about is the structure and communication involved in some of the countries throughout the world, but not yet present in the United Kingdom, which includes Scotland.

France, Belgium, Australia, and Canada are the main countries at present who have structures and lines of communication set up, which I can only describe as exceptional! India isn't quite there yet but the wheels were in motion before the pandemic came along - and is progressing again, as I understand the situation over there. On the PROBUS Global Website, there is a recording from those 5 countries on the structure in each of these countries. On the website, go to Meetings and Presentations, you will find their recordings.

In the Canadian PROBUS structure, which also reflects the situation in the other countries I referred to above, there are PROBUS Districts set up throughout the country. Each District has a Director that serves on the Board of PROBUS CANADA. These Directors are not there to regulate the clubs, but have been set up to help communication between clubs and members in the different areas and give them support and assistance.

So, in PROBUS CANADA, a not-for-profit Corporation, there are 13 Directors, each elected by a vote of the clubs in their district. Each Director sits on a Board with an Executive of President, Vice

President, Treasurer, Secretary and Past President. There are also two Administrative Assistants - Managing Director and Financial Director. The Board is set up to help the clubs they 'oversee'. They help recruit new clubs, recruit management teams, attend special meetings, etc - all geared to enhance the PROBUS membership. Directors are expected to visit each club in their area at least once every three years. That may not be considered as being very often, but the fact that there are over 250 Canadian clubs must be taken into consideration. Directors may have from 10 to 30 clubs under their jurisdiction - it's based on the geography of their area in the country.

Australia has a similar set up, and the Managing Director, who has Regional Directors on her Board, is the key person - New Zealand is under the wing of Australia and the organisation is called 'Probus South Pacific Limited', ('PSPL'). France, Belgium, Germany, South Africa, Ireland, Japan, and the Netherlands all have Central organisations of one type or another.

The Probus world of structures and communication is progressing, but the main gap in the developments is the United Kingdom - Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, and Wales. And we should be looking at what is happening around us and get on that bus!

I would like to eventually see a 'Probus United Kingdom' - perhaps that could be set up in stages, viz: each country within the UK set up their own umbrella club, i.e., 'Probus Scotland', 'Probus England', 'Probus Northern Ireland' and 'Probus Wales'. If we reached that stage, setting up a 'Probus United Kingdom' would be a doddle, (piece of cake, child's play, pushover, or, no sweat!).

I would like to eventually see a 'Probus United Kingdom'

I have been liaising with PROBUS Global and have started setting up a database of all Scottish Probus clubs, with the long-term goal of setting up a communication system for, and cementing relations with, all these clubs. Once we have the database complete, containing details of every Scottish Probus club and their members, then we can look and plan ahead.

Website? Certainly, a must: we already have some Scottish Probus clubs with their own websites, so we do have some expertise in that regard within our midst.

I must thank Linda Metcalfe, PROBUS Global, for all her help in putting together the database so far. Linda will be sending out what we have, after the Festive Season, to the clubs on our current database and we hope they will furnish us with more details of their clubs and help identify other Scottish clubs we are not yet aware of - and assist in any way they feel able to. I would also like to thank Dick Furlong, President PROBUS Global, and Peter Jennings, Webmaster PROBUS Global for their assistance in this 'project', and their help, enthusiasm, and encouragement in everything I have been involved in, since joining PROBUS Global.

We have a long way to go before we have our national Probus clubs but with the assistance of those members who have the enthusiasm and passion to accomplish the job we will, through time, succeed.

I would like to wish all Probians, and their families, throughout the world, best wishes for the coming festive season, and please do get in touch if you are ever in Banchory, Scotland.

Stan Thomson

Secretary, Probus Banchory, Scotland - e-mail: stanthomson@hotmail.com



A unique way to promote Probus & Rotary

One of the biggest problems facing Probus, Rotary and Rotaract is attracting new blood.

One of the difficulties is that most people have been invited by members to join Rotary and Probus but in this climate it is not happening. Covid 19 has really brought this to a head in Ireland and I am sure across the globe. So what can we do about it?

Well in Cork we have come up with a fairly innovative way, we think!

President of Rotary Cork, Willie O'Brien was passing an empty Store on Patrick Street, the main street in the City, saw all these drab windows empty and said could we get permission to use them to celebrate 95 years of Rotary in Cork City & County!

Using the Rotary network, a bit of arm-twisting and hey presto, he got 5 windows, 15 metres of window space by 2.5 metres high, what a spread. So this was a huge opportunity to sell the Probus message, which we took and were able to do.

We are starting to use LinkedIn to canvas business people who are coming up for retirement, so we hope with Windows, Website and LinkedIn we will get new members. Will keep you posted and any advice would be more than welcome.

Aodh Bourke

Probus UK
Great Britain & Ireland



Probus Magazine in the UK came to a sudden stop with the first lockdown in 2020 when clubs were no longer permitted to meet, travel companies (who in the main pay for its production) ceased advertising as no-one could go anywhere, and, to top it off, the editor caught Covid from a friend visiting from Spain just before flights were grounded.

The website - probusonline.org - came in very handy with many speakers making contact to offer talks on Zoom and numerous clubs taking advantage of the fact they could have a speaker from the opposite end of the country without paying travelling expenses.

Editor/webmaster Alison found herself speaking to clubs in Canada from her Worcestershire home and other UK speakers also found an international audience on Zoom.

A big plus in the UK has been the number of members, who previously did not wish to embrace modern technology, finding out it isn't so difficult after all when their loved ones thrust a smart phone or iPad into their hands so they could see how they were faring during lockdown.

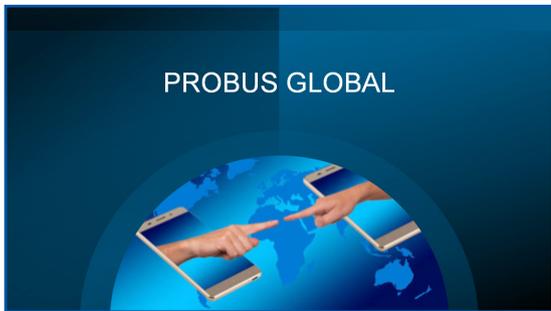
Several clubs have reported all of their members now have email and many still meet via Zoom in-between their normal physical meetings.

At least one new club has started up and has members from all over the country, meeting exclusively on Zoom.

It never ceases to amaze me how the older generation can adapt and make the best of a bad situation.

Alison Harris, Probus Editor & Webmaster - editor@probusonline.org

Probus Global - Canadian Coordinator's Report



members to join PROBUS Global and discover communications between members in their region and members in other countries/regions.

The late Shirley Roberts, PROBUS Global's former President, held a few Zoom meetings for women members of the organization. These were very interesting, as we discussed how Clubs from around the world met and what their differences were. I plan to continue these meetings in the New Year.

Other members of the Coordinating Team include Gauthier De Brabandere from Belgium, Jacques Pierre Nollet from France, and Nick French and Rob Sproul from South Africa. We are planning a virtual meeting to discuss and exchange ideas for the future of PROBUS Global. Both Gauthier and Jacques have made presentations to the Newmarket Club, and these may be found on the PROBUS Global's web site. I will be attending Jacques's club's virtual meeting in mid-January.

It is very encouraging to see the number of members growing quickly and our goal is to increase communication within your own country and to have this activity coordinated on a global basis.

Marlene Pearce

As Canadian Coordinator, it is my pleasure to welcome all new Canadian members when they join. I also encourage all Canadian Clubs to invite me to take part in their Virtual meetings, to introduce PROBUS Global. Using a PowerPoint presentation to promote the organization, I ensure that members know the benefits of the PROBUS Global web site. Peter Jennings often joins me and explains how the web site operates. I also encourage club

Viña del Mar, Chile

During the pandemic, Probus Viña continued to carry out its activities normally through the Zoom platform, which allowed us to maintain our Thursday Coffee and our monthly Lunch Meeting virtually.

Despite the computational limitations of several partners, we were able to meet virtually on all occasions with the attendance of up to 19 partners. In December 2020, we were able to hold a face-to-face lunch meeting with 14 partners. From July 2021 until now, it was returned to face-to-face meetings because sanitary conditions allowed it.

Our country has had a very successful evolution due to restrictions and that we have a large population vaccinated against Covid 19. On the other hand, and independent of Covid, we have suffered the loss of five partners, including the founder and first President Enrique Bravo Contreras, which we regret very much.

Regarding Probus Global, our command of the English language does not allow us to participate in your meetings, so we would appreciate including our partner and Former President, Mr. Víctor Ortiz Bolocco, email intecmachile@gmail.com, who will be happy to participate and will inform us

Many greetings from Viña del Mar and the wish that Probus Global continues to have much success in its important management.

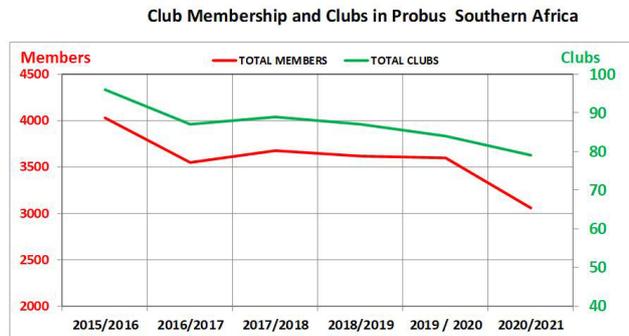
Domingo Monteverde, Secretary



Impact of Covid-19 on Probus in Southern Africa

Before embarking on the somewhat depressing review of how Covid has affected the existence of Clubs in Southern Africa, I should explain the geographic area represented by Southern Africa. During the last century, Southern Africa, in the context of Probus, comprised South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Sadly, many years ago, contact was lost with the few clubs remaining in Zimbabwe and they have probably all but disappeared owing to the socio-political situation. South Africa is now the remaining country representing Probus in the region.

Even prior to the onset of Covid 19 two years ago, the survival of many clubs was under pressure, as shown by the attached graph which depicts the trend in Clubs and membership numbers over the last 6 years across all provinces in South Africa.



You will notice that since 2015 there has been a general downward trend from 96 clubs to 79 today. Membership has declined from around 4000 to 3000, which is even more concerning.

The exact reasons for this are not entirely clear but can probably be traced to a number of factors, being:

- A period of 9-year rule between 2009 and 2018 under Jacob Zuma where serious crime and corruption became entrenched. As a result many older folk left the country to join their children who had already established themselves overseas, who had seen the writing on the wall.
- The evergreen challenge of finding capable and willing members to step up and serve on executive councils' management committees, coupled with, in some cases, poor leadership. In a number of our clubs, replacements for presidents could not be found.
- The ongoing challenge of retaining and recruiting members. Member numbers have in most cases dwindled due to closure of clubs, death and emigration. The usual method of introducing new members via members bringing in friends has, except in a few cases, not been functioning that well.

The onset of COVID has only exacerbated the situation and brought to the surface those clubs that have been suffering from the above challenges. With normal club meetings and outings being prohibited because of lockdown, clubs on the brink were exposed even further. Two clubs in the Western Cape, where no new president and other exco members could be found, virtually shut down in a matter of days despite a healthy membership.

Fortunately, most other clubs did not suffer the same fate and those with a strong vibrant leadership introduced innovative ways of remaining viable.

Despite these endeavours many members, perhaps justifiably so, stayed away for fear of contracting the virus. It was only after receiving the second jab of Pfizer vaccine that during October some semblance of confident normality was restored. With the exception of terminated and dormant clubs, most clubs were more or less back to normal in November and many are holding their Christmas lunches, as usual, in December.

Regrettably as I write this, South Africa has just entered a fourth wave thanks to Omicron. It was correctly forecast that, as this took hold in the country, daily infection rates would escalate from less than a 1,000 to over 20,000! We wait on tenterhooks to learn what lockdown restrictions might be imposed over the festive period.

So what has the Probus Council of Southern Africa done during this time of severe restrictions to maintain sustainability of clubs in the region? The critical issue has been to keep members engaged while isolated at home. Many were, prior to Covid, already alone and relied on Probus functions to feel part of a community.

The first action was to ensure that club exco's step up their communication with members by email and where necessary make regular phone calls, especially to those struggling with loneliness. As lockdown was eased, outdoor coffee mornings were introduced, which in the beginning were only attended by those brave enough to venture out. But over time, and as vaccination progressed (South Africa was very slow in getting their programme off the ground and still has a long way to go), more

members started reappearing, although sadly a few clubs chose to resolutely remain dormant and have continued to do so to this day.

One opportunity that came out of Covid was the ability for Probusians across the world to connect online via Zoom and Skype. For those who were prepared to challenge themselves by learning the rudiments of Zoom, new vistas were opened. In South Africa we created a "Zoomers interest group." This now has a membership of 160 and participants were able to attend a talk by Chris Leworthy from the UK on The Battle of Britain. Since then we have held two more online talks from local speakers and are now planning a Zoom online quiz for January. This is probably one major benefit that has emerged from Covid in that Probusians can now attend other online Probus events around the world.

In addition to this we also started promoting the Probus Global website and we launched a campaign encouraging Probusians in South Africa to join the members section. This was relatively successful, with 46 now registered and enjoying the activities that pop up from time to time.

Another initiative we introduced last year during a short period of reduced lockdown was a "Presidents Seminar." This was an in-room meeting at the Italian Club in Cape Town. Presidents and other interested exco members of all clubs were invited to a morning seminar followed by lunch. This was our second run of this event and it was hugely successful.

Although restricted to clubs in the Western Cape Province, we had 19 out of 24 clubs present, with an audience of 46 people. We shared the current status of Probus in the country, progress made in some areas, including the benefits of the Probus Global website. Exco concerns were addressed where possible, including possible ways of stemming the flow of departing members and introducing easy to implement ideas to brighten meetings and boost fun levels. The evergreen problem of finding new exco members was also raised. It seems that members are still resistant to stepping up because of the extra work involved.

It was suggested that there is now good cause for changing some of the ways we operate which retains member interest but with less work. The key points of the book "Who moved my Cheese?" were highlighted - the fact that we must be prepared to actively adapt to change. And let's face it, the last two years have yielded massive change. The quote "Work Smart, Achieve More, Work Less" was presented - think creatively to streamline exco activities. Come up with simple easy to arrange activities that aren't too demanding on one's time as an exco member. For example, hold a regular informal coffee morning on a fixed day of the month on a "turn up if you feel like it" basis. This is currently working extremely well with my home club.

This style of thinking can be used to persuade reticent members to step up and serve. The seminar concluded with a message for Presidents to take back to their members. During his inauguration speech in 1961, John F Kennedy said "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country?" Why not use the Probus club analogy: "Ask not what your club can do for you but what you can do for your club?"

We now wait with bated breath to see if the fourth wave will have any further impact on us as an association. I believe many of our stronger clubs will forge ahead having learnt from the past. I look forward to the challenges of 2022.

Nick French

President: Probus Council of Southern Africa

Probus in the South Pacific - Australia & New Zealand



I am pleased to have this opportunity to share the highlights of the past year and the outlook for 2022. While the pandemic overshadowed much of the 2021 year in both Australia and New Zealand, I am continually amazed by the resilience of our Community.

Throughout the year there were periods across the countries and regions that prevented 'in person' gatherings. Once permitted, Club meetings and activities were held outdoors, in smaller groups or in a hybrid format - whatever Club leaders could do to ensure their members stay engaged and connected - they did. This is what friendship in Probus is all about, making sure that the isolation presented by lockdowns was minimised as much as possible. I am so very proud of the work undertaken by Management Committee members to help their members stay connected.

Our Probus Day theme in 2021 was 'Celebrate Probus - do a friend a favour' and despite the challenges, Probus Day 2021 was a resounding success. In lockdown, the Probus South Pacific Team produced a wide range of collateral for Clubs and Associations to utilise, these included Probus Day awards and invitations as well as promotional material for use on government websites, newsletters and social media pages. Landmarks all over Australia and New Zealand were lit up in Probus colours to commemorate Probus Day which was celebrated all throughout the month of October. I invite all Probus Global members to view our latest Active Retirees magazines which highlights the Probus Day celebrations across [Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#).

Understandably there has been an impact on overall Club membership as a result of the pandemic. While some of that impact has been a decline, we have also seen an increase in the number of enquiries to join Probus as more and more retirees look for those face-to-face social connections.

I am confident about what the future holds for Probus in both Australia, New Zealand and indeed the world, as more members of society learn what Probians already know - that we need friendship, fellowship and of course some fun in our retirement years.

On behalf of the PSPL Team, I would like to extend our very best wishes for the festive season to all PG members and their families. Silvana Martignago, CEO, Probus South Pacific Limited

PROBUS in Germany

The first Probus Club was founded in Germany in 1991.

The Probusfreunde (Probus Members) are gentlemen as well ladies, who have been able to join for a decade. At the beginning of 2020 there are 12 Probus clubs in Germany, all of which are located in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). If you are interested in Probus, please contact one of the club presidents at: www.probus-deutschland.de

You can view the calendar of events for the individual clubs on the Internet or find out about the international connections and activities of Probus at: www.probus.org and www.probusglobal.org.

The existing clubs are happy to help with advice and action when establishing new Probus clubs. Please contact us. Preparing for establishing a club includes drawing up club statutes. This is formally approved by the members upon formation and signed by the founding officers of the Rotary sponsoring club. Since there are no binding statutes for all German Probus clubs, each club has its own statutes.

The Probus Clubs in NRW want to spread this idea in Germany. We would like to get in touch with those who are interested in Probus and NRW is happy to provide assistance when setting up a new club. From the activities of the members creates a self-generating benevolence, a sense of community, a diverse background of interests and a strong sense of warmth.

Our founding club is the Rotary Club Bottrop-Wittringen: www.rc-bottrop-wittringen.de



Probus in Belgium

PROBUS BELGIUM is in the midst of a 4th Covid wave in December 2021 and one thing has been proven by the covid viruses of whatever given name: there are no certainties in this domain.

Australia seemed to fight effectively, as did New Zealand, but had to lockdown longer than expected. Most of Europe coloured Covid-red when Belgium prided itself to be an example of high degree of vaccination (+ 90% above 18 years). The belief was that vaccination would prevent any further havoc in terms of a new wave. Belgium had suffered 26.000 deaths, economic difficulties, increased corporate debt, etc. So restrictions were loosened in September and PROBUS activities returned to a cautious normal: mouth mask when moving around, elbow greetings, no kisses, distancing at the tables, etc. As a result clubs started to meet again at their own pace and increasing attendance.

Three out of six regions organised a Presidents' meeting in October & November 2021, attended by almost all clubs of the region. The other regions decided to wait until 2022. There was unanimity in the verbal testimony of happiness and joy amongst members to physically get together again, to cautiously visit places or even go on trips. Surprisingly, there was a great diversity of testimonials on how clubs had overcome the lockdown period. It gives me pride and confidence that "my generation" excels in creativity and manages to keep the friendships and contacts very much alive. This is what PROBUS is all about!

The PROBUS Club of Ciney celebrated its 35 years in an outdoor animal park at Han sur Lesse on the last day of September. It was a unique and "first" experience to give the celebration speech with bears in the background, deer across the road and participants in an open road train. Six clubs could celebrate their 30th or 35th anniversary; four more had to reschedule their December celebrations to next year. Twelve celebrations of anniversaries had right away been "postponed"!

The virologists' warnings for a 4th covid wave were not taken seriously enough at first. Only when intensive care units started to reach their limits, resulting in delays of non-Covid urgent treatments, did officials decide on new restrictive measures, but no lockdown. PROBUS clubs took the lead as of the end of November to postpone physical gatherings, Christmas dinners or New Year's luncheons.

PROBUS Global was on the lookout for someone from continental Europe (yes ... Britain voted for and got it's Brexit) to be active in interconnecting Europe with the rest of the (PROBUS) world. PROBUS France and PROBUS Belgium agreed that our mutual understanding and friendship could be an asset to jointly try to promote such connections. Jacques Pierre Nollet (F) and Gauthier De Brabandere (B) are "game" after a (slight) arm twist by Richard Furlong.

To all friends all over the world: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, Zalige Kerst en Gelukkig Nieuwjaar, Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année, Frohe Weihnachten und Glückliches Neujahr 2022.

Gauthier De Brabandere

President of PROBUS BELGIUM 2019 - 2021



Probus Ciney 35 at Han sur Lesse



Probus flags at Presidents' meeting



2021 has not been an easy year for the 1,255 members in 63 PROBUS FRANCE clubs due to this horrible COVID wave.

The election of the President of PROBUS FRANCE, elected for one year renewable once, took place on the 5th of January. Philippe Cattyn, member of the club of Dunkerque, has been elected President. Members of his board are Jean-François Loridan as secretary, Hervé Gimbert as treasurer, Hervé Scribe as the representative of the South part of France clubs, Jacques Pierre Nollet as the representative of the North part of France clubs, Jean François Guinet for the international relations, Bruno de Carbonières for communication and Philippe Delacour for the interclubs relations in the South of France. The board in France is



Probus in France

assisted by a team of 10 members.

Unluckily, we did not have the General yearly meeting of the presidents in 2021 and we planned it for January 2022 in Lyon.

Due to the lockdown, the first half year did not allow us to meet physically. Despite the age of the members, most of the clubs had regular Zoom meetings as a way to keep in contact and get information about everyone's health. Only in the middle of June, did we have the opportunity to gather the board in Paris and it has been the new beginning of meetings.

Early in September, the establishment of a new club in Brittany was celebrated and we had, after this ceremony, a meeting of all the presidents of the western part of France. The following week, we gathered the presidents of the southern part of France and on the 4th of October we had the pleasure of gathering the presidents of the northern part of France. Those meetings showed us the existing and real friendship between all the PROBUS clubs' members.

On the 29th of September, the annual golf competition took place which was a real success. And in October, the establishment of a second new club happened in the north. Unfortunately, all the meetings that our clubs used to have with some Belgian clubs have not been possible during the year and no travel abroad as we usually do once a year has been possible.

At the request of Richard Furlong, one of the French members of PROBUS has accepted, with the active and friendly help of Gauthier De Brabandere, the President of Probus Belgium, to become the continental European link for PROBUS Global.

From all the French members of PROBUS, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a wonderful year 2022.

Jacques Pierre NOLLET

International Relations Officer of PROBUS FRANCE

Probus Club of Hyderabad: An Update

Probus Club of Hyderabad (PCH) was founded on 4th Sept 1998 with 18 members, selectively invited from outstanding achievers in the country and after careful screening, with Pr. Ram Mukherjee as President. The idea was to bring together distinguished elderly citizens and make the remaining part of their lives worth living, active and useful by providing them the opportunity to enjoy fellowship of the peers, to expand their interests, to have external friendship and to possibly encourage towards healthy living.



FRIENDSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

Friendship and Fellowship continue to be the founding pillars and guiding principles of the Club. Spouses are also admitted into the Club as members. Currently, the Club which is 23 years old, has 25 paid members and a total membership of 43. The oldest member is 95 years young, with outstanding credentials.

The Club regularly meets on the last Sunday of every month, named Regular Monthly Meetings (RMM's). Managing Committee meets every quarter reviewing the last quarter activities and looking forward to the next quarter. The Committee members are elected every year and are responsible for functioning of the Club for the coming Club Year.

During the initial years of its formation, PCH had experimented with Community Service and other socially focused activities but went through some rough weather in conceptualization and management. Unlike others like Rotary Club, PCH is not a Service Club. Currently, the constitution prohibits raising money for any social ventures, but allows voluntary participation of individual members.

Many times, our friends expressed their opinion that our club spends substantial money for conducting regular meetings and contributory fellowship dinners but does not undertake any service programmes. Since our Club was formed primarily to promote fellowship among retired and semi-retired persons who might have already contributed generously to Service Clubs individually, we decided that members of our Club can individually contribute and involve themselves with social activities, but will continue to promote only Fellowship and Friendship among us, without any long term financial involvement.

INITIATED STEPS FOR PROBUS INDIA

The experience of the first 20 years of PCH has given us confidence to play a bigger role with PROBUS INDIA. India is reported to be having over 20 Probus Clubs. They can be brought under one umbrella called PROBUS CENTRE INDIA, as the admin and service centre, with the sole authority for promoting Probus Culture across India. We had taken a few baby-steps by contacting Probus Clubs

in Chennai, Bangalore etc. but the efforts were not pursued later due to Covid 19.

ALIGNING WITH PROBUS GLOBAL MISSION

We appreciate PROBUS Global mission to promote through effective, ongoing communications with all members and encourage retired and semi-retired people seeking to share their experiences with each other. As we look to the future, we wish to continue supporting Probus Global Vision on fun and friendship which our members have been enjoying for over twenty years.

COVID 19 IMPACT

Like several organizations all over the world, PCH is also impacted by the restrictions imposed last around two years on physical meetings, their frequency and number of attendees. Its impact on fellowship is obvious. While we felt that strict measures designed and implemented across the country resulted in downward trend in the pandemic impact, the recent outbreak of Omicron is again causing concern. However, the hope is Physical Meets and fellowships will soon be back for PCH.

In spite of the above concern, PCH has been maintaining its monthly, committee, fellowship and other meets on Virtual mode. Further, the members are being entertained through on-line games like Housie.

CHALLENGES

Our members are getting aged with time, and a few of our senior and founding members are not as active. We need to induct fresh faces soon and it sure is a challenge. During the last couple of years, COVID 19 has disturbed the conductance of Physical Meets for both MCs and RMMs. This needs quick correction. We need to put back the spirit of fun and fellowship as soon as possible. Another challenge is to put in place, in the next couple of years, a system for increasing networking with other Clubs in India.

Dr. RHG Rau President, 2020-2022

Cooloola Coast Probus Club, Queensland, Australia

The Cooloola Coast Probus Club is on the coast of Queensland near Fraser Island. These past two years with Covid have seen our membership drop from 30 to 20 members as several members moved to live nearer their families but, apart from a short recess in 2020, our monthly meetings have been held as usual, with Guest Speakers and time for afternoon tea and chat.

We are fortunate that our area had few restrictions caused by Covid, and most of us live less than a ten-minute drive from the others. This allows many informal contacts between our members to be part of our lives.

Two members have chosen to isolate and not have the Covid vaccine, and we miss their presence but do keep in touch with them through frequent emails and telephone calls. Our Welfare Officers are also active in visiting and assisting members when they are ill.

Each month members have gathered for a morning tea, sometimes at a café but also at a macadamia farm, a plant nursery, and at various community fund raisers. As usual, we have attended concerts and luncheons as a group, but trips away were put on hold. These are expected to resume early in the new year. A morning walking group has started following a talk at one of our meetings.

This month members enjoyed two showings of André Rieu Christmas DVDs at members' homes, and had a merry time at our Christmas Luncheon with skits, jokes and singing.

With the opening of our Queensland State border in mid-December, many members are concerned that Covid will affect us much more this coming year, but we are making plans in the hope it will not.

Katrina van den Brenk, Secretary, Cooloola Coast Probus Club Inc.



Two of our members - Daryl & Ann celebrating Christmas



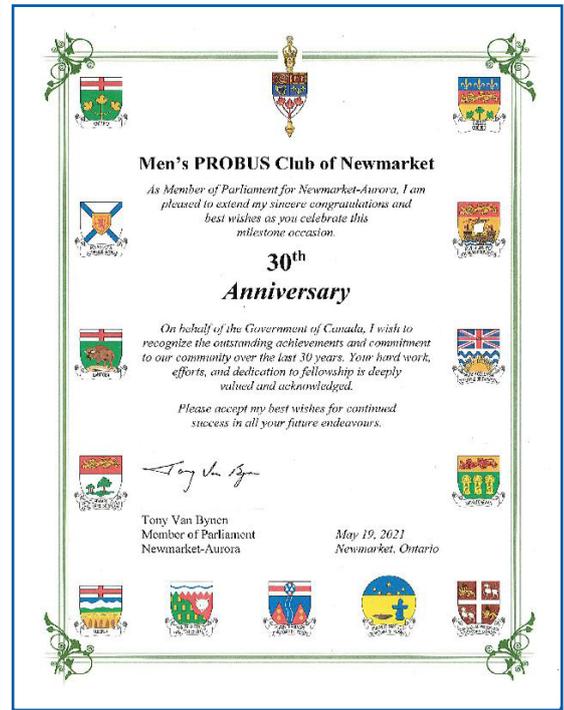
Three more of our members - Marie, Della & Roma

The Men's Probus Club of Newmarket - The Little Club that Could

Since March of 2020, the start of the pandemic in our area, our club's Management Team has strived to keep our membership involved, entertained and informed.

As many segments of our country scrambled to understand the impact of COVID-19, in April of 2020 we had our first virtual meeting using the Zoom platform. This was hosted by Steve Muir, our Technology Chair, using his personal Zoom license. We continued to have Zoom meetings and developed other programs to keep members active in our club. Sunny Lau developed our webpage and a call tree was used to call all members on a regular basis. The pandemic continued beyond all expectations; the club purchased its own Zoom license and in November of 2020 we introduced our first International WHO AM I from Scotland. Since then, we have had WHIs from India, France, Belgium, and England. In September we returned to our country, with a WHI from the Maritimes. We also introduced international keynote speakers soon after our first WHI on topics from England, Scotland, Uganda, France and South Africa, as well as several from around Canada. Recently we have been having management meetings at a local restaurant, the Lions and Sun, who we support by having very enjoyable lunches after our meetings. We are now entering a new phase, Hybrid Regular Monthly Meetings; our first was in September. We have our virtual meeting on Zoom and members can attend in person, reserving a limited number of slots as Ontario protocol and Lions and Sun dictate. In May this year we celebrated our 30th Anniversary, and thanks to PROBUS Global, we made it a celebration to remember. With the help of our PROBUS Global contacts, we had President of Newmarket UK PROBUS club, the mayor of Newmarket UK, President of PROBUS Global and many other international guests. From Canada, we had a number of PROBUS Canada Management Board, our local Member of Parliament, Newmarket Mayor and guests from across Canada. Hosted by our vice President Richard Furlong, we had the opportunity to hear from PROBUS leaders around the world. We were given a profile of the town and PROBUS club in Newmarket UK, and our local MP offered his congratulations from the Government of Canada. Our keynote speaker was John Taylor, our local mayor. It was really unique to have the two mayors meet and exchange greetings as well as a promise to stay in touch. A great celebration, indeed.

Looking ahead, with our current hybrid meetings and future in-house meetings, we will strive to enhance the PROBUS experience for all those who have the opportunity to be involved with the "The Little Club that Could".



Probus Club of Kapiti Coast New Zealand

Probus Club of Kapiti Coast Christmas lunch Party held at the Paraparaumu Bowls club on Thursday 02 December.

The cake was cut by Vice President John Hutchings and his wife Carole. Sadly, numbers had to be restricted because of Covid 19 regulations. It was a very happy occasion and was much enjoyed by the members attending as a number of monthly meetings had to be cancelled due to lockdown.

Wishing you a great Christmas and may 2022 be a better one for us all. Warm regards.
Liz Smith



A woman was flying from Seattle to San Francisco . Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft, the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. The man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Seeing-Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight.

He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, 'Kathy, we are in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?' The blind lady replied, 'No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs.'

Picture this:



All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!



The Year in Review - Probus Association of Queensland



Some of the Business Card designs produced by PAQ



Matching A4 posters designs produced by PAQ



Matching 600x1550mm banner designs produced by PAQ



Queensland has indeed been fortunate in terms of how few cases of COVID-19 there have been in the state (2,200) and certainly in terms of the few deaths (7) resulting from infection in the period of March 2020 to December 2021. The state's Chief Medical Officer has instituted a series of lockdowns and restrictions which have resulted in impacts on Probus Clubs in Queensland meetings and operations.

However, there have been 5 new Probus Clubs established in Queensland since March 2020 and it is planned to look for appropriate opportunities to open more in 2022. Probus in Queensland is certainly now more "upbeat" than it was this time in 2020. Some clubs had lost numbers but the majority of PAQ's clubs have seen an increase in demand for Probus membership as seniors throughout the state realize that the loneliness and isolation, they've experienced in the lockdowns, can be overcome by joining in the fun, the fellowship and the friendship extended by Probus Clubs.

This year PAQ has run seminars for Probus Club Presidents, Treasurers, Secretaries and Outings and Activity Officers. The Presidents' training focussed on building bridges between the clubs and their local government representatives, promoting their club both internally with members and externally to the public, lowering the average age of the club and a different approach to getting management teams for clubs. The Treasurers' Day focussed on the leadership role of the Treasurer in a club as well as budgeting for club growth and activities such as training. These topics, along with a focus on the cashless society and how to invoke that at a club level were well received and most of the PAQ clubs have begun a move to EFTPOS, Direct Deposit and cashless meetings. The Secretary's Day examined the various forms required during the club year from PSPL, PAQ and other government authorities as well as the importance of the Secretary in making a successful club. The Outings and Activity Officer's Day began with a presentation from the state bus and coach owners' council detailing some of the costs and issues involved in hiring coaches. Participants were stunned to learn that one tour operator had spent close to a million dollars on one coach before driver and on road costs. The day continued by exploring ways to increase club member participation in club outings and activities as well as planning for succession to their positions. Evaluations from all of the sessions, run in a number of locations, were extremely positive and congratulatory. The plan for 2022 is to take these sessions down to clusters of clubs.

From the informal talk over breaks during all of these days, the constant issue raised by most of the officers involved, and facing most clubs at this time of the year, is the one about getting a new management committee for the following year. Apart from Covid lockdowns and restrictions, membership reluctance to take on management roles, along with insufficient club-based training to take on the various roles, will impact on many clubs and I suspect that some of our clubs will, in fact, close in 2022. Clubs should be preparing their own club manuals including sections for the various positions emphasizing how the tasks get done and when not just the list of responsibilities. Club Treasurers and Secretaries need to have a manual for "their system" and encourage some assistance throughout the year in carrying out their role so that succession will be easier. The idea of a club having one or two Assistant Secretaries, Assistant Treasurers, Assisting Membership Officers, etc needs to be encouraged to ensure their club continues. Rostering members to give assistance meeting by meeting may be necessary to break down the barrier of "I couldn't do that". It is not just the club's management committee's responsibility to ensure that the club continues and positions get filled - it's every member's as, after all, it is your club.

The role of social media for the promotion of Probus can't be understated. Research for the PAQ's training events showed that, in Australia, YouTube, Facebook, Facebook Messenger and Instagram were the leading social media platforms for the 65+ users. Web sites need to be phone friendly as almost all of the mobile users in Australia (88%) use their phone for internet searches and that figure rises to 99% worldwide. Clubs need to move more of their promotion to these platforms to attract new and younger members in 2022.

The Probus Association of Queensland has acknowledged the need to promote Probus in the wider community and, in the last half of 2021, undertook to run advertisements in two of the leading "free" seniors' newspapers which are distributed throughout the state. These ads have been tagged with the call to "Live Life, Make Friends", "New friends, Fun Times" and "Fun has no Age Limit". Response has been steady and one recent caller said that she had "got your number off the TV ad" - but PAQ hasn't done TV ads. I'm working on the premise that the newspaper ads are being read and are working. PAQ intends to continue doing newspaper promotion in 2022 and is also looking at billboard and back of bus advertising.

Best wishes and success to all Probus Global members in 2022.
Rob Neary, President of the Probus Association of Queensland

Matching 1/3 broadsheet-size ad designs produced & used by PAQ in the major seniors oriented free community newspapers which have state-wide distribution

Flora Dell Turns 100

Self-described as a “builder”, Flora Dell is an outgoing, vibrant, passionate, and committed community activist and volunteer who is dedicated to improving the health and wellness of older Canadians.

She has established and overseen several programs and organizations in Greater Moncton and New Brunswick, advocating in particular for older adults and working hard to make her community an age-friendly city.

A committed volunteer and activist and building on her experience in the field of gerontology, she has shared her broad knowledge with groups such as the Active Living Coalition for Older Adults, Osteoporosis Canada and the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging. She has designed programs to teach seniors to deliver exercise classes in their communities, and forged partnerships among experts, hospitals and associations to provide improved health care services for seniors. She continues to inspire Canadians of all ages to embrace an active lifestyle.

Receiving awards and honours is nothing new to Flora Dell.

Flora Dell was made a member of the Order of Canada (2007), the Order of New Brunswick (2009), was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal (2002), and was inducted into the Order of Moncton (2018), to name a few. She was also the first woman to be elected as councillor in Riverview.

Dell has also made a mark on Greater Moncton, sitting on dozens of local community boards and paving the way to improve the lives of seniors through her work on the Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee, the development of the Seniors' Information Centre and the establishment of Moncton's Senior-Friendly Business Program.

She has worked in several organizations at the provincial and national levels and is a long-time advocate for French as a second language.

“You know, we're quite an amazing generation of older people because we want to be out, we want to be doing, and we want to be part of the community and being part of the community is very important,” Dell said.

“I really enjoy life, I enjoy my family, I have a wonderful family, I just enjoy being out and about, and I have wonderful friends who are very supportive.”

In late June of this year, the three founders of our PROBUS club arrived at Flora Dell's residence. The occasion - Flora was about to become a Centenarian! Flora was thrilled to be honoured by our PROBUS Club. We presented her with a dozen yellow roses and a card from our membership. She seemed to thoroughly enjoy the visit and accolades. Another remembrance for the occasion was a certificate from PROBUS National commemorating her 100th birthday, prepared by Marlene Pearce, Past - President of PROBUS Canada. Of course HAPPY BIRTHDAY was sung to the celebrant!



Making Plans to return to Meetings

Several of our Canadian Clubs are beginning to make plans to return to their original meeting places before Covid. The PROBUS CANADA Board of Directors has suggested guidelines to help in this process and each Director is responsible for sending these Guidelines to all Club Presidents in their District. Please feel free to share our ideas.

Sincerely, Bob MacNair, President, PROBUS CANADA and Marlene Pearce, Past President, PROBUS CANADA and Canadian Coordinator for PROBUS Global.

COVID-19 --Re-opening PROBUS Clubs

Guiding Principles used: Keep abreast of changes to Guidelines/ Club's autonomy vs. Guidelines/Keep brief/general

Suggested Guidelines for Re-Opening PROBUS Clubs:

Note: These are Guidelines only and do not in any way minimize the important responsibility of Management Committees and individual members to do all that is necessary to reduce risk to themselves and to their fellow members.

Startup Strategies:

- Each Club's plans should adhere to current and changing Federal, Provincial and Municipal Location Guidelines and Health Authorities and satisfy each Club's needs.
- Health and Safety of our Members is Paramount-Personal Hygiene and Social Distancing.
- All Club members have a responsibility to follow their appropriate guidelines in a caring manner.
- We are a Togetherness/Social Organization.

- Provide confidence to Members that returning is low risk. They have been apprehensive-common sense dictates.
- Priority should be Stability/Retention- Then Growth (be prepared for reduction in Membership in some cases).
- Crisis has provided opportunities to learn and to improve communications to members is a high priority e.g. newsletters etc.

Be Open To:

- Reducing numbers attending meetings--changing to larger venue, split clubs, etc.? Consider using Zoom or equivalent for those unwilling or unable to attend physical meeting.
- Social distancing. Change format/layout/seating.
- Hand sanitizers available at entrance of meeting venue. Clean or sanitize hands before and after meeting.
- Consider requiring members to wear masks to protect others.
- Sanitize microphone and any other equipment that you used.
- Re-evaluating food serving practices at meetings for coffee/celebrations or group activities.
- Should allow for physical distancing for as long as may be required.
- Flexibility re: Club's AGM (Timing/Nominations/Reschedule/Virtual or E- mail voting for AGM process works as an option. By laws flexible in these times. NOTE: AGMs may be postponed, and some Management Committee Teams could remain in place for more than a one year.
- Hugs/handshakes- out for now.
- Sick members must stay at home (to protect others).
- Greeter could ask each member how they are feeling.

What does your club do to celebrate Christmas?



Below are some of the responses to our Question of the Week
Wed Nov 24

Richard Furlong: Christmas lunch for members and Spouses at local restaurant Traditional Christmas Turkey dinner with all the trimmings and entertainment, although virtual this year and last.

Sat Dec 04

Leppens Roger: Probus Leuven Vesalius: Nothing. Probus Genk Martinus: Last year all members received a breakfast, delivered at home, by the president.

Carwyn Arnold: We have a fantastic fun filled Christmas luncheon with Secret Santa, Christmas Trivia, a presentation of fun by our male members and of course a wonderfully delicious meal together.

Peter Jennings: Members and their spouses have a Christmas luncheon with turkey and all the trimmings.

De Brabandere Gauthier: Due to increased covid impact all meetings in dec and jan have been postponed. An alternative has not been decided yet.

David Goodman: A Christmas entertainment (songs etc) put on by a member and friends.

Gordon Wood: Christmas Luncheon for members, their ladies and guests

John Stokes: We have a lunch time meal with our ladies and some light entertainment.

Lynne Stewart: We do a Christmas Lunch with entertainment.

David Bradshaw: Special Christmas Lunch for members and partners, with entertainment (jazz band this year).

Cathie Vincent: Pre-COVID we had a luncheon with great entertainment, good food, gifts. Now sadly our celebrations are all online. Maybe we will be able to celebrate Christmas 2022 in person?

Brian Marlow: Christmas lunch @ a local restaurant.

Roger Lovell: Special traditional "Invitation Lunch" with members and their guests.

Grand raffle, and special locally renowned guest speaker. Dining room decorated, festive serviettes and "crackers".

Hamish Martin: We have a Christmas lunch. Before lunch we have entertainers leading us in Carol and Christmas song singing.

Len Thibeault: Christmas Luncheon

Cornelis R Nederveen: Nothing at all, since we are still under a COVID regime all over the Netherlands.

Roger Woodard: Christmas Lunch and Carols at local church

Paul en De Meester: Our club Kortrijk Andleie member of Probus Belgium has a tradition. Around Christmas we have a grand party for the club members and the partners

Sandra Wallace: Yuletide luncheon with local choir, a photo booth with festive (and funny) hats, antlers, fun outfits, etc. and a draw for gifts either donated or purchased.

Sam Lewindon: We hold a Christmas Dinner, with prizes and surprises!

Jane Wilson: Luncheon

Max Bowyer: Our Club meets for a celebratory lunch

Mick Calder: Probus Wellington Central celebrates Christmas with an annual smorgasbord lunch in a venue overlooking Cook Strait and occasionally views of the South Island. We usually have entertainment and run a raffle. This year everyone must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 to attend.

Sun Dec 05

Katrina van den Brenk: As a small club, we gathered twice in member's homes to watch a Christmas video e.g., André Rieu's "Home for Christmas" went down well this year, although not the most Christmassy video available. Having two gatherings meant those who could not attend the first one was not missing out. Visits and 'phone calls to members who are less mobile than others. A Christmas party will be held in a local venue wit car-sharing so most can imbibe with Christmas Cheer. Secret Santa gifts to be exchanged - but to be either homemade or from a local Thrift/Op. Shop.

Liz Smith: We have a Christmas lunch with all the trimmings and a secret Santa. This year we also had a Christmas Quiz which was loads of fun.

Patrick STUART: Christmas lunch

Colin DEMPSTER: Just had our Christmas Lunch which was attended by 60 members, wives and partners in the local golf club.

Gordon Mott: We hold a Christmas Lunch at a local venue, attended by members, wives/ partners, and friends if venue capacity is sufficient. General bonhomie across the gathering, concluded with a brief address from the Chairman, and a 'free' raffle (every table has at least one winner). Not one to be missed.

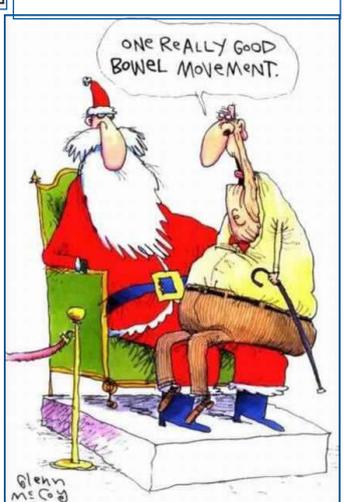
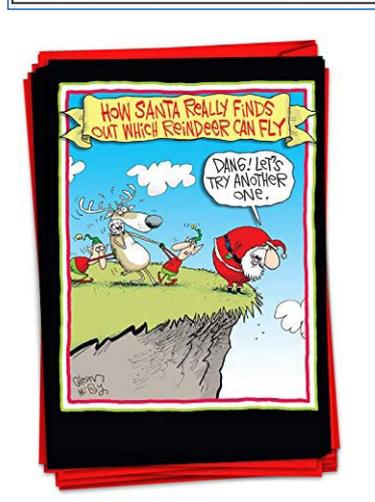
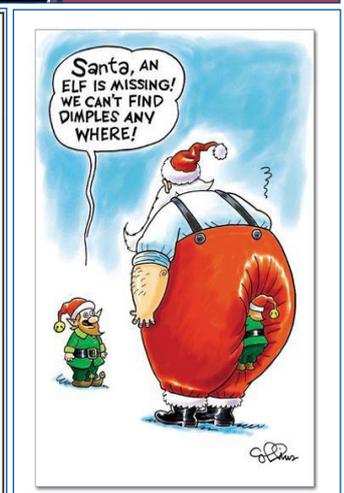
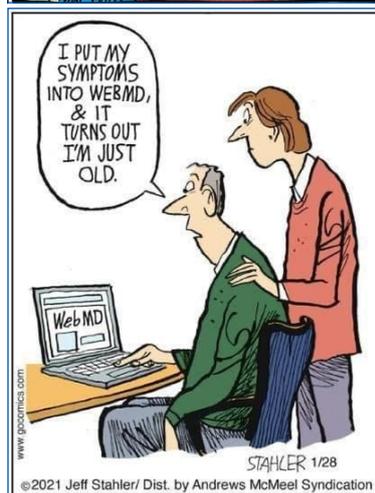
Aodh Bourke: Have a Christmas meal.



*A little Christmas
Humour*



We are living in a generation that would unplug your life support, just to charge their cellphone. lol



Merry Christmas to all of our PROBUS Global friends and wishing you a safe 2022.