



December 2020

## ENVISION: *Looking forward while recognizing the past*

### Management Committee

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**Past-President:** *Curt Allen* 416-705-3632  
**Vice-President and Chair Fellowship Committee:** *Gordon Stovel* 905-335-4463  
**Secretary:** *Don Kirkwood* 905-845-1734  
**Assistant Secretary:** *Niten Barua* 905-844-0670  
**Treasurer:** *Doug Francis* 416-804-1267  
**Chair, Membership:** *John Bond* 905-844-3564  
**Chair, Speakers:** *Alan Ellis* 416-518-1827  
**Chair, Activities:** *Hugo Kamerling* 905-847-2806  
**Chair, Special Events:**  
*Jim Davidson* 416-709-9259  
**Director, Communications & Website:**  
*Rick Schwartz* 905-842-6869



Hugh O'Neill



Curt Allen



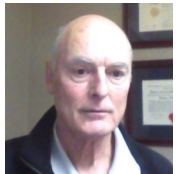
Gord Stovel



Don Kirkwood



Niten Barua



Doug Francis



John Bond



Alan Ellis



Hugo Kamerling



Jim Davidson



Rick Schwartz

### The President's Column

Shortly we will say goodbye to 2020 and good riddance I say. It is particularly difficult to have these last few golden years slip past while isolated from our friends and even our loved ones.

I have done some silly things in the past but none worse than volunteering to help out in Probus during a pandemic. I want to make friends but not with a photograph! The lock-down and vulnerability of those over 70 years has seriously affected us all. While the virtual meetings are a brave substitute, they cannot replace the human contact and friendship that is at the core of the Probus movement.

When we will all meet again, in person, is not known at this time. Most troubling is the back-peddling qualification statements from politicians. Canada's important position in the world is not what Ottawa would have us believe. It may well be that we will not get the best vaccine?

Having contacted other Presidents in the 13<sup>th</sup> District I found there a variance in the operational success during the pandemic. We, in the Probus Club of Old Oakville are doing well. This is in no small part due to the work of Gord Stovel and his Fellowship Team. We noted the members who had not renewed their membership or had not joined us on Zoom. The team reached out to those identified. If you receive a telephone call it is because we are concerned and want to offer fraternity and help, as

needed.

In the activities area, Hugo Kamerling has had a very successful golf season. The camera and investment club and the Live Alone Group are working well. I encourage you to avail of these activities now and in the future.

Your Management Committee will be meeting shortly to address the programme for 2021. We will seek to expand our activities and prepare for live meetings once more. In the meantime, Alan Ellis has a line up of great speakers for our monthly meetings. Our present attendance, is about 50-60 so there is room for more! If you haven't got a suitable computer, consider sharing with a fellow member using distancing and a mask. In the meantime Rick Schwartz is doing an incredible job in communications.

My wife, Ann, and I wish you all  
*a Very Happy, if quiet Christmas and a safe New Year*

*Hugh John O'Neill*  
President

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## Membership Committee Report

Your committee was pleased to welcome two new members to our Club since late summer:

George Hastings and Lloyd McCoomb

This is a significant achievement in

these times of limited social contact. One of our goals is to maintain contact with our fellow members through activities where we can achieve social distancing. We use our Zoom facilities to enable us to continue our monthly meetings, with excellent presentations by first rate speakers. Also through Zoom we continue the regular meetings of several of our "clubs"; for example, the investment club, camera club and the LAG group.

We encourage all members to pro-

mote the benefits of joining Probus to their friends and acquaintances.

Our good news is that we have **112 members** at this time, quite a healthy number.

*John Bond*

Membership Committee Chair  
December 2020

## Special Events Committee Report

This fall the Special Events Committee was very restricted in organizing events for our group as a result of COVID 19; however, we were able to host and manage (Thanks to Ed Nickerson and his commitment and involvement) a fun car rally on October 6th with twenty participants (ten vehicles). We had assigned (social distancing!) start times and this resulted in the participants not being exposed to one another. While Ed and I as organizers were required by the Halton Traffic Police to move our personal vehicles outside of the Lowville Park parking lot street, the Lowville Bistro was very accommodating in permitting Ed and I to park in their restricted parking lot which was closed at that time.

The layout of the course was designed with the participants in mind to have FUN versus being a competitive race event and that was clear from the outset for those driving the course which should have taken approximately one hour to complete.

We did have some interesting answers to some of the questions however:

Question - - - what do Pets visit?  
Answer - - - Forestdale Kennels. We received two answers to this that said

- - - Fire Hydrants and one answer that was "poop bag"!

Question - - - What's slowly crossing the road? Answer - - - Turtle Crossing Sign. We received a couple of answers that said - - - Children!

This course had a total of thirty three questions (clues) and the winner provided thirty two correct answers getting only one incorrect which was really quite incredible. The winners were a tandem of Glenn Higginbotham and Gerry Popp. Congratulations to them!!! Tied for second place with only two incorrect answers out of a total of 33 was Garth and Joanne Gisel and - - - Gord and Marilyn Stovel who participated in their first ever car rally!

The overall feedback from the participants was very positive with everyone enjoying the opportunity to take a wonderful and colorful drive through some of our beautiful countryside on a terrific sunny fall day.

### The future – post CoVID

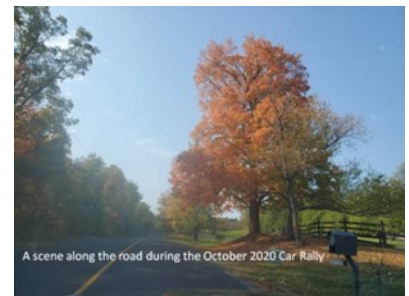
Your special event committee is looking forward to hopefully mid-year next year when we can be more physically social once again. As a reminder, here are some of the events previously offered and enjoyed by our members that you can look forward to in the future:

- Luncheons, including Presidents' Luncheon and other special occasions: e.g. Boris Brott luncheon.
- Sheridan Theatre live plays
- Shaw Festival trips
- Golf tournaments
- Select bus tours: e.g. Elora Hydro Electric Plant, Muskoka Steamship Cruise, Blue Jays and more.

And future events that we have considered include a trip to the Stratford Festival, Wine Tasting Trip to Niagara, Distribution Centre tours (e.g. Amazon) and more special luncheons and dinners with guest speakers.

*Jim Davidson*

Special Events Chair



A scene along the road during the October 2020 Car Rally

## Help Wanted

Looking for an opportunity to become more involved with the PROBUS Club? Rick Schwartz, Director of Communications and editor of this newsletter is looking for help. There are a couple of ways you could help:

- Assist in setting up various Zoom meetings

- Suggest content ideas for this newsletter—things you think other members would be interested in
- Assist in actually putting this newsletter together. We are using Microsoft tools in a Windows environment.

If you think you might be interested or would like more information about what is involved, contact Rick ([rick\\_a\\_schwartz@yahoo.com](mailto:rick_a_schwartz@yahoo.com)).



# ACTIVITIES

LAWN BOWLING	MARK COX	(905) 849-7564	
BREAKFAST	(To Be Determined)		
BRIDGE	PETER MORRIS	(905) 849-8010	
CAMERA	RON THORNBURY	(905) 257-0399	Zoom meetings
CRIBBAGE	BRIAN EMO	(905) 842-1663	
DINING	HUGO KAMERLING	(905) 847-2806	Zoom meetings
DISCUSSION	DON KIRKWOOD	(905) 845-1734	Spring 2021
EUCHRE	CURT ALLEN	(416) 705-3632	
GOLF	HUGO KAMERLING	(905) 847-2806	Spring 2021
INVESTMENT	JOHN VIPOND	(905) 844-7460	Zoom meetings
	BRENDAN BARNET	(289) 838-2499	
LAG	RON THORNBURY	(905) 257-0399	Zoom meetings
LUNCH & POOL	ST. JOHN BLAKELEY	(905) 844-1140	

**Hugo Kamerling**, Chair of the Activities Groups, notes the following special situations for the various clubs, many of which are operating differently than normal due to CoVID-19:

-Camera Club - Leader Ron Thornbury - email: [rthornbury32@gmail.com](mailto:rthornbury32@gmail.com)  
Presently only zoom meetings. Next meeting: January 20. Everybody has a camera, but many of us do not realize the endless possibilities of how to shoot great photos. If interested email Ron to join the group.

-The Living Alone Group (LAG). Leader Ron Thornbury - email as above.  
Normally meeting every Friday at 10.00 a.m. at Mo's Family Restaurant on Speers Road, however because of Covid 19, only zoom meetings. Please contact Ron for participation.

-Investment Group under dual leadership of John Vipond e-mail [jvipond@cogeco.ca](mailto:jvipond@cogeco.ca) and Brendan Barnett email [husruin@yahoo.ca](mailto:husruin@yahoo.ca)  
Presently only zoom meetings on the third Monday of each month. Working successfully with three Phantom folios. Normally 8 to 10 members participating. To join, please contact John or Brendan.

-Probus Golf Group. Leader Hugo Kamerling email [hukamerling1@gmail.com](mailto:hukamerling1@gmail.com)

Originally only playing one 9 hole game monthly for male members only, now offering nine hole games on 3 Wednesdays each month and 18 hole games on one Wednesday for members AND spouses, at The Oakville Executive Club, situated close to Oakville. After the games opportunity for drinks and luncheon with social distancing at the patio of the club. Power carts available. Special reduced rates for our Probus Club. Please advise me if interested. We have pre-booked tee-off times available as of April 21, 2021

-Dinner Group. Leader: Hugo Kamerling. Normally meeting at the third Wednesday of each month at a restaurant chosen by the host organizer, but no actual dinner meetings at present, only monthly zoom meetings. Open to all Probus members and their spouses, subject to available (restaurant) space. Normal participation between 8 and 13 couples. Please contact Hugo if interested to participate in these popular events.

-All other activities suspended until after Covid 19. However the respective group leaders - see above total activities outlay - are ready to receive your email to include you in future restarting of these activities.

See article on page 7 featuring the Lunch Pool & Group.



## Fellowship Committee

Gord Stovel, Chair

As the pandemic swept over us all, as you know we were forced to cancel our live meetings. In the process, we lost that opportunity, once a month, to chat amongst ourselves during coffee break, as well as at the beginning and end of our meetings.

This is and will always be a very important aspect of the Probus experience. It's that opportunity to chat with live peers about anything that seems important at the moment.

It's what is also known as **FELLOWSHIP**.

In September the MC recognized this and asked me to work with a team of our members to try to fill this FELLOWSHIP void. The members who agreed to develop this team are Curt Allen, John Williams, Alan Ellis and

Roger Sanders.

Collectively we thought best we start with those members who were not showing up to our ZOOM meetings. Obviously, these folks were not connected because of computer issues, health issues or lack of interest. One thing we knew they all had in common were the realities of being basically trapped in their homes by Covid.

To say the least, our team has found universal acceptance. These members were thrilled we reached to see how they were, talked through their challenges, shared our own Covid experiences; and did that which we all know as **FELLOWSHIP**.

As we go forward, we plan on continuing the process, calling these folks, and others, to just chat and to see if there are ways that we, or the broader Probus network can help them work through this experience. More to report next newsletter.

Alan Ellis, Chair

## Speaker Line-up for Calendar 2021



<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Wednesday, January 6, 2021	Amanda White-Pressey	Senior Director, Marketing & Communications, Season Seniors Lifestyle Living - Oakville HO.	The challenges of adapting to Covid; lessons learned and how will Seniors residence look in the future?
Wednesday, February 3, 2021	Niten Barua	Retired from Big Pharma	The Vaccine Development Process
Wednesday, March 3, 2021	Tom Axworthy	Senior Fellow Munk Institute	The current Political Climate
Wednesday, April 7, 2021	Rabbi Stephen Wise	Shaarei-Beth El Congregation of Oakville	"The challenges of Judaism in the 21st century"
Wednesday, May 5, 2021	Hassaan Basit	Conservation Halton	Conservation work in Halton Region
Wednesday, June 2, 2021	Tony Tarrantini	Sheridan College Oakville Animation Faculty	Sheridan's leadership in Animation
Wednesday, July 7, 2021	Dr. Stuart Edmonds	Executive Vice President Research and Advocacy Canadian Cancer Society	Advances in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Prostate Cancer
Wednesday, August 4, 2021	Dr Cal Gutkin	Member of the Interim Governing Council of the new Mississauga - Ontario	Changing Face of Health Care in Ontario
Wednesday, September 1, 2021	Wendy Belcher	Oakville Historical Society	Oakville in the 1800's and early 1900's
Wednesday, October 6, 2021	David T. Chapman	Photographer and Storm Chaser	"Storm Chasing in Ontario"
Wednesday, November 3, 2021	Lloyd McCoomb	Retired from Management of Pearson Airport	Lessons from a Mega-Project. The Toronto-Pearson Project (1998-2008)
<b>Presidents Luncheon, November 17, 2021 **</b>	Mark Hebscher	Former sportscaster and radio show host	"The Greatest Athlete (you've never heard of)" George Orton, Canada's first Olympic gold medallist. (Paris, 1900).
Wednesday, December 1, 2021 <b>XMAS Luncheon (Venue TBC)</b>	Mark Rector	Former Prof Humber College	"Oh Canada, Our Home & Inventive Land"



## November Guest Speaker

### Iliana Oris Valiente



Iliana is the Managing Director for the Blockchain practice at Accenture, responsible for innovation strategy with emerging technologies. She provided us with an in-

troduction to the technologies around the digital transformation in the financial services sector. There are literally thousands of companies who have raised billions of dollars world-wide to work on these technologies. Topics for the talk include crypto currencies, Central Bank digital currencies and digital identities.

The underlying technology is called multi party systems or sometimes digital ledger technology, and underlying that is something called blockchain, which basically means business transformation. We are moving from a traditional set of data systems where each business and its partners use different products and exchange infor-

mation via purchase orders and invoices, leading to constant reconciliation between those parties. What blockchain brings is a shared data system between all these companies, wherein "I see what you see" based on TRUST.

These shared data systems can be public, like those associated with cryptocurrencies, or they may be limited to a particular set of business partners and customers. Confidence is created by evidence of the provenance of the transaction, along with knowledge as to whether there has been an attempt at tampering with the data, plus the ability to control who can see and perhaps change a transaction, and finally with data that is encrypted so it is secure.

So in Financial Services, what this is all about is the future of money. By 2027 10% of GDP globally could be "tokenized" (meaning using blockchain). Estimated savings from use of this could be as much as \$600bn USD. There is a spectrum of offerings, from central banks through commercial banks and consortiums all the way to end consumers, so from digital forms of fiat currencies like the C\$ all the way to cryptocurrencies. It costs US\$200bn to maintain cash in the US, there are US\$554trillion in assets potentially convertible to digital assets globally so more than 40 central banks are researching or testing cen-

tral bank digital currencies. In addition, 125 million Americans received payments for COVID relief from the American governments, so huge processing savings could have been achieved.

Having a digital identity is absolutely critical to establishing this digital financial world. But 1.2 billion people live in the world without documented proof of their existence. A digital identity could save 90% of a bank's onboarding costs for establishing a new bank account for a customer. This topic has been under discussion for at least five years in Canada, but things have been ramping up in the past year or so. The idea is interoperability – between provinces, airlines, foreign governments. Known Traveler Digital Identity (KTDI) is a concept of having all your credentials that have been issued by an authority in an app on your smart phone that provides your biometrics to those authorities that need them to easily access them dramatically enhancing the user experience.

But for this all to work, blockchain needs to be adopted by groups of companies or other service providers. There are currently dozens of consortia of financial services companies, a growth from 25 in 2016.

## December Guest Speaker

### Lianne Harris B.A., B.F.A(Ed), T.E.S.L.



Celebrate the season with a refreshing look at the cherished stories and symbols surrounding Christmas.

Join Lianne as we go back in time and explore various cul-

tures to better understand the origins, significance, and popularity of our most recognized Christmas motifs and well-loved stories.

Lianne has been a history, culture and social studies resource specialist with the Toronto District School Board almost 20 years and has been the guest instructor and workshop leader for teachers across many boards in Southern Ontario. To date she has taught over 80 000 teachers

and students (usually in authentic period clothing). In 2003, she was selected by W.O.M.A.D. as one of Toronto's Women of Influence.

She is the author of many books including two medieval novels and non-fiction books on Bangladesh, India, great women in history, historical clothing and costuming, and world travel photography. She is a contributing author of the Canadian best seller business book, The Power of Women United.

### *Christmas Stories and Symbols*

Lianne gave us a very interesting talk around this topic, dressed in period costume as the eldest daughter of a Scandinavian family (as St. Lucia, the bringer of light, with a crown with candles) who had a role in celebrations there as the leader of the family's procession to church on Dec. 13, the beginning of their Christmas season.

She broke her talk into 3 sections: the Christian tradition, Symbols and the evolution of Santa Claus. She went through the story of the birth of

Jesus, how and why Joseph and Mary travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem based on the history we have been able to piece together from that time. She discussed the notions of the Magi and the star. Symbols include the candy cane, representing the hooked staffs of the shepherds, stars representing the Star of Bethlehem, gifts, like the wise men brought to the baby, and Christmas itself – a word meaning Christ's Mass, a gathering of believers. It is almost certain that Jesus was born in the Spring, but in the evolution of Christianity and the celebration of Christmas, it was "hidden" amongst pagan traditions including Saturnalia and the Day of Mithras, finally declared to be Dec. 25 by Constantine. So there are lots of pagan rituals, like the Christmas tree from the Germanic and Scandinavian traditions, which spread to England. Oliver Cromwell killed the whole notion, but Charles II brought it back as a big party. Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" began the modern tradition of the meaning of Christmas: charity, kindness, forgiveness, redemption, and sharing the holiday with family.

(continued p.6)

## December Speaker (continued from p. 5)

The final topic was the evolution of Santa Claus. Any reference to St. Nicholas is suppressed because it is Catholic, and the Protestant revolution had by then begun (Martin Luther). Kris Kringl was the first expression of the concept, then the Dutch had a Sinterklaas and they brought it to the eastern U.S. In England, Father Christmas is a thin green-clad wanderer who dispenses gifts. Then there is the U.S. tradition, which began with Clement C. Moore's poem, "Twas the Night Before Christmas", which is where the sleigh, reindeer, chimneys and reindeer come from. Our version of Santa Claus was created by Coca Cola based on the poem, someone who is happy, jolly and if he broke into your house in the middle of night you wouldn't be scared – thus the jolly, rotund, bearded old guy. But it all comes back to St. Nicholas of Myrna, Turkey who died 383 A.D. He is the patron saint of children. Lianne gave us a long story of the connection to gift-giving.

If you would like to review her presentation again, or if you were unable to attend the meeting and would like to hear it for the first time, it will be available at the link previously distributed until January 4<sup>th</sup>.

## January 2021 Probud Meeting

Doors open at 8:45am—you may want to informally chat with your friends until the meeting officially starts at 9:30am., Wednesday, January 6th.

### Guest Speaker

Amanda White-Pressey

Senior Director, Marketing & Communications, Season Seniors Lifestyle Living - Oakville HO.

Topic: The challenges of adapting to Covid; lessons learned and how will Seniors residence look in the future?



Milton, Ontario

## Paraprosdokians

(Submitted by Alan Ellis.)

Paraprosdokians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected and is frequently humorous. (Winston Churchill loved them.)

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you.... but it's still on my list.
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up.... we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
7. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
8. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
9. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
10. In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of emergency, notify...." I answered, "a doctor."
11. Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
12. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
13. I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.
14. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
15. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian, any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
16. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
17. I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.
18. "Take my wife—please!" —Henny Youngman
19. "There but for the grace of God—goes God." —Winston Churchill
20. "If I could just say a few words... I'd be a better public speaker." —Homer Simpson
21. "If I am reading this graph correctly—I'd be very surprised." —Stephen Colbert
22. "On his feet he wore...blisters." —Aristotle
23. "I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it." —Groucho Marx
24. "I like going to the park and watching the children run around because they don't know I'm using blanks." —Emo Philips
25. "I haven't slept for ten days, because that would be too long." —Mitch Hedberg
26. "I sleep eight hours a day and at least ten at night." —Bill Hicks
27. "I don't belong to an organized political party. I'm a Democrat." —Will Rogers
28. "On the other hand, you have different fingers." —Steven Wright
29. "He was at his best when the going was good." —Alistair Cooke
30. "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." —Jim Brewer, sometimes attributed to Groucho Marx
31. Einstein finally finished his theory of relativity... It's about time!





## Lunch & Pool Group

(submitted by St. John Blakeley, Group Leader)

**I**t is a long time since we put our lunch & pool meetings on hold. In fact my last email was on March 15 then the province shut everything down at midnight on the 16th – just cry thinking of all the St. Patrick's Day Guinness that has had to be dumped since then (unless it really does have a long life!) Nobody has been bugging me to suggest that we start meeting – would that be separate tables 6 ft. apart?

I have not been to Monaghan's since March & was wondering if anyone has been. Please let me know if you have & how you found the surroundings.

The monthly Probus meetings on Zoom have, I think, been very successful. I hear that many Probus clubs have just stopped completely. I saw that quite a number of you are tuning in. If you have not been doing so, it's very easy after downloading the Zoom program. I'm sure that Roger Sanders ([roger.sanders@bell.net](mailto:roger.sanders@bell.net)) or Rick Schwartz ([probus.oldoak.webmstr@gmail.com](mailto:probus.oldoak.webmstr@gmail.com)) would help you if you have any problem. All you have to do then is click on the link that Rick sends out in a regular email a few days before the meeting.

I hope that you have all renewed your membership which was reduced to \$30 as expenses are much lower now but there is still a cost to keeping the club going. Instructions for Interac payments and the mailing address are on the contact page of the website (<https://www.probusoldoakville.ca/contact>).

Everyone's email is on the Probus membership list; the last one was, I think, June 30, 2020. It is currently being revised **so if you have any change** please contact John Bond, Chair of Membership ([johnlynda@cogeco.ca](mailto:johnlynda@cogeco.ca)) without delay.

I hope all of you are well and surviving this on-going restricted lifestyle that we felt was going to be over or almost over by now.

Best wishes & stay safe,

*St. John*

## POOL EMAIL REPLIES

St. John: Great to hear from you. I thought I might get a longer cue to make sure distances between players could be controlled but thought better of it. Most of our players are out of control anyway. Looking forward to post Covid-19...

Thanks for reaching out St. John. I haven't been inside a restaurant since March except to pick up take out. Unlike many in our pool group I am old and not taking any chances. Believe it or not, I miss you guys. Looks like a vaccine is getting close. Lawn bowling was played with a shortened season and no inter-league competitions. Only 60 of the 140 regular members played- the rest like me gave it a miss. Average age is 68 with 67% percent over 70 hence the reluctance. Recruitment was postponed for a year so you will have to wait until 2021.

As the chief priest and high potentate of the lunch and pool group it was good to hear from you. I think it is important that we keep the guys in the loop so we can return to our normal lunches eventually. The highlight of the lunches for me is the weekly exchange of lies that emanate from this group. One can hardly afford to miss a meeting.

Thanks for getting in touch. Would very much enjoy going to lunch and pool again but doubt that it will be any time soon.

Good to hear from you St. John. We got lots of golf for 6 months but expect to lead a much more restricted life for the next six. Hopefully a vaccine will appear in the New Year and Monaghan's will become part of our lives again.

Miss our Tuesday lunch and pool but still avoiding restaurants and other crowded places. Hope everyone is OK and being careful. With Trump now toast and sanity returning to the White House, we at least have something to look forward to.



## ***Our Very Own Amateur Scientist***

**M**any of you know **Ivor Mansell**, Probus Old Oakville member since February 2000. And many of you know that he has an intense interest in things mechanical, electrical and even biological (you may have heard his stories of harvesting Monarch butterfly eggs from his milkweed plants, and raising them to release to the wild, saving them from predators.) But this story is about his observation that our skies seem to have become much hazier over the last few decades.

In order to prove or disprove his observation, Ivor constructed a “Haze Sensor” based on an article he saw in the May, 1997 issue of “Scientific American.” When he first built his unit, he found he couldn’t get consistent readings, and that he couldn’t calibrate it. However, he observed in the few days after 9/11, he was getting repeatable readings, and attributed it to the fact that there were no airplanes flying, “messing up the sky.” Later he read a report that NASA had found the same thing and was able for the first time to establish a base reference for a clear sky.

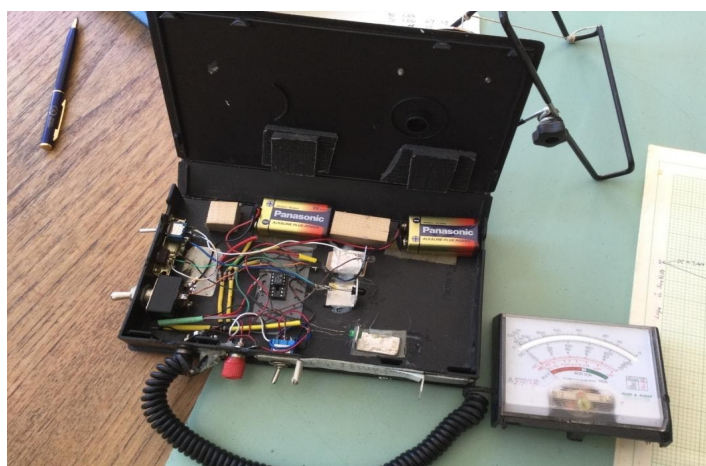
In an exchange with Ivor, he asked me whether I had noticed that during the last snowfall the snow doesn’t twinkle like it used to, due to light scatter from particles

in the sky. He also has observed though, that there is no longer a black line marking different snowfalls as there used to be when coal-fired generating stations were in operation.

Pictured below is his haze sensor, modified from the original plans to obtain readings for ultraviolet and infrared radiation, as well as visible light. As you may have noticed, the case for the device is an old VHS video cassette with the “guts” removed. Quite the innovator, our Ivor!

(submitted by Rick Schwartz)

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**Patient:** Doctor, I'm thinking that I may be losing my hearing.

**Doctor:** Can you tell me what you know of the symptoms?

**Patient:** Homer is bald and fat, Marge has blue hair...

(thanks to Alan Ellis)



(The Following was submitted by **Lianne Harris**, our December Speaker, as a follow-up to a question from one of our members:)

## **The Symbolism of 'The 12 Days of Christmas':**

**My True Love** = Jesus Christ

**1) A Partridge in a Pear Tree** = Christ crucified on a wooden cross

**2) 2 Turtle Doves** = Old and New Testaments (The Bible)

**3) 3 French Hens** = The 3 Virtues (faith/hope/charity)

**4) 4 Calling Birds** = 4 Gospels -**Matthew, Mark, Luke & John** (calling out the good news).

**5) 5 Golden rings** = the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible --  
(**Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**)

**6) 6 Geese a-laying** = stood for the 6 days in which God created the world

**7) 7 Swans A-Swimming** = The 7 Gifts of the Spirit--1) prophecy, 2) ministry, 3) teaching, 4) exhortation, 5) giving, 6) leading, 7) compassion

**8) 8 Maids A-Milking** = The 8 Beatitudes

-->**The 8 Beatitudes**

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.

Blessed are they who mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

**9) 9 Ladies Dancing = 9 Fruits of the Holy Spirit** = 1) Love 2) Joy 3) Peace 4) Patience 5) Kindness 6) Generosity 7) faithfulness 8) Gentleness 9) Self-control

**10 Lords A-Leaping** = **The Ten Commandments**

**11 Pipers Piping** = **Eleven Faithful disciples (Judas, #12, betrayed Christ)**

**12 Drummers Drumming** --12 Points of the Apostles' Creed

(**Catholic and later many Protestant sects**)

## *The Last Word*

A woman goes to the optician for her annual eye examination. The optician puts a contraption on her face and asks her to say what she sees.

“I see empty airports and empty football grounds. I see closed theatres, closed pubs and closed restaurants.”

“That’s perfect” says the optician. “You’ve got 2020 vision.”

(submitted by Tony Last)