

PROBUS District 2 Meeting, Ontario, Canada

The District 2 PROBUS Area Meeting was held at the **Stouffville PROBUS Club** on October 21, 2019. Members from 33 of the District 2 Clubs attended – a total of 118 participants. New **President PROBUS Canada, Marlene Pearce** and her husband Winston visited from New Brunswick as part of their Ontario Tour. Marlene and District 2 President, Brenda Andrews, presented information and current PROBUS updates to those assembled. There are approximately 38,500 PROBUS members across Canada, about 6,000 of whom are in District 2.

There were three objectives of the day:

- Enable PROBUS principles of fellowship, self-development and participation.
- Generate ideas for Club leaders to pursue at their home Clubs.
- Support a forum to **"Get Connected and Stay Connected"**!

To achieve the objectives and ensure relevance for participants, organizers requested ideas and issues when invitations were first sent out. From the close to 60 ideas received, 9 themes emerged. During the day long meeting - with mixed-roles participation – over 200 ideas/solutions were generated related to these themes. Participants achieved two main outcomes: ideas and suggestions – new, currently in place and those tried and discarded for potential follow up at home Clubs. Secondly, the activity allowed for a high level of interaction as different roles from various Clubs worked together to share and build on each others' ideas.

Of high interest to attendees was having the opportunity to interact with same-role members from other Clubs. To this end each participant was assigned seating by their role. Each role was then tasked to generate ideas on: **Best Practice** (*what worked well in the role*), **Inefficiencies** (*what gets in the way*) and **Potential/Solutions** (*things tried or learnings*).

Results from both the ideas generation and best practices sessions were sent to Presidents of each Club. This information can also be found on the PROBUSGLOBAL website.

Another area of interest for many attending Clubs was a panel discussion on the creation and usage of the web for Club-related activities such as events sign-up, electronic newsletters, registration, on-line payments, etc. **Webmaster Trina MacKenzie** of the Stouffville Club who recently created the Club's website spoke about the challenges in creating the website and the subsequent push to encourage member usage. **Peter Green, Webmaster Pickering-Lakeside** spoke about a purchased package to handle all administration on-line including payments. Both individuals presented the pros and cons of each approach, and while it was agreed that the latter package was efficient and very attractive in its versatility, several Clubs cited cost as a prohibitive factor based on their current membership-numbers. As well, **Richard Furlong, Bradford Mens Probus** introduced the **PROBUSGLOBAL** website to attendees and encouraged usage and introduction of the site to all members.

It was an excellent occasion for members from many PROBUS clubs to interact, to meet and to discuss challenges and issues facing all of us moving forward. We continue to **"Get Connected-Stay Connected."**

For more information contact: Tara Seon, VP PROBUS Club of Stouffville (2019).