



# NEWSLETTER

# PROBUS CLUB VANCOUVER

#252-2025 West 42nd Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6M 2B5 Phone and Fax (604)261-6818

Clubs for retired and semi-retired professional and business persons, former executives and others

...to find more about Probus go to [www.probus.org](http://www.probus.org)

January 2007

#### President

Jack Farley  
604-922-1515

#### Director

Probus Canada  
Pidge McBride  
604-274-0446

#### Past President

Denis Creighton  
604-922-6469

#### Vice President

Ted Daem  
604-732-7758

#### Secretary

Bill Weatherall  
604-263-3069

#### Treasurer

Bill Manson  
604-988-2365

#### Speakers Committee

Fred Colton  
604-266-7060

#### Membership Committee

Nick Thornton  
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#### Activities Committee

Don Hudson  
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#### House committee

Doug Lambert  
604-266-2422

#### Newsletter Editor

Roy Williams  
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#### Membership Services

Tremayne Perry  
604-261-9669

#### Historian and Archivist

Gordon Thom  
604-739-0714

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Presidents' Luncheon

**Time:** 9:30 AM

**Location:** Point Grey Golf and Country Club  
3350 S.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C.

**Speaker:** Robert S. Plecas

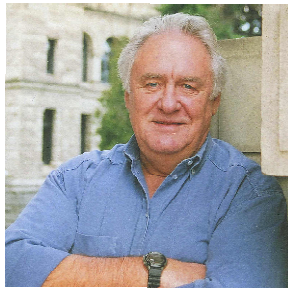
**Topic:** A Mandarin Remembers...an insider compares Bill Bennett with his peers

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Presidents' Luncheon - Wednesday,**  
January 10, Point Grey Golf and Country Club

**Valentine's Day Luncheon -**  
February 14, Shaughnessy Golf Club

## ROBERT S. PLECAS



Robert Plecas is a senior, seasoned negotiator and problem solver equally at home in the private sector business community and

government, and, who has recently authored his first book.

In government, he was a career public servant for over 20 years serving under both the Social Credit and NDP administrations. Over half that time he served as Deputy Minister in numerous portfolios including the Premier's Office; Forests; Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources; Economic and Regional Development; Provincial Secretary and Children and Families.

He was concurrently responsible for government wide personnel issues, labor negotiations during the 80's outsourcing and privatization (including the gas division of B.C. Hydro to form B.C. Gas), Royal and VIP visits during Expo, creation of BC Lotteries and acted

as the Provinces' trouble shooter and fixer.

In the private sector Robert Plecas was a self-employed business and government relations consultant from 1991- 96 and 1998-2005. Major clients included Canfor and other forestry firms, Telus, Imperial Oil, International Wood and Allied Workers (IWA) and the Coalition of BC Businesses.

As a mediator, he handled the dispute between the Government of Canada, Musqueam Indian Band, City of Richmond and Canada Lands over the disposal of Garden City Lands.

He served as President, BC Lumber Trade Council from 1998-2002, the Association that led negotiations on the export of softwood lumber to the U.S.A.

As a lecturer at the University of Victoria and Queen's, he has developed and teaches: "Negotiation Strategies", "Crisis Management" and "Best Practices."

Today, he specializes in a very few, highly selected, complicated, difficult private or public sector intractable problems that require a

high level of skill and experience to solve. He has a BA Honours and MA in Political Science from the University of Victoria and is a political pundit for CBC radio. He also appears on television news and political commentary programs such as Vaughan Palmer's "Voice of the Province."

He is Author of the best seller, "Bill Bennett, a Mandarins View" published by Douglas McIntyre.

## Minutes of the December 12, 2006 Meeting

Attendance: 170 including guests

President Jack Farley opened the meeting and reminded us that the Presidents' Luncheon will be held at Point Grey Golf and Country Club on Wednesday, January 10th. He asked all those wishing to join in the lunch to please let the office know promptly. Jack then asked Nick Thornton to introduce the new members (See "Welcome New Members" on page 4). At Jack's request Norm Weitzel introduced this morning's speaker, Dr. John Nightingale, President of the Vancouver Aquarium.

John started with a little background of the Aquarium. He joined the staff thirteen years ago in 1993. John pointed out that this year is the Aquarium's 50th anniversary. While the building has undergone many renovations, by the very nature of the operation (concrete tanks filled with sea water in continuous flow) the structure's life expectancy is at hand. The Aquarium operates on a self-sustaining basis and there is currently a \$100 million revitalizing and expansion project underway. While 70% of this capital expenditure must come from Governments, fund raising is the source of the remaining 30%.

Dr. Nightingale then talked of several aspects of the operation. It has a staff of 350 and 900 volunteers. The Aquarium is supported by

20,000 households' memberships and a \$70 million annual budget. The general goal is summed up in their mission statements as "the conservation of aquatic life." To achieve this goal their long-standing principles are to: provide excellence in animal care; be responsive to their communities of users; maintain a dynamic visitor experience; expand our focus on education and remain a self-supporting, non-profit organization.

John stressed that the aquarium staff are trained to search out and adapt new technologies.

A good example is their leading edge fish tracking procedure. Briefly, acoustic tags are surgically implanted in the smolts. Then, electronic, and easily retrievable, receivers are placed at specific location on the ocean floor. These record every acoustic tag (smolt) that passes. John used the Cultus Lake Sockeye run as a specific example. In this case, 100 hatchery smolts were tagged and receivers were placed at several locations at the bottom, such as in the lower Fraser River, the entrance to Howe Sound, the top of Vancouver Island and across the Strait of Juan de Fuca. After releasing the smolt, the tracking system recorded that 61 made it to the Fraser, one third detoured into Howe Sound and 30 were tracked entering the Gulf of Georgia, 13 of which entered the Pacific via the Queen Charlotte Strait, none went through the Strait of Juan De Fuca.

We were then introduced to the "Pacific Ocean Shelf Tracking Project." The initial purpose of which is to standardizing fish tracking technology on a continental basis. Eventually, the goal is to extend the technology to all coastal seas on a global basis. As this would involve world-wide ocean and sea currents measurements we were introduced to a new word 'Sverdrup' and John quizzed us on it's meaning. Sensing no response, he offered a

clue, that it is a measure of ocean currents. Again silence, so he said that Sverdrup is a flow of one million cubic meters of water per second. To achieve accurate world wide fish-tracking measurements, tidal and current flows must also be tracked.

Sverdrup units are extremely large to make the readings more practical. John concluded by telling us that the Vancouver Aquarium is rated as the fifth best in the world. This is not surprising when we appreciate the large scope of activity undertaken.

*During the question period we learned that:*

- The fishing industry and the Aquarium have a working relationship but bottom trawlers and drift netters play havoc with the environment. While there is no international restriction against these practices, the Aquarium would endorse and encourage any action in that direction.
- Fish farming is a necessity as there is not enough wild salmon to satisfy human demand. However, fish farming is new to BC and much can be done to clean up the operation. Some suggestions are; the use of concrete tanks to contain/remove waste, and improvement/control of feed by the fish farming industry.
- We are experiencing global warming. However, it is not crystal clear whether restricting greenhouse gases can minimize the rate of increase. The Kyoto Accord is a good step, but the environmentalists need to rethink their strategy.
- Red tide is caused by plankton bloom that contains toxins that poisons shellfish when it's consumed. There is no clear reason as to why this happens.
- There are no plans to reintroduce orca whales to the Vancouver Aquarium.
- The Aquarium expansion budget has 90% approval.
- This year's Aquarium attendance is expected to be close to a million, up from the nine hundred thousand.
- Ling cod is a protected species. In any event there are too few to catch.

- The Port of Vancouver is swept well with the tide and current and is as clean as any port worldwide.

Dean Winram thanked the speaker.

Bill Weatherall, Secretary

## Reflections From The President

At our January 10th luncheon meeting at the Point Grey Golf and Country Club we will be celebrating our 10th

anniversary. The very first meeting was held on May 20th, 1997 with 50 charter members in attendance and I would like to pay tribute to our past presidents who



have guided our club to the success that we enjoy today. We are the second largest Probus Club in Canada.

**1997 - Fred Cotton:** Fred was a prime mover within the Rotary Club of Vancouver in establishing the Probus Club Vancouver. He currently chairs the Speakers Committee. Fred attended Duke of Connaught High School before going to the U of Washington where he earned a Bachelor of Business Degree. Fred spent most of his life with the Sears organization and was General Manager on his retirement. He is Past President of Shaughnessy Golf Club and spends a lot of spare time at his retreat on Mayne Island.

**1998 - Pidge McBride** - Pidge is just completing a term as Director of Probus Canada. He attended Magee and his attendance at UBC was interrupted by the war as he joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1943. He served in the Atlantic before becoming involved with anti-sub work in the Irish Sea and the English Channel. In 1945 he returned to UBC to complete his education. Pidge joined the Woodward's organization and spent a

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## NOTICES

**Members Services Desk:** Tremayne Perry

**Cash Desk:** Bob Swannell, Terry Heenan, John Banfield

**Greeters:** Gerald Farry, Art Jeffrey, Glen Miller

### PRESIDENTS' LUNCHEON

#### 10TH ANNIVERSARY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10TH, 2007

Point Grey Golf and Country Club

The Presidents' Luncheon is always held in January as part of our regular meeting. Please note that this year we have had to schedule the meeting and Luncheon on Wednesday, January 10th due to Point Grey Golf Club not having space available on the Tuesday. The cost will be \$25.00 for members and \$35.00 for guests. Please bring cash or cheques to the meeting. Coffee will be available as usual at 9:30AM but the meeting will not get underway until 10:30AM.

**Please telephone the Probus office at 604-261-6818 to advise if you will be attending so we can provide the Golf Club with an attendance number.**

This is our 10th anniversary and we will be honouring the ten presidents who have led us so successfully over this period.

### 2007 GOLF TOURNAMENT CANCELLED

Every year since the formation of our Probus Club ten years ago, we have had a golf tournament. With each passing year, it has become more difficult to persuade a sufficient number of members to participate in this event, which involves a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of the organizers. Consequently, it has been decided to take a breather in 2007. If sufficient interest should redevelop, we will restart the tournament in 2008.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

**Dick Bradshaw** - Investment Management

**Jim Duffy** - Education (transfer from Parry Sound Club)

**Bob Fay** - Investments

**Jeremy Hooper** - Chartered Accountant

**Bob Johnstone** - Civil Service (Revenue Canada)

**Nick Lemoine** - Investment Dealer

**Jim McLennan** - Broadcast Marketing

### VALENTINE'S DAY LUNCHEON

*Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club*

*February 14, 2007*

As outlined in the last newsletter, we have made arrangements with Shaughnessy Golf Club to be our venue of a Valentine's day luncheon. So treat your spouse, girl friend, partner, whatever, to a lovely lunch in a very attractive setting.

Some particulars. There will be a cash bar for your favorite pre-lunch libation including glasses of wine to accompany your lunch. Visa is the only credit card accepted. The bar opens at noon and we will sit for lunch at 12:30pm. During dessert and coffee, we have arranged for the talented Amy Stephen to entertain us, singing and playing the keltic harp to appropriate Valentine's Day music. All this for \$45.00 per person!

Please register in advance on the attached form. Please note there will be no refunds after February 7th.

### Probus Club Vancouver 2007 Meeting dates

Tuesday at 9:30 am\*\*

**January 10th \*\***, February 13th, March 13th, April 10th, May 8th, June 12th, July 10th, August 14th, September 11th, October 9th, November 13th, December 11th.

**\*\* January Meeting is on a Wednesday at Point Grey Golf and Country Club starting at 9:30am**

number of years in Alberta and finally Vancouver when he became VP of Food Operations. He enjoys golf, reading and traveling and has served as a Director of the Point Grey Golf and Country Club.

**1999- Roy Williams** - Roy was born in Winnipeg and went on to the U of Manitoba where he obtained a B. Comm. (Honours). He was a member of the 1952 Canadian Olympic Basketball Team and served as a Director of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. He is a Chartered Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Planner, and is in his 57th year in association with Great West Life. He is a Past President of both the Winnipeg and Edmonton Life Managers Associations. His retirement focus is golf, travel, photography and computers and Roy continues as the Editor-in-Chief of our Probus Newsletter.

**2000 - John Hopkins** - John was born in Saskatoon and attended Balfour Technical School in Regina. He joined the Woodwards organization and while working, completed courses in electrical engineering. He spent 41 years with Woodwards in Vancouver and Edmonton involved with the planning, development and construction of stores and shopping centres. In retirement, John enjoys golf, bridge, and travel.

**2001 - Norm Weitzel** - Norm was born in Regina and went to Kelvin High School in Winnipeg (where he was awarded the trophy as top athlete). On graduating with a BA from United College he became an advertising executive with the Southam Newspaper chain and served as Director of Advertising in Winnipeg, Edmonton and then Vancouver with the Sun and the Province. He served a term as President of the Canadian Advertising Executives Association. Norm is a sports trivia buff and is also interested in travel, rollerblading, cycling, cross country skiing and gardening.

**2002 - Don Farquhar** - Don was born in Edmonton and obtained his MD at UBC in 1958. He holds a certificate of Family Practice of Canada and is a fellow of that college. He also earned a certificate in BC Studies through SFU. Don is past President of Vancouver Medical and Saltaire Society and is still active in Probus, organizing the Princess Louisa Inlet Boat Tour and Deputy Secretary of the club. In retirement Don enjoys travel and is a so-so tennis player.

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**VALENTINE'S DAY LUNCHEON  
SHAUGHNESSY GOLF CLUB  
REGISTRATION FORM**



February 14th, 2007 - 12:00 Noon

Cost \$45.00 per person

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost @ \$45.00 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward to: Vancouver Probus Club, #252 - 2025 West 42nd Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6M 2B5

*No refunds after February 7th, 2007*

2003 - Tom McCusker - Tom was born in Vancouver and attended Alameda High School in California and Prince of Wales in Vancouver. He received a B.Sc. from UBC and his DDS from the University of Toronto. During his career he served as President, Medical Services Association; President, BC Arthritis Society; Member, Vancouver Foundation Medical Advisory Board; Chairman, Director, BC Life Insurance Co and Dental Director Seaboard Life Insurance. Tom enjoys golf, tennis, travel, fishing, financial affairs and gardening.

2004 - Gordon Thom - Gordon was born in Maple Creek, Sask. and graduated from Picture Butte (Alberta) High School. He obtained his B.Comm. at UBC and an MBA from the U of Maryland. He moved on to BCIT where he became Vice-Principal Continuing Education and then President 1974 to 1985. He was designated President Emeritus from BCIT on his retirement. During his career Gordon served as President, Association of Canadian Community Colleges; Vice-President Vancouver Board of Trade; and was elected Senator by Convocation to the UBC Senate. In Probus he is Historian and Archivist and participates in the Rotarians' Investment Club and Rotary Bridge group. Gordon enjoys his summers on Bowen Island.

2005 - Denis Creighton - Denis was born in Toronto moving to Vancouver at an early age where he attended Lord Byng and University Hill High School. He went on to UBC where he obtained his BA and LLB degrees and then spent 39 years with Campney & Murphy in the corporate/commercial area. Denis has been a Director and President of the British Properties Homeowners Association, for five years was a member and Chairman of the West Vancouver Board of Variance and, dare I say, also a member of the West Vancouver Police Board for three years. He enjoys golf, gardening and reading.

Wishing each and every one of you a wonderful Christmas and a healthy and happy 2007 and looking forward to seeing you at the Presidents' Luncheon on January 10th.

Jack

**Happy New Year!**

