

PROBUS CANADA'S ZOOM MENTORSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

Once the Pandemic hit us in March, our Canadian PROBUS Clubs meetings were at a standstill. Enter Zoom! Many of us had never even heard the word before. Clubs across Canada have responded unanimously and over half of our 256 Clubs are now involved.

The Zoom Support Program (initiated by PROBUS CANADA Director, Martin Capper, and Cambridge Men's Club Member, Dan Clements) has been very successful. There are 21 Mentors, helping our Clubs across Canada, using Zoom to reach out to their Members for Virtual Meetings. Each of our thirteen Districts was assigned one or two mentors. These people attended the Clubs meetings, acting as Host for at least two or three meetings. Meetings were recorded and could be distributed to absent Members. Some of the Virtual Activities that took place, in addition to regular meetings, were Book Clubs, Trivia Nights, Wine Tasting, Bingo, Knitting Groups. Even a Cooking Class (the member sends out their recipe and while making it, you can have the ingredients on hand, and join in doing your own meal. Some apparently just had a glass of wine and watched the procedure. One Club had their Christmas Party on Zoom dressing in Holiday Attire that consisted of funny hats and sweaters mostly red and green. The special speaker was a Stand-Up Comedian followed by Christmas Trivia and Winners of the Twelve Days of Christmas Wine Survivor Contest being revealed.

It has been wonderful to see how different Clubs serve their members during these particularly challenging and stressful times.

Along with the Zoom Support Program, Clubs have continued to have a monthly newsletter which provides everything from games, puzzles, recipes, and pictures. Also, several Clubs have been using a "Phone Contact Program" where Management Committee members are assigned to contact, on a fairly regular basis, each Member of their Club just to touch base and have a friendly chat to see if any special concerns need to be addressed. This is especially important for members who live alone, and it truly shows that the foundation of PROBUS, namely Fellowship, is being addressed.

We are all looking forward to the day our Meetings get back to normal, but for now our Clubs are staying active and creative and enjoying the new Pandemic programs.