



# The PROBUS Pilot



Probus Club of Western Ottawa – serving the western half of the National Capital Region

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## Creating an age-friendly Ottawa

Seniors make up close to 20 percent of Ottawa's population. With such a large portion of the population being older, it is important to consider what works for older adults in this aging society. Join us to learn about what the Council on Aging of Ottawa is doing to make Ottawa a more age-friendly city through education and advocacy, how they are working with the city to effect change, and how they are shaping the future with older adults.

The Council on Aging has over 180 volunteers working on committees that advocate for change in the areas of health, housing, income security, and transportation, as well as supporting the organization in other ways, such as administration, translation, and fundraising. They are the proud developers of the recently trademarked Smart Aging™ Program, currently comprised of 18 workshops all about later life transitions, which have been

delivered to thousands of Ottawa's seniors. They are also the co-chairs of the City of Ottawa's Older Adult Plan Roundtable for 2026-2030.

Sarah Bercier has a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Clinical Counselling, both with a focus on later life issues. Throughout her career, she has worked in the fields of elder abuse, seniors' housing, care coordination, lower-income seniors, and research dissemination. She has spent the last twenty-five years focused on the transition to retirement and has served as the



**Sarah Bercier**

Executive Director of the Council on Aging of Ottawa since 2015.



**The Merivale Fish Market Restaurant** was the venue for our January luncheon. We had another great turnout with 23 participants. There are more photos on page 4.

The Probus Club of Western Ottawa is part of the international organization of Probus Clubs designed to serve retired and semi-retired, business and professional and like-minded people. The morning begins at 9:45 am with a time for coffee and socialization followed by a guest speaker. Probus Western Ottawa meets at

Kanata Baptist Church  
465 Hazeldean Road

Editorial

## Attendees or contributors

Although it is only February, your Management Committee is thinking about the operation of our club for our new year starting in the fall of 2026. This is an opportunity to bring in new people with new ideas.

This year has been another highly successful one, but behind the scenes, we have not been able to operate on all cylinders. We have had vacancies in certain positions, and other members of the Committee have not had anyone to back them up.

For the first time in many years, we will not be having a Sugar Bush outing. We have not had a secretary to take minutes, and new interest groups have failed to find organizers.

The problem may be the size of our club. With over 200 members, we don't know each other. What we really have are attendees and not participants. In most clubs, members both gain the benefits from and contribute to the club. It's a two-way street.

Socialization and education are important as we age. By volunteering, we do both — we meet new people, and we learn new things.

The immediate challenge is to fill our vacancies. But looking ahead, we need backups in all positions to both share the load and provide for the future. At the June meeting, you will be electing a new slate of individuals to manage your club next year.

If you are interested in helping, we ask that you step forward now and advise a member of the Executive of your interest(s).

If you can make coffee, take a photo, contact a museum, edit a newsletter, organize a nature walk, use a spreadsheet or are willing to learn, then step forward. You will benefit from the experience, and our Club will benefit as well — all for only a few hours per month.

We really do need your help.

Peter van Boeschoten  
[newsletter@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:newsletter@probuswesternottawa.ca)

# Lunch-out coming in February

**Wednesday 25 February**

**Zolas Restaurant**

**2194 Robertson Road**  
**Meet at Noon**



**Z O L A S**  
 RESTAURANT

We are proud to be the first restaurant in the west-end of Ottawa to offer an Italian dining experience with an open concept kitchen. Vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, or dairy-free? Menu [here](#).

Please sign up at our February meeting.

## Travellers Group getting underway

**Meeting set for  
Tuesday 3 February**

After an initial meeting in November, the group is active and thriving, indicating a growing interest with now 34 members.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, 3 Feb. at the Kanata Baptist Church. Use the north door from the parking lot to access classroom A1.

All signed-up members are welcome to attend. Those who cannot attend will receive a summary of the matters discussed.

As a follow-up to the last meeting, the group coordinators have drawn up a survey to further advance activities and goals. All new ideas will be welcomed.

Bearing in mind the need for privacy, there is an email address dedicated for the use of SIG travel club, available to those who signed up

People can also contact the SIG coordinator, Ray Jones.

In future, the coordinators plan to report relevant points from the group meetings in the newsletter and at executive meetings.

## Euchre shifts by one week, now Friday 20 Feb.

**Where:** Bells Corners United Church,  
 3955 Old Richmond Road at Moodie Drive.



**Time:** 12:30 for social time, coffee and snacks:  
 Games begin at 1 p.m.  
 We welcome new members!  
 For Probus members only!  
 Some knowledge of the game is helpful.

For further information, feel free to contact Barbara or David Stafford at [bbole@sympatico.ca](mailto:bbole@sympatico.ca)

## Let's keep this going



**Bring a book ...**

**... Take a book**



Check out our swap table at every meeting

# Naturalist's talk drew an appreciative audience



In January, Michael Runtz gave an informative and often humorous presentation about his career and travels as a naturalist in Algonquin Park and in many other woodlands throughout Canada. While he focused on his experience with moose, beavers and bears, there was also discussion on birds, foxes and other wildlife. In addition to some hair-raising encounters with some of the larger species, he also mentioned black flies and mosquitoes. This was a highly entertaining presentation, which prompted many questions and comments. There is lots more information on his [Facebook Page](#).



## Looking ahead at our future speakers

**March 19, 2026:** Dr. Ian Lee: "Should Canadians thank Donald Trump for exposing our 50 year economic decline?"

**April 14, 2026:** Dr. Andrea McCrady, the Dominion Carillonneur: "The voices behind the 'Voice of the Nation' Tales of Canada's Dominion Carillonneurs"

**May 12, 2026:** Dr Paul Villeneuve: "Wildfire smoke and our health: Risks, research, and what we can do"

## Some Special Interest Group mailing lists frozen

The table at right shows SIG status as of January 13.

Membership in the following SIGs is frozen pending their identification of a Prime Contact: bird-watching, cycling, hiking, pickleball, theatre-nights, and walking.

The Bridge group has disbanded due to waning interest.

Restarting a frozen SIG, or starting a new one, will require a volunteer willing to respond to queries about the group. To volunteer, please email Ray Jones at [sig-groups-coordinator@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:sig-groups-coordinator@probuswesternottawa.ca)

Any SIG that does not identify a prime contact by April 15 will have its email group list removed.

As a PWO member, you may join or leave one of the groups below by either

- using the signup sheet, available at meetings, or by
- sending an email at any time to: [sig-\[group\]-contact@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:sig-[group]-contact@probuswesternottawa.ca)

PWO SIG Status		January 13, 2026
SIG Name	# Signups	Prime Contact(s)
Art-Appreciation	4	June Stewart
Billiards	1	Ellen Clare O'Gallagher
Book-Club	7	Anne Stenkowski
Breakfast-Club	26	David Lee
Games-Night	6	Nicola Jarvis
Knitting	2	Elaine Bradley
Travellers-Club	34	Suma Abraham / Tom Wileman
<b>Total Signups</b>	<b>80</b>	Red text indicates a change from December

and substituting [group] with the appropriate SIG name: for example, [sig-games-night-contact@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:sig-games-night-contact@probuswesternottawa.ca). Put "Join", "Leave" or "Info request" in the subject field:

## Welcome New Members

Welcome to the new members who joined our Probus Club in January:

**Guy Mondor**  
**Ann and Neil Piche**



More photos from our January lunch out at the Merivale Fish Market

## Make sure to visit our website

Our club has a website to keep you up to date on speakers, activities, photos, our organization, and other information. It can be found at: [www.probuswesternottawa.ca](http://www.probuswesternottawa.ca)

Make sure that you bookmark this location so that you don't have to keep typing it in. The left-side menu lets you go to any of the featured pages.

The website has a link page, not only to Probus Canada and other local Probus Clubs but also to local seniors centres and other seniors organizations.

Do check it out and let us know if we should add anything.

### After the meeting

### We go out for lunch

Join us for lunch after our February meeting to socialize and discuss the presentation.

This month we will be at:

**Busters Bar & Grill**  
420 Hazeldean Road

Often our speaker is able to join us. At the beginning of the meeting, we ask for a show of hands of those planning to attend so that we can advise the restaurant.

**Probus Canada**  
Across Canada there are  
**254 clubs and**  
**36,560 members**



Free Coffee/Tea  
Service now offered  
from 9:45 -10:20 am  
(to facilitate clean-up)

Membership inquiries may be sent to  
[membership@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:membership@probuswesternottawa.ca)



Keep an eye out for colourful, tiny stars on membership badges, both permanent and temporary. These indicate that the wearer became a brand-new member of Probus since September '25. Give these members a warm welcome!

### Chuckle Corner



An elderly woman lived on a small farm in Canada, just yards away from the North Dakota border. Their land had been the subject of a minor dispute between the United States and Canada for years. The now widowed woman lived on the farm with her son and three grandchildren.

One day her son came into her room holding a letter.

"I just got some news, Mom," he said. "The government has come to an agreement with the people in North Dakota. They've decided that our land is really part of the United States. We have the right to approve or disapprove of the agreement. What do you think?"

"What do I think?" his mother said.

"Sign it! Call them right now and tell them we accept! I don't think I could stand another one of those Canadian winters!"

Our Website

[www.probuswesternottawa.ca](http://www.probuswesternottawa.ca)

Newsletter comments or submissions

[newsletter@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:newsletter@probuswesternottawa.ca)