

Glacier Probus Club – Monthly Gathering Thursday, February 1, 2024

President Lorne Meyer called the meeting to order just before 2:00 as the guest speaker was under a time constraint. Members were happy to “groan” at the one-liners Lorne shared.

There were 88 members in attendance – a “full” house.

Michele Morton, Jennifer Harrison, Heather Crites and Rose Vasile came attired appropriately to promote the English Tea Party being held at the D’Esterre Centre on Saturday, February 10 at 2:00. Tickets were on sale at the meeting or can be ordered online under “Special Events” on the Probus website. Tea, coffee, sandwiches, scones, sweets will be on offer.

Club members will shortly receive an email outlining plans for a Bowling Event organized by Katie Hubberstay. Mark Wednesday, February 28 on your calendar.

Past President Alan Brown outlined the positions coming open in June on the Management Committee. Most of the current positions will start in June 2024 but we do have a current opening for a Special Events Director. If you are interested in serving as Vice President, Facilities Director (organizes refreshments for monthly gatherings) or a Member at Large (2 openings) please let Alan know. He can be contacted at: browns.comox@gmail.com

Ann Zambilowicz introduced this month’s speaker Dr. Jonathan Reggler. Dr. Reggler is a family physician in Courtenay. He studied medicine at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, graduating in 1984 and then spent eight years in the British Army prior to entering general practice in southern England. He emigrated to Canada in 2003.

He combines hospital with office practice. His office practice is deliberately skewed towards the care of seniors, and he thus also provides a lot of palliative care. He became involved in the provision of MAID (Medical Assistance in Dying) in 2016 when the practice was legalized in Canada. He is Co-Chair of the Clinicians Advisory Council of Dying with Dignity Canada.

Dr. Reggler shared some statistics and definitions and indicated that MAID numbers have been steadily rising with Vancouver Island at the top of the chart in BC. In the third quarter of 2023 MAID deaths were 10% of the total deaths that occurred.

Any family physician can provide MAID but it has become somewhat of a specialty with just a few physicians providing MAID in the Comox Valley. Doctors can conscientiously object to MAID but must provide a referral to a doctor who will provide the service.

Dr. Reggler spoke to the issue of advanced directives for MAID based on a fear of loss of capacity caused by dementia. He indicated that physicians work from a “ten minutes to midnight” mind set that involves working closely with patients and alerting them to the risk of loss of capacity to request MAID. In Canada patients can sign a waiver of final consent that covers the situation where capacity is lost between the initial request for MAID and the date set for completion.

He also outlined how physicians work with patients, their families and loved ones to plan the event – who is present, should children be included, where it will happen (often at home), what does the patient want – music, celebration, privacy.

Dr, Reggler's talk revealed how dedicated he is to ending patients suffering and providing compassionate end of life care.

There were many thoughtful and insightful questions from the audience.

President Lorne Meyer thanked members for participating in the recent technology survey. The winners of the \$25.00 gift cards were Phil Morck and Ann Isbister.

Dave Pendlebury (acting for Registration Director Donald Bourne) conducted the monthly gift card draws. This months cards from Hot Chocolates were won by: Barbara Robson, Diane Snowadski, Bill Jorgensen and Al Sabey.