



The Beacon



Newsletter of the Brighton PROBUS Club

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Hello all, I hope that you are all well and coping with the shutdown we are experiencing. My wife Allalie and I are hunkered down and missing family and friends as we all are, hoping this thing is soon to be over. It seems like the vaccine's arrival has given a boost to spirits and we can only hope the pace of delivery picks up and our place in line comes sooner rather than later.

I want to thank all of you who have contributed to this edition of Beacon. At a time when everything is shut down we rely on member contributions to be able to publish the newsletter.

Without your input there would be no content. Please keep it up as we look for more of your help in future editions.

Your management committee will meet as soon as we are able and will review what the future looks like with respect to regulations, the status of the vaccine rollout and what our common sense tells us. We are looking at zoom as an option. Some clubs have tried it with varying degrees of success. It is a difficult tool to use for large interactive meetings.

The government tells us that all Canadians who want the vaccine will get it by the end of September. We can only hope we are able to meet as normal sometime a bit later this year.

Who would have thought a year ago that the primary fashion accessory of 2020/2021 would be a face mask. I am wondering how long it is socially acceptable for me to continue to wear my very comfortable Christmas masks.

So, I would ask you to keep an eye for anything you may want to contribute to the Beacon. Please send it to myself or Joan Selwood.

Please stay safe,

Ian

P.S. What do you call it when a snowman throws a temper tantrum..... a meltdown.





January

Bob Brearly	8 th
Mary Waddell	14 th
Brian Sutton	16 th
Ian Gray	19 th
Ann Sutton	19 th
Robert Cowbrough	23 rd
Derek Madder	25 th
Ian Stewart	27 th

February

Edith McPherson	3 rd
Margaret McVean	6 th
Clay Samis	8 th
Louise McGilly	9 th
Davina Rice-Jones	12 th
Marilyn Cowbrough	14 th
Tony Soulis	14 th
Lois Wyndham	14 th
Joan Madder	20 th
Barbara Moniz	21 st
Judy Caswell	24 th
Anne Palmer	25 th

A true story from Sheila Waters' workdays:

When I first went to work in Program Management at CAE Electronics in Montreal I was assigned two contracts delivering Magnetic Anomaly Detector-heads (MAD) Systems, to Grumman Aerospace and Sikorsky. In a company like CAE that shipped multi million dollar simulators all over the world, it was quite a task getting any single department in the

company to give any attention to smaller projects. Deadlines were being missed and customers getting angry as they waited for deliveries. Sikorsky, decided to send one of their own engineers to work with us to try and speed things up.

A few days after he arrived I got a call from the board of directors asking how their guy was doing. I answered that things were going well and told them their guy was a "real brick", I continued talking but realized the line had gone awfully quiet. I asked if they were still there, a voice then said "What did you call our guy?" My turn to go quiet, they thought I had called their guy a p****. I hadn't realized "brick" was very much an English expression! From then on all the mail I received from Sikorsky was signed, from your brick so and so!

... and a joke ...

Max receives a text message on his phone -

Morning Max, Richard next door. I've been riddled with guilt for a few months and have been trying to get up the courage to tell you face-to-face. When you're not around I've been sharing your wife, day and night, probably much more than you. I haven't been getting it at home recently. I know that's no excuse. The temptation was just too great. I can't live with the guilt and I hope you'll accept my sincere apology and forgive me. Please suggest a fee for usage and I'll pay you. Richard.

Max, feeling enraged and betrayed, grabbed his gun, went next door, and shot Richard dead. He returned home, shot his wife, poured himself a stiff drink and sat down on the sofa. Max then looked at his phone and discovered a second text...

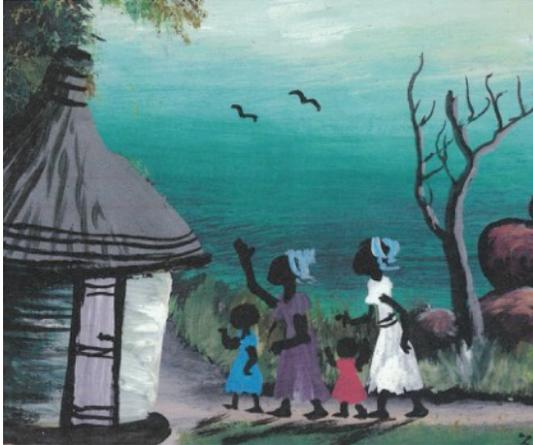
Hi, Max. Richard here again. Sorry about the typo on my last text. I assume you figured it out and noticed that the darned spell-check had changed "wi-fi" to "wife." Technology, huh? It'll be the death of us all.

Submitted by Sheila Waters



An African Journey - 1st April, 1988 - Good Friday

Leaving the city of Harare behind, headed for the Easter weekend to the Eastern Highlands in Zimbabwe, a magnificent region bordering Mozambique. En route we came across a number of “police checks”, not uncommon in this country and we have become aware of how one has to conduct oneself on such occasions - be courteous and cooperative. Having in our possession at that time a government vehicle showing licence plates indicating we were part of an International Technical Training group (under the auspices of CIDA*, the Canadian International Development Agency) our journey so far was smooth and worry free.



Nearing the hotel we travelled down a well maintained, very quiet and isolated road that meandered through small African villages where nearly every family member rushes down to the roadside to wave - delightful, and where the African landscape is simply beautiful. The sight of the rondavels (the African home) adds another dimension to our surroundings. Up ahead we see what appears to be another police check, but this time no police vehicle in sight but an army vehicle with one army personnel waving us to stop. On this occasion the soldier was a lone lad of no more than 18 years of age, in complete combat uniform, cradling a Kalashnikov rifle, a bandolier or bullets across his chest looking very nervous and with a wild look in his eyes! My husband got out of the car as was commanded, ready to answer any questions as necessary. The questioning went like this:

“Where are you going - where do you come from - what is your name - what is your job - do you have guns - do you have bombs - do you have dynamite(!).” He seemed somewhat satisfied that we were carrying no ammunition or rockets but he wanted to make sure and demanded to see what was in the boot (trunk) of the car. Two sets of golf clubs - he thought we were concealing weapons in the bags, at which point the clubs were removed from the bags and a demonstration of “teeing off” was performed for him. Again, satisfied that we were not working with the rebels over in Mozambique he motioned for my husband to get back in the car - wishing us to “have a good day” - seriously! All during this “check” we had an audience of about 20 little children who appeared from out of nowhere watching all of the action and enjoying every minute of it.

On reaching the hotel a half hour later we headed straight for the bar to calm down from the very nerve wracking incident we had just experienced. When recounting our story back in Harare some days later we discovered that in the previous year four young English tourists were ambushed and sadly killed on that same isolated road - not what we wanted to hear.

Then there was the time

Submitted by Pat Ralston

*The Ralstons spent two years in Zimbabwe with CIDA

Elder Banking ... PRICELESS!!

Shown below is an actual letter that was sent to a bank by an 86 year old woman. The bank manager thought it amusing enough to have published in the New York Times.

Dear Sir:

I am writing to thank you for bouncing my check with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his presenting the check and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it. I refer, of course, to the automatic deposit of my entire pension, an arrangement which, IU admit, has been in place for only eight years.

You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account \$30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank. My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally answer your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity which your bank has become. From now on, I, like you, choose to deal with a flesh-and-blood person. My mortgage and loan repayments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank, by check, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate.

Be aware that it is an OFFENSE under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope. Please find attached an Application Contract which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Notary Public, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course, at MY convenience, I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he/she must quote in dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service.

As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Let me level the playing field even further.

When you call me, press buttons as follows:

Immediately after dialing press the star (*) button for English.

#1. To make an appointment to see me.

#2. To query a missing payment.

#3. To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.

#4. To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.

#5. To transfer the call to my bathroom in case I am attending to nature.

#6. To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home.

#7. To leave a message on my computer, a password to access my computer is required. Password will be communicated to you at a later date to that Authorized Contact mentioned earlier.

#8. To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1 through 10.

#9. To make a general complaint or enquiry. The contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service.

#10. This is a second reminder to press * for English. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call. Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement.

May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous New Year?

Your Humble Client ... and remember ...

Don't make old people mad. We don't like being old in the first place, so it doesn't take much to piss us off.

Submitted by Jeff Brace



Some thoughts for the day ...

Never sing in the shower! Singing leads to dancing, dancing leads to slipping, and slipping leads to paramedics seeing you naked. So remember...Don't sing!

My wife asked me to take her to one of those restaurants where they make the food right in front of you. So I took her to Subway and that's how the fight started.

During the middle ages they celebrated the end of the plague with wine and orgies. Does anyone know if there is anything planned when this one ends?

I see people about my age mountain climbing; I feel good getting my leg through my underwear without losing my balance.

We can all agree that in 2015 not a single person got the answer correct to, 'Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?'

So if a cow doesn't produce milk, is it a milk dud or an udder failure?

If you can't think of a word say "I forgot the English word for it." That way people will think you're bilingual instead of an idiot.

I'm at a place in my life where errands are starting to count as going out.

Cronacoaster noun: the ups and downs of a pandemic. One day you're loving your bubble, doing work outs, baking banana bread and going for long walks and the next you're crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don't even like.

I'm at that age where my mind still thinks I'm 29, my humour suggests I'm 45, while my body mostly keeps asking if I'm sure I'm not dead yet.

Don't be worried about your smartphone or TV spying on you. Your vacuum cleaner has been collecting dirt on you for years.

I'm getting tired of being part of a major historical event.

I don't always go the extra mile, but when I do it's because I missed my exit.

You don't realize how old you are until you sit on the floor and then try to get back up.

Having plans sounds like a good idea until you have to put on clothes and leave the house.

It's weird being the same age as old people.

When I was a kid I wanted to be older - this is not what I expected.

Chocolate is God's way of telling us he likes us a little bit chubby.

It's probably my age that tricks people into thinking I'm an adult.

Marriage Counsellor - our wife says you never buy her flowers. Is that true? Him - to be honest I never knew she sold flowers

I don't think the therapist is supposed to say "wow" that many times in your first session but here we are ...

If 2020 was math word problem: If you're going down a river at 2mph and your canoe loses a wheel, how much pancake mix would you need to re-shingle your roof?

How many of us have looked around our family reunion and thought "Well aren't we just two clowns short of a circus?"

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Submitted by Colin Wright and Joyce Hubel



A wife treats her husband by taking him to a strip club for his birthday. At the club, the doorman says, "Hi Jim, how are you?"

The wife asks, "How does he know you?" Jim says, "Oh dear, I play football with him."

Inside the bartender says, "The usual, Jim?" Jim says to wife, "Before you say anything, he's on the darts team."

Next a stripper says, "Hi Jim! Do you crave the special again?"

The wife storms out dragging Jim with her and jumps into a taxi. The taxi driver says, "Hey Jimmy boy! You picked up an ugly one this time ..."

Jim's funeral is on Sunday!!!

Submitted by Barb Moniz

Serious Lock Down Advice

Everyone, please be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home! I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my Pepsi, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine because she puts a different spin on everything! Certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant! In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic - told me to just suck it up! But the fan was very optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion, but the front door said I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip! You can just about guess what the curtains told me - they told me to "pull myself together!" We will survive.

Submitted by Bonnie Minns

Whilst being a stay at home mom I volunteered to look after the kids in the elementary school yard.

One lunch time I noticed a young lad hanging around the door. I went up to six year old David and asked him if he had had an accident. He answered " No, I ain't had no accident." I said "Your pants look awful wet to me."

He replied "That ain't no accident, I pissed myself".

No answer to that!

A true story from Sheila Waters

Inner Peace - This is amazing ...

If you can start the day without caffeine, If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains, If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles, If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it, If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time, If you can take criticism and blame without resentment, If you can conquer tension without medical help, If you can relax without alcohol, If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

Then you are probably the family dog

And you thought I was going to get all spiritual! Handle every stressful situation like a dog. If you can't eat it or play with it, Piss on it and walk away!

Submitted by Sandy Fawcett-Kovacs

