



# NEWSLETTER – November 2021

## WOMEN’S PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

Next meeting: **Tuesday, December 7, 2021**

9:45 a.m. - You are welcome to log on to Zoom.

10:00 a.m. - Meeting online via Zoom. Please be on time.

A reminder of the meeting will be sent last week of November  
and the link to the Zoom meeting will be sent December 5, 2021.

If you wish to join by telephone: please call Barbara Wynn for the number and ID #.

**Speaker:** Dr. Sebastián Marino, speaking to us from Jesus College,  
University of Cambridge, UK

**Topic:** Studying Exocomets from the Driest Place on Earth:  
the Atacameno Highlands, Chile

**Description:** The discovery of thousands of exoplanets over the last decade has revealed that planetary systems are ubiquitous and incredibly diverse. This has dramatically transformed our picture of the Universe and opened the possibility of life elsewhere. However, a comprehensive view of planetary systems can only be achieved by studying all their constituents, and that includes their cometary component. This talk will provide an overview of the latest advances in *Exocometary science*, and how ALMA (the largest astronomical observatory in existence) allows astronomers to image belts of exocomets around nearby stars, access their composition, and hunt for hidden planets.

Dr Sebastian Marino graduated from the Universidad de Chile with a BS and MS in Astronomy in 2015. He then moved to Cambridge for his PhD at the Institute of Astronomy. After completing his PhD in 2018, he moved to work as a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Heidelberg, Germany. After two years in Heidelberg, he joined Jesus College as a Junior Research Fellow in 2020. His publication record is outstanding, with more than 50 peer-reviewed papers since 2015. His current research topic is exoplanetary systems, focusing on their cometary components that he studies using the ALMA observatory and numerical simulations to constrain the formation, evolution, and architecture of planetary systems. After the launch of the new *James Webb Space Telescope* (NASA's successor to Hubble) in December this year, Sebastian will be one of the first astronomers to use it to search for planets embedded in cometary belts that he predicted based on ALMA images.



***Dr. Marino is fascinating and explains his topic as if he is explaining it to his grandmother.***

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PROBUS International:

<https://probusglobal.org>

## A Message from President Leslie Chang

Dear Members:

I find November a month for reflection on the year's events before the busy Christmas season overtakes me. Because of the pandemic, last year was an anomaly with feelings of sadness from isolation and uncertainty. The importance of our homes as places of refuge and staying connected with family and friends for mutual support and encouragement became a priority. Perhaps these are the roots of the growing women's movement; drawing strength from our connections to allow our talents to blossom and be recognized!



Our last two speakers were inspiring examples: Julie Veloo, Founder of the Veloo Foundation in Mongolia, had a vision to make a positive difference in the region; and Martha Piper (OC, OBC), co-author of the book, "Nerve: Lessons on Leadership from Two Women Who Went First," was the first woman to serve as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia (UBC). These women broke the glass ceiling through their initiative, leadership, strength, resilience, and perseverance.

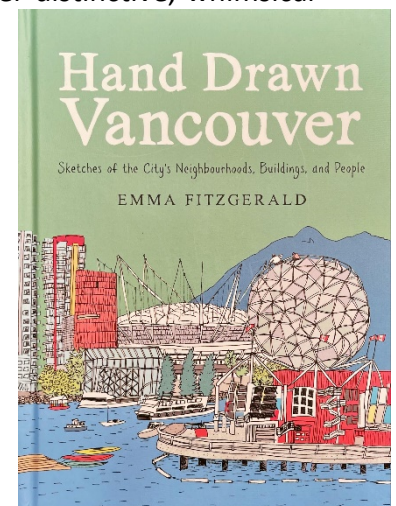
Despite recent gains in gender equality, there is still much work to do, and I hope the next generation of women will continue to follow our lead.

On another note, I was delighted to recently receive a portrait of my house as a gift from my daughter, Lauren. The portrait was sketched by her good friend and artist, Emma FitzGerald, whom she met at a Queen's University program in England many years ago. Also a trained architect, Emma has published a number of books which all feature her distinctive, whimsical sketches of city landmarks and neighbourhoods. I currently have "Hand Drawn Halifax" and "Hand Drawn Vancouver" in my bookshelf and thought I would share a copy of my house sketch and the cover of her Vancouver book with you to enjoy.

I am eagerly looking forward to in-person meetings again that will hopefully start the first Tuesday in February. For now, stay safe and stay healthy.

Sincerely yours,

Leslie Chang



**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

**Help Wanted:** a familiar phrase these days!

**Activities:**

Would you be willing to organize an outing to one of Vancouver's museums or galleries?

As the organizer, all you need to do is:

Choose a place to visit.

Establish the date and time, and the maximum number of people.

Give this information with an address, and any other pertinent details, to our Webmaster, Estelle Jacobson, by phone 604 259 1091 or email [probuswomen.news\(at\)shaw.ca](mailto:probuswomen.news(at)shaw.ca).

She will do the publicity with emails and in the Newsletter.

Registration could be done on our new, easy-to-use website [www.probuswomen.com](http://www.probuswomen.com).

Anyone, Everyone, Somebody could do this – hopefully not Nobody.

**Newsletter Contributions:**

Please help make your Newsletter more interesting and personal by submitting a poem or a story about a favourite destination. Perhaps you have just read a wonderful book which should be shared. Jokes are always good and also brainteasers.

**Last but Not Least:**

A poignant Zoom “chat” was written at our last meeting – “Wonderful talk. Which of our members is now inspired to have the ‘Nerve’ to become our Vice President?”

**Update Your Contact Information:** Log on to the new website:

<https://probuswomen.com>.

**Newsletter:** Material to be included in the next Newsletter should be submitted to Editor Jane LePorte by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Correspondence:** If you know a Women's PROBUS member who should receive a get-well or condolence card, please let Barbara Wynn know.

**Management Committee Contacts:** Please see the last page of this Newsletter for confidential telephone or email contacts when you need or want to send information.



*Lovely fall colours*

### **BC Towns Quiz**

A few more – answers on page 6

1. Ringer's Cove
2. Coloured Water
3. Automotive Shaft Circles
4. Stretched Shore
5. Royal Twin Boys
6. And
7. Kootenay Fortress
8. Leaving Cove
9. This Ford Will Rust
10. A Lot of Talking
11. Say Anything Here
12. A Sense of Purpose



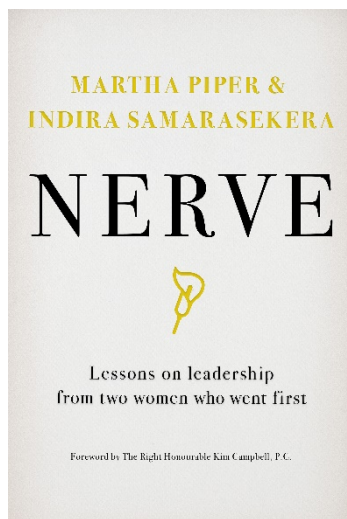
If you know numbers 10 & 11, you know BC very well.

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### **NOVEMBER SPEAKER**

Martha C. Piper, O.C., O.B.C., Ph.D.

*Lessons on Leadership*



On November 2, Dr. Martha Cook Piper, President Emeritus, University of British Columbia, shared stories from the book '*NERVE: Lessons on leadership from two women who went first*', which she co-authored with Dr. Indira Samarasekera, O.C., Ph.D., President Emeritus, University of Alberta.

This was such an interesting session. Past President, Barbara Wynn, interviewed Martha, and it was evident that Barbara had carefully read the book.

As most of you probably know, Martha was President of UBC for two terms and Dr. Indira Samarasekera became her Vice President and then became President of The University of Alberta. Both also became Vice-Chancellors of their universities.

Neither woman expected initially to be in a leadership role. Martha began her career as a physiotherapist and Indira as an engineer. Both were married young and with their husbands pursued graduate degrees. One couple left the United States for Canada and the other left Sri

Lanka first for the United States, then to Canada. Both combined careers with being mothers. Martha's marriage has lasted for over 50 years, and Indira's did not last but ended in an amicable divorce.

Martha told us that she is addicted to the artist, Georgia O'Keefe, and has read all the biographies. This was a woman who wasn't easy to know but led her life definitely and painted what she wanted to paint where she wanted to paint; one of the few well-known women artists of her time. The book begins with this quote from Georgia, *"It takes more than talent. It takes a kind of nerve... A kind of nerve, and a lot of hard, hard work."*

She said women are generally hard workers but often lack nerve, the decision to act, to step out, to do something a little differently and to balk the trends. Women are often afraid to draw upon their nerve.

Martha talked about serendipity and how good things can happen if you allow yourself to recognize opportunities as they present themselves. In her case she had completed her PHD in epidemiology and biostatistics and was excited about the possibility of working in public health and applying mathematical modeling to determine the risk factors, incidence and prevalence of certain diseases. At this point she was asked to be the new director of the School of Physical and Occupational Therapy at McGill, although she thought she was finished with physiotherapy. She thought about it and decided to do it, and this changed the course of her entire career. It was serendipitous and required nerve as she had never been an academic.

She talked about advocates versus mentors. An advocate works behind the scenes to sponsor you. She told how when she was at the University of Alberta a very respected professor came to give a lecture and told her how great Indira was. After Martha had spent three years at UBC, Indira applied for a position and although Martha had never met her, she did an interview because of what that professor had said.

She did admit she wasn't particularly gracious when Indira left to become President of Alberta. She gave her excellent references, but she had wanted her to stay at UBC and eventually become President. It took time and intent to put the relationship back together again.

She talked about putting a team together. At UBC she said that some of her choices were not great and others amazing. You have to look very carefully at what you need in a team; you need chemistry. They can't just have their own interests at heart. You want ambitious people, but you need people who can work together.

She said women look at things a little differently. She got everyone Harry Potter wands as she said they needed to create some magic. Needless to say, some thought she was crazy but sometimes, when things were going badly, she would ask them to take out their wands. It created a bond of working together. You need to inspire people to be the best they can be.

She talked about the line between professional relationships and friendships. Women tend to have difficulty with this. We want colleagues to like us, to be friends but they aren't. You need support networks outside your work-family, friends where you can get personal gratification.

When Barbara asked her about having to deal with controversy, protests, and even death threats when she was president, Martha noted that there are also wonderful things. Dissent is what the university community is all about. She learned two things: one was how important it was to have a personal support system who loved her unconditionally and, secondly, she thought everything would be different, consensus would be reached and everyone would be happy, but that just isn't going to be true.

She told us how nervous she was when the Queen came to UBC and then found herself sitting beside her at a luncheon downtown. The Queen was lovely and even put her lipstick on at the table before she had to speak, which Martha found quite liberating.

How did it feel when she finished her term at UBC? Did she have a sense of loss? It helped going to Oxford for a year right away, but she did find it hard going from being a title to a person. You have to slow down and figure out what you want to do. For instance, she quilts now.

When asked what advice she would give young women, she said she would tell them they can lead, don't be a victim, and believe in yourself as we need women leaders.

Meredyth Kezar wrote this excellent summary and made the following comments:

*"I really enjoyed this session and bought the book as it looks specifically at leadership for women and reminded me of times in my own life that had been serendipitous. When I was a consultant at the Vancouver School Board, I seemed to read a lot of books on leadership but none of them really looked at women as leaders and I wish I had been able to read this book then. I love the format of the book, which is really a dialogue between her and Indira, and the introduction by Kim Campbell was thought-provoking as well. What a super session this was! Here is to more women leaders!"*

President Leslie Chang eloquently thanked Dr. Piper and gave kudos to Past President Barbara Wynn for her interviewing style.

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**Answers to BC Towns Quiz:** 1. Horseshoe Bay 2. Black Creek 3. Kamloops 4. Long Beach  
5. Prince George 6. Prince Rupert 7. Castlegar 8. Departure Bay 9. Fort Steele 10. Yahk  
11. Sayward 12. Mission