



September 2023
NEWSLETTER

WOMEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

Next meeting: **Tuesday, Oct. 3rd, 2023**

9:30 a.m. - Arrival

Point Grey Golf Club

10:00 a.m. - Meeting

3350 S.W. Marine Drive

*We acknowledge that we meet on the unceded lands of the
Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations*

Masks are optional

OCTOBER SPEAKER

Speaker:
Larry Barzelai

Topic:
**"Why Climate Change is
the most important
issue we have to face"**



Dr. Barzelai will present the case for 'Why Climate Change is the most important issue we have to face.' He will show how the world is changing dramatically and that this change is accelerating. He will try to show that we all need to play a part in trying to slow this change. This information will be presented through a health focus.

Dr. Barzelai has been in family practice in Vancouver for 42 years, having a rounded family practice with a special interest in geriatrics. Barzelai has particularly enjoyed teaching medical students and residents. He is now focusing mainly on the elderly who live in long-term care facilities. "I am fortunate to have been working at the best job in the world. I wish I could convince the next generation of its value."

He is chair of the BC branch of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment. This group examines the intersection between the environment and health. It promotes self-education, education of the medical establishment, and also of the wider community. It engages with political leaders of all stripes and is often featured in the press. The association sponsors an annual medical conference entitled The Climate Emergency.

Women's PROBUS of Vancouver:

Contact us:

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JULY SPEAKER

Ashley Gowanlock

“My Opportunities Just Dress Up As Obstacles.”

It always seems as if September is the start of a new year and what a great start Vancouver Women's Probus had with Ashley Gowanlock. Ashley is a three-time Paralympian who competed in dressage in the Beijing, London, and Rio Paralympic Games. She began riding at the age of two after being diagnosed with cerebral palsy, in order to provide physiotherapy and help with her balance. She was soon hooked and by 2006 had made her debut on the Canadian Para dressage team in Langley, B.C.

Ashley is vivacious and outgoing and cheerfully referred to herself as a “wobbly”. Her parents always encouraged her

to participate and try everything. She had an active younger brother and her mother ran a daycare and made sure she could participate in every activity in some way. She wasn't even aware she was 'different' until a boy told her he didn't need help from a cripple. She has always been the kind of person who will try anything and the slide show she presented certainly proved that. She is fearless!

If like me you are not familiar with what a dressage competition is, successful training at the various levels is demonstrated through the performance of “tests”, prescribed series of movements ridden within a standard arena.

She was asked how she can give commands without using her legs and she told us that whips and voice commands become her legs. At the Paralympic Games one competes against people with similar disabilities. One has to adapt to any weather conditions or other interruptions.

She was asked which are the most competitive countries and traditionally this has been England. As a result, she did a lot of training and living in England. Also, more competitions are in Europe and travel is expensive. This caliber of horses is expensive as is travel. It is expensive having to fly horses for instance. She struggled financially as she is not wealthy and funding is not easy to obtain.

She retired after the Rio Paralympics as just too political. She also told us that she had a fall in Rio and later found out that there was a problem with the field, but that was

not admitted publicly. Also, it isn't an equal playing field as such an expensive sport. And just living with a wheel chair is expensive. Better funding is required.

After this she was kind of turned off the sport but then was asked to coach at the facility where she did her early training in Langley so she does this now in the summer and loves the sport again. During the year she works with students with disabilities in a school setting.

As well as speaking to school groups etc., Ashley is very involved in the program Right to Play. This program was begun by a Norwegian Olympic athlete, Joann Olav Kloss, after a visit to Eritrea, as a way of teaching through play. The goal is to help children to stay in school and graduate, resist exploitation and overcome prejudice, keep themselves safe from disease, and heal from the harsh realities of war and abuse.

<https://righttoplay.ca/en-ca/>

Several times Ashley told us that she was fortunate to have proactive mother, father, & siblings, and to be able to go through school & community with the same group of people who protected her.

Ashley was asked what her future goals are and she told us she loves to travel and she loves to rattle perceptions of disabilities. She would like to do disability counselling. She certainly is an excellent person to inspire others. She feels strongly that you can't let life float by. And Ashley has an incredible zest for life and we were honoured to have her present.

“You have to wake up everyday and make the decision that today you will choose joy no matter what obstacles you may face. And when in doubt it's always a good idea to laugh at yourself.”

Ashley is the author and attendees were able to purchase her book, My Opportunities Just Dress Up As Obstacles. It is available as well through Amazon or Indigo.

For more info: <https://paralympic.ca/team-canada/ashley-gowanlock>

Ashley's mom was in the audience and it was evident what a champion she has been.



Meredyth thanked Melanie for an enlightening talk, given with openness & humor.

Meeting Notes:

Thank you's to the greeters & badge ladies!

Volunteers are needed!

Membership, recording, newsletter content, treasurer. After 10+ years, Barb would very much like help with the Treasurer position, with the hope that she can slowly retire.

Looks like we're moving...

PGGC notified us that next year they will be unable to accommodate us for 6 months.

Meredyth is looking at several optional locations, including UBC Golf Course & VanDusen Garden. As a bonus, both options would be able to offer coffee & tea. Details to follow.

This will start in the new year.

We would appreciate your thoughts, please email probuswomen@gmail.com

Membership Fees

The 2023/24 membership fees are coming in.

For those who haven't updated theirs, payment by credit card is preferred – go to www.probuswomen.com, click the "head and shoulders", enter your email address and password, fill in your credit card information, and finish the transaction - don't forget to log off.

Your receipt of payment will be in your inbox in a few minutes.

You can pay by cheque (\$80.00) to Women's PROBUS and bring to the meeting, or send it to Janice Brown at 904 West 22nd Ave., Vancouver BC V5Z 2A1, or bring the cheque to the July or September meetings.

Management Committee Contacts:

Women's PROBUS members will find the *confidential* phone numbers and email addresses on the last page of their Newsletter. Please contact any if you have any questions, or email .

Newsletter:

Contributions of stories, poems, jokes and brain teasers are welcome. Please send them to the Newsletter Editor any time you wish.

Update Your Contact Information:

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? Please update your profile on the Club's website <https://probuswomen.com>
Or email womensprobus@gmail.com



Book Recommendations:

The Librarian of Burned Books by Brianna Labuskes
“For fans of *The Rose Code* and *The Paris Library*, *The Librarian of Burned Books* is a captivating WWII-era novel about the intertwined fates of three women who believe in the power of books to triumph over the very darkest moments of war.”

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus
“A tale of female disempowerment in the 50s and 60s gets a culinary tweak in this sweet revenge comedy.”