

Shorelines

NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF NORTH SHORE VANCOUVER

May 2021

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Management Committee

President:

Ron Wood
604-922-7646

Vice President:

Darryl Stodalka
604-925-2570

Secretary:

Keith Fenton
604-926-7586

Treasurer:

Gordon Adair
604-230-9122

Past President:

Herb Grubel
604-980-7922

Communications:

Tom Gunn
604-921-7298

House:

Terry McLeod
604-926-0239

Membership:

Jeremy Marr
604-926-9368

Speakers:

John Elliott
604-925-3535

Special Events:

Doug Magoon
604-616-6761

Past Years Newsletters

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probusns2021

Special General Zoom Meeting Monday, May 10th - 9:30AM

with guest speaker

Dr. Marco Marra

“Genomics the Future of Cancer Care”



Dr. Marra is the UBC Canada Research Chair in Genome Science, and a member of the Order of British Columbia. He is a Canadian Medical Hall of Fame inductee, a recipient of the 2019 Don Rix Lifetime Achievement Award, the 2017 Canadian Cancer Research Alliance's Outstanding Achievements in Cancer Research Award, the 2015 Dr. Chew Wei Memorial Prize in Cancer Research, a 2013 UBC Killam Research Prize, a 2012 UBC Faculty of Medicine Distinguished Achievement Award, and the Medal of Merit Award from the International Association of Lions Clubs. He was elected to the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in 2009; received the Frontiers in Research Award from the BC Innovation Council in 2008, and was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2007. He was a recipient of a Genome BC Award for Scientific Excellence, a MSFHR Career Investigator Senior Scholar Award, and Simon Fraser University President's 40th Anniversary Award. In 2004, he received a Terry Fox Young Investigator Award and BC Biotech's Innovation and Achievement Award (along with the entire GSC staff) for sequencing the SARS coronavirus genome.

Since 2014, Dr. Marra has been listed in the yearly Highly Cited Researchers and World's Most Influential Scientific Minds (Clarivate Analytics). This list recognizes world-class researchers selected for their exceptional research performance, demonstrated by production of multiple highly cited papers that rank in the top 1% by citations for field and year in Web of Science.

Dr. Marra's contributions to genome science led to an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Simon Fraser University in 2004, and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Calgary in 2005.

Mark Your Calendars with These Important Dates



June Zoom Meeting - Monday, June 14, 2021

Guest speaker Steve Macdonald, The Pacific Science Enterprise Centre, Delivery of Science-based knowledge,

Pop-Up Zoom Meeting - Monday, May 17, 2021, 10:15AM

President's Notes



The Management Committee is requesting your attendance at our meeting May 10th, commencing at 9:15, to consider a proposed change to the quorum requirements at General Meetings of our Club. The purpose of the proposed bylaw change, requiring your vote, was effectively outlined in the report, dated April 15, 2021, prepared by Secretary Keith Fenton, which was sent by email to all members on the 21st

of April. In essence, the intent of the proposed motion is to amend the bylaw whereby the required quorum at General Meetings would be reduced from 25% to 15% of the membership.

While we are all focussed on the troubling increases in the provincial number of COVID cases and the availability of vaccines, the incidence of cancer in our population also continues to be a major concern.

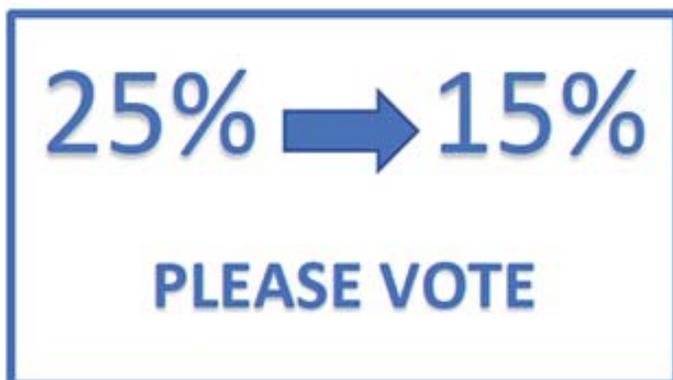
Following the brief business session, our guest speaker Dr. Marco Marra, Director of the Canada Michael Smith Genome Science Center at BC Cancer, will present a video and an address entitled "Genomics-The Future of Cancer Care".

Respecting Dr. Marra's schedule, the presentation will conclude at 10:30 which will include approximately 30 minutes for Q & A.

Thank you for your continued participation at our PROBUS Club monthly Zoom meetings during these challenging times and, in advance, for your attendance at the Special General Meeting on Monday, May 10th. to vote on the important bylaw change.

Ron Wood

Contact: president@probus-northshorevancouver.ca



May Speaker

Our upcoming speaker on May 10 is Dr. Marco Marra who last spoke to our club in April 2017. He is a world renowned scientist who heads up Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre at BC Cancer. His multi media presentation is titled "Genomics the Future of Cancer Care".

This is a leading edge technology and we are looking forward to hearing what exciting developments have happened over this past four year period.

John Elliott, Speakers Chair

April 26 Pop-Up Meeting

On April 26, our Club hosted a pop-up Zoom meeting with 2 topics for discussion. There were a record 30 members attending. Each presenter could have easily kept a discussion active for much beyond the time available. Thanks very much to the 2 members who led discussions:

First was Herb Grubel, a club member and an accomplished Economist, who led a discussion on recent Provincial and Federal Budgets.

Next was club member Malcolm Metcalfe, eminently qualified, who led a discussion on issues surrounding ownership of an electric vehicle.

A number of spin off topics were suggested and we encourage club members to let us know of their interests for discussion in future pop-up Zoom meetings.

Darryl Stodalka & Terry McLeod

New Member Welcomed and Introduced at a Recent Meeting



Chris Newcomb was born in the London, England and graduated from Manchester University with a degree in Civil Engineering. After graduation he came to Canada and worked as a consulting engineer for Associated Engineering here in Vancouver. Then followed spells with Canron in Tanzania and Ameron in Ecuador. Finally, he joined McElhanney Consulting in Vancouver as a Consulting Engineer working his way up to become President and then Chairman of the Board. He has just retired after close to 40 years with them.

He has been very involved with the Association of Consulting Engineers both in BC and Canada, being on the Boards and chairing both organizations, and is still active with the International Federation of Consulting Engineers. He is an avid road cyclist, has a passion for genealogy, and loves to travel and eat regional food.

Jeremy Marr, Membership Chair

Last Month Speaker - Jonathan Manthorpe

Jonathan Manthorpe has been a foreign correspondent and international affairs columnist for nearly 40 years.

His topic is the Canada/ China situation. He will refer throughout to the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party, the definitions of which are very important in Canada. We have in Canada at least 1.5 million people who are of ethnic Chinese heritage, and the vast majority of them have lived here for many years, with many 3rd and 4th generation born here. In the last few months we have seen some despicable reports of attacks on Canadians of Asian heritage. The People's Republic of China is not China and the Chinese Communist Party is not the Chinese people regardless of how much they try to convince us of this. We must always remember this is not a matter of ethnicity, but of Canada's dealing with a foreign government.

The relationship between Canada and the PRC has been in crisis for over 2 years, and it is the worst rift between Ottawa and Beijing since diplomatic relations were established in 1970. His message to us is that this is an excellent thing, and should have happened a long time before. It should be forcing Canadians to reassess the reality and potential of a relationship that has been dysfunctional for at least two decades. As a country we need to significantly lower our expectations of what is possible in our relationship with the PRC and the CCP. At the same time we need to recognize that Canada's relationship with Asia as a whole needs to turn away from the fixation on the PRC and to turn toward the many middle Asian countries, many of them democracies, with which we share substantial common interests. Dec 1st, 2018 was the start of the current crisis in Sino-Canadian relations with the detention at YVR of Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou. The CCR responded by kidnapping and holding hostage two Canadians in the PRC who have been tortured and held in solitary confinement, denied diplomatic access, charged with espionage, subject to a secret trial last month (no result announced). The result will depend on what happens as Meng Wanzhou's case winds through the courts in Canada. This is the most serious crisis since the diplomatic relations started 50 years ago.

He sees a major benefit for Canada. It shows that we share almost no civic values or interests with the PRC and cannot hope to have a relationship with the current Beijing regime that extends beyond simple trade. We can't have a relationship with a regime whose first instinct if there is a problem is to take hostages. There is evidence of the success of the CCP's campaign to persuade Canadian officials, business people and academics that the country has a special relationship with the PRC. They are a hard headed bunch whose only motivation is self-preservation. Canada

does 90B\$ a year in trade with CRP, our 3rd largest trading partner. Almost all of the Chinese media in Canada is under the control of the CCP. Confucius Institutes are espionage outposts of the Chinese Embassy and the Consulates.

The China/Canada Business Council founded in the 1970's is dominated by the Montreal based Power Corporation. Power Corp and CCP are a one stop window into Canadian Policy and decision making, as strong linkages were formed early on with Prime Ministers and high level political figures and has endured.

CCP is seeing global warming as an opportunity and are investing in ice breakers to use in a route over the pole to shorten shipping distances between shipping destinations. Canada needs to be ready to enforce their jurisdiction of companies using these routes. Finally, Covid19 has revealed many weaknesses in our economic, political and social system, not least of which is how the supply chain of essential goods collapsed. This revealed how much of essential goods production has been outsourced, with much of it in the PRC.

Questions

Q1 Human Rights considerations should always be a factor in foreign relations, and with China being a violator, what approach do think Canada should take to the Chinese Market?

A Focus on the rest of Asia in developing our Indo-Pacific policies. The Huawei incident has shown how easily trade can be disrupted when there are no common values to support the relationship. If incident had been with another country (e.g. Japan, South Korea) there would have been some tension but would not have descended into the crises we have with China. Other countries would not have kidnapped Canadians off the street to hold hostage. We have now a comprehensive and progressive Trans Pacific Partnership. The new iteration of what we had a few years ago. 11 members including Canada, being led currently by Japan, and other countries are wanting to join. As well as trade, it includes having common values on ethical ways of conducting business. China is going to be the second largest economy in the world but not very sophisticated. Canada should have a very simple transactional relationship with them.

Q2 China with its history, culture, language, and 1.4 B people does not think and behave like other countries. What can we do?

A Forget delusions of the last 50 – 60 years that we are going to change China, and keep the relationship as simple as possible. The fate of the two Michaels is a harsh lesson for us. We can't deal with Beijing in any normal way, and we have to insist on maintaining our own values.

Is pessimistic about the future of the USA as it seems that the political and social polarization in the country has a lot to work out –it is a massive division in the country about who and what the country is for. Has always been a difference in thought – is it a republic to be ruled by elite, or is it a democracy? Canada needs to display our values to the world and to do what we say.

Q3 In *Claws of the Panda*, you give Canadians a clear history of the CCP has infiltrated Canadian Society, politics, industry and government. Do you believe Canadian Universities should accept research grants from China?

A No. They have been pillaging our technology faculties for the last 30 – 40 years. In 1970 we began exchanging students and it was notable that the Canadians that went to Chinese Universities were interested in learning the language and the culture. The Chinese students that came to Canada in the early days came to learn English, but mainly came into technological faculties, intending to obtain our expertise. That has carried on including the funding of research where whatever patents come out of it going to the Chinese companies. PRC companies coming to Canada have gotten very adept at acquiring all and every research grant available, which means we are funding as Canadian taxpayers the pilfering of Canadian technology by these companies. This is a terrible situation.

Q4 The Chinese Government has made investments in building infrastructure all over the world, particularly in the poorer countries like Africa and the Caribbean who will never be able to repay the debt. What do you think is their end game and how is it going to turn out for those countries? Is buying political favours one of their objectives and how should Europe and the western countries respond?

A Have heard from some commentators that they have almost taken the expansion of the British Empire as their model. For example, China's Belt and Road is a massive piece of imperial expansion. The whole aim of this multi Trillion\$ infrastructure project is to "make all roads lead to Beijing". Its roads, bridges, ports, railway links, airline and airline links, spans the whole world including Latin America. As part of this, Beijing has been gaining control of ports, in particular in the last few years, using "debt traps" – where ports needing refurbishment are offered very sweet deals but where the small print provides sections that say that failure to pay = forfeiture of the ownership of the port and Beijing officials take control. Chinese officials or companies from Beijing say nothing to worry about, as the deals can always be refinanced if need be. However, if they do run into problems, China will use the small print to take control of the port, and it

has happened in Greece, Mombasa, Kenya, and the east coast of Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. Pakistan is at the end of a whole new route to the Indian Ocean across Pakistan and up into Western China. These ports that come under Chinese control are mostly to do with trade but are also potential bases for the growing Chinese Navy. The ones around the Indian Ocean are the concern of India, USA, and others where these are part of the expansion of China's blue water navy and its ability to project power around the world. Beijing has been very adept at what is called "elite capture", particularly in Africa, where they have managed through bribery to acquire the loyalty of many African leaders where China has massive investment in raw materials, oil and agricultural land. In China, about 20% of its land mass is suitable for agriculture. It has a real problem with food security and so has purchased massive estates for food production and sent Chinese labourers over to work them. How do we respond to it? We have to watch carefully and some countries are starting to push back against it, so that it may not turn out quite as China wants it to.

Q5 In the book "Restoring Democracy" you detail many western countries where governments have become increasingly autocratic to decentralization. Can you visualize a reversal of the Canadian autocracy?

A Yes. I think there is a lot we need to do in Canada to restore democracy, and one of the problems that has occurred is that we have adopted the notion of celebrity as part of politics and that political parties are branded by their leaders. Happening both at the Federal and Provincial levels, this has proved very damaging. It has diminished the importance of political parties and of MP's in the legislature. Party leaders are not there due to support in caucus but because they got elected by party membership who think the leader represents the "brand" of the party. We need to reverse that. In the past, one needed enormous support in the legislature. Legislature and parliament have become increasingly dysfunctional and useless in the scheme of political life. Blames political parties of all factions for this – they need to reform themselves and re-establish how they work and for whom they work, and their relationship with the public. Public distrust of parties and the media are huge and we have lost touch with constituents and the mainstream of the public. We have a lot of work to do to rebuild trust with citizenry and the establishments that manage society. All should be thinking and talking about what we want the "new normal" to be post pandemic.

Q6 How will China adopting the digital currency affect relations?

A Digital Currency is somewhat of a mystery and is

Last Month Speaker - Jonathan Manthorpe Cont'd.

out of my depth. Remember the late 1990's – 2000 where the first wave of the digital revolution started. There were floods of money going into every digital start-up and there was a huge crash in these companies. Have yet to be persuaded that this is a viable thing and it seems like a video game with money. Thinks it's a con job.

Q7 How did PRC's foreign policy change when Xi Jinping took power? Was the change substantial or was it just a change in tone?

A It is one of those strange situations where substance and tone are actually the same thing. Xi Jinping said in the 1980's that PRC should hide its ambitions, keep its head down and get on with rebuilding the economy of China, and leave its ambitions to later. When he came to power in 2012 he decided it was now time for the PRC to become overt and display what it wanted to do and how it intended to do it. The CCP is now making it clear that it intends to be a world power and would like to be THE world power by 2050, and it intends to do it on its own terms. It intends to have international institutions that work to CCP's view of the world, doesn't intend to become a stakeholder in western institutions like the world bank, international monetary fund or the united nations and all its agencies that have been in place since the end of WWII. Beijing is building its own international institutions and will expect us to comply with those. Canada needs to put efforts now into shoring up and building our alliances with middle power democracies. Not sure we can trust the USA the way we have done and need to strengthen relationships with Europe and democracies in emerging economies, in Asia and in Africa, and in the middle-east if we can find one. It is a substantial change in China and it is very real.

Q8 How do we repatriate jobs from China or other Asian countries to Canada and should Canada be supporting the Asian infrastructure bank?

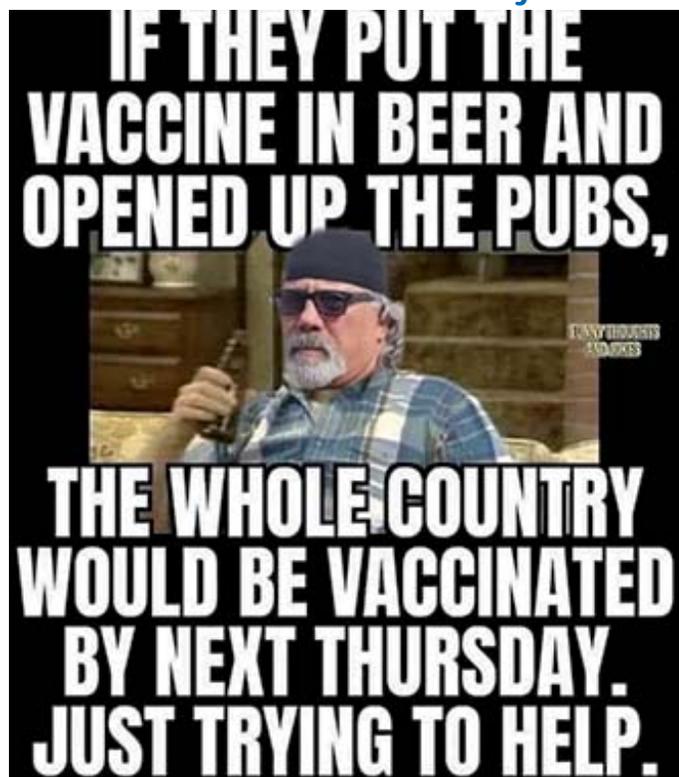
A Not an entrepreneur or business man, so can't get into this very deeply. Interested in a movement which started in Sweden a while ago called "a right to repair" which put into legislation the requirement for all appliances and manufactured goods sold in Sweden to be able to be repaired. Part of this grew out of the cellphone business and built in obsolescence of similar goods. We can change for the better the culture of manufactured goods by following up on this. Ending the disposability of manufactured goods will end the mountains of garbage created by disposal. Talking to importers in various industries, they say 30 – 50% of things arriving in containers from China and low-cost producing countries don't work when they arrive and goes to the garbage leading to pollution and environmental degradation. Interested in adopting a new and sustainable culture in this regard.

Q9 Are you worried about the possibility that China may start a war over Taiwan?

A Yes. There is a war over Taiwan happening by accident more than anything. There is no legitimate claim by Beijing to own Taiwan and this is part of their imperial expansion. The vast majority of Taiwanese want nothing to do with the PRC. They like their independence and their free and open democratic system which is one of the most vibrant in the world. They have been very successful in their transition from a military regime, one party state to a democracy (30 years ago) and they want to keep it. There has never been a government that has ruled both China and Taiwan. Xi Jinping has put his personal prestige behind this idea, making it a dangerous situation, so need to watch it very carefully. It is already a huge challenge for USA and other democracies and western allies in Asia, especially Japan which is a strong supporter of Taiwan. It is very much in China's hands what happens.

Darlene Dean

Your Smile for the Day!



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Editorial contributions and comments are welcomed and may be sent by e-mail to :

linda@probus-northshorevancouver.ca

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