



THE PROBUS CLUB OF OAKVILLE
Established in 1988 - The Fifth Probus Club in Canada

www.theprobusclubofoakville.com



April 16, 2026 – In-Person and Zoom Meeting. *Meeting begins at 10:00 AM. Featured In- Person Speaker at 11:00 AM.*

**Meeting Place – Oakville Public Library - Central Branch –
120 Navy St. Second Floor Auditorium**

Plenty of Parking on Water St with Elevator to Second Floor

FEATURED SPEAKER – George Takach



Probus Club of Oakville
Speaker Information
April 16, 2026

Taiwan and Cold War 2.0: What Canadians Need to Know

We are delighted that George Takach will be our speaker on April 16. George spoke to us last summer about the new cold war and the dynamics of artificial intelligence. After hearing that presentation, our members were interested in hearing George speak about Taiwan, the next potential pressure spot in the world.



Taiwan is a very important country that Canadians don't know enough about. Taiwan is a first-rate democracy with a vibrant civil society that adheres to the rule of law; it has a population accepting of religious, gender and sexual diversity; it has a health care system that is the envy of Asia; it has a culture that fuses east and west; and it boasts 175 universities and

colleges on an island the size of Vancouver Island. In terms of strategic geopolitics, Taiwan is indispensable to the democracies because it produces over 90 % of the most advanced semiconductor chips used in the world, including the critical chips that run the most powerful artificial intelligence software in civilian and military applications. Unfortunately for Taiwan and the rest of the world, the autocracy in Beijing claims Taiwan to be part of China, and Xi Jinping threatens to take over the small island by military force if necessary. The *Economist* magazine has called Taiwan the most dangerous place in the world.

In his new book, ***Inspired By Taiwan***, former lawyer and now author and geopolitical analyst George Takach, discusses Taiwan and its outsized importance to geopolitics and countries all over the globe, including Canada. The book contains numerous pictures taken by George and his wife when they explored the island nation on a study trip, during which George did many of the interviews for the book. In his presentation, using some images taken from the book, George will highlight what Canadians need to know about this marvelous, very relevant and dangerously situated country, including the critical posture of the United States and President Trump towards Taiwan. George makes the case that the world's democracies should support Taiwan in order to keep the peace in Asia. George also argues that Canada has a lot to learn from Taiwan, given Canada's own challenges with a much larger neighbour that is threatening Canada's own wellbeing. After his presentation, there will be a chance for questions and discussion.

George will bring copies of ***Inspired By Taiwan*** for purchase and signing (he is able to sell them at a material discount to the price at bookstores and on

Amazon). All of George's proceeds from the book's sales go to Camp Scugog, a charitable camp dedicated to serving kids in difficult circumstances - campscugog.org (George was a camper at Camp Scugog in the early 1960's.)

George has undergrad and law degrees from the University of Toronto, and an MA from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. He practiced technology law for 35 + years as a partner at McCarthy Tétrault. During his legal career he was also an Adjunct Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School for 22 years, a columnist for Lexpert Magazine, and wrote three books on tech/law topics. Currently he is a Senior Fellow of the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary History at the University of Toronto. George now writes books on technology and geopolitics for a general audience, including ***Cold War 2.0: Artificial Intelligence in the New Battle Between China, Russia and America***, which was published in 2024 (the Chinese-language version of the book came out in 2025). His latest book is ***Inspired By Taiwan***, published by Sutherland House Press.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

April 2026

GOOD NEWS!!! At our last Management Committee meeting it was agreed that our dues will remain unchanged at \$75.00 for the year and if you want to sign up for the coffee it is and additional \$10.00.

Jay Kell, our Membership Chair, is asking for assistance. If anyone would like to join Jay he would be most appreciative. It is not an overwhelming job however assistance is needed.

At the Management Committee Meeting it was realized that we have a number of "YOUNGER" members and a whole lot of us who are "OLDER" members. We are looking into activities, events and speakers that will appeal to the "Younger Members". Stay tuned for more information.

Our Activities Committee have planned or are planning some interesting activities over the next few months. As they are offered please make sure if you indicate that you are interested and that you make every effort to attend. There is a **Pub Lunch** at The Royal Windsor Pub on **April 30th** at 12.00 noon. Let Peter McCormick know if you are attending. petermccormick@hotmail.com

We are looking into forming some small interest groups in addition to the Book Club and the Investment Club. Let us know if there are any groups that interest you. Gerry Pielsticker is planning a Tech Group in the near future.

You are encouraged to bring a friend to the meetings in hop that they will become a member. There is a plan coming to make bringing a friend more enticing. Again stay tuned for more details.

There was to have been a District 3 Meeting on line however the leader's computer was not working so it was postponed to a future date. As well the annual Meeting for Probus Canada will be held on April 24th. I will let you know if there is anything that affects our Club.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the April meeting.



Minutes of the General Meeting - Probus Club of Oakville

Oakville Public Library, Navy St.

March 19th, 2026

DENOTES ACTION REQUIRED

Roy Oldfield, President, fresh from a tintinnabulation practice with the Seniors' Bellringers Society of Upper Oakville loudly & enthusiastically called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roy may have been competing with the opening bell of the TSX and Dave P.'s announcement that the



Investment Club had earned a year/year return of 26.5%; now Dave P./Jack R. are taking Probus No. 5 public on KASE! Right now, informed Fox News estimates are that the Club has a bigly virtual balance of ~c\$7,800,000, give or take ~C\$6,000,000. Has everyone seen the memo? 😊 Check out Rugg's *Random Market Ruminations* on the new Kazakhstan Exchange [Kase](#).



More about this and Dave's commentary, pg 8.

1.0 Membership and Guests

Jay Kell began by confirming that we have 59 members, 38 of whom attended the meeting. We had one (1) 'Zoomer', Brian Zink, who will now

be inundated with survey experience requests from Zoom Canada at all hours of the night. We also welcomed guests, **Steve Lipton and John Mikloska**, who had been attracted by our website. **Welcome, Steve/John**. We hope to see you again soonest. All manner of gift cards welcome, Gentlemen, especially **Shell/Petro Canada!** Just leave them by the donut table in an envelope addressed to Tim or Jay.

See also **Activities Committee**, page 9.

2.0 Minutes

Tim O'Shea, Secretary, proudly autographed copies of his *Sheep-Shearing Certificate* from his recent exploits in New Zealand. He was urged to attend to the business of the meeting and quietly reprimanded by the one-person **Nominations Committee, Paul N.** who was offering free cookies for *anyone* who might become next year's Secretary.

After Tim ascertained that there were no amendments suggested by the Members present, **Paul Nelson**, proposed a Motion to Approve the Minutes of February 19th, 2026. The Motion was seconded by **Alex Murphy** and carried unanimously.

3.0 Members' Health

Mike Purcell is on vacation in Portugal. Thankfully, there were no new reports of a Member's ill health. **Rory Mahon** has been repatriated safely after a mishap in Portugal.



Roy reported that, as a matter of interest, **Ivor Barlow, Past President**, who was not in attendance, had mentioned to Roy that **47 years ago** he (Ivor) was in **Tehran** working on a **C-130 Hercules**

Project when the **1979 Islamic Revolution** occurred! Wow...where to start? How the world has changed, politically, economically and 'every which way' since. **Thank you, Ivor**. See you soonest back here at the Club.

[Final flypast in UK of C-130J aircraft before decommissioning.](#)

4.0 Reports from Management Committee Members:

President

Roy led off the batting order...

- Our **District 3 Coordinator** has been engaging our Clubs actively; a follow up meeting with other area Clubs is scheduled for September. Our **Vice-President, Ray H.**, will be sharing some interesting opportunities for us to explore at our next MC & General Meetings;
- **Photographer**... we would like to have a photographer at our meetings; stay tuned for further details. Volunteers with a [Kodak Brownie](#) welcomed!



Vice-President

No new items to report from **Ray** who will introduce our Profiler later today, **Andy Vavasour**.

Treasurer

Wolfgang declared a healthy Bank balance of **\$6,582.45**, our obligations are current and the Club is on sound financial footing. Keep those PINS safe, Mr. Treasurer!



Speaker's Report

Grant Swanson shared the forthcoming list of tentative speakers today and for the next several months; some speakers' names are being finalized already for October and November:

- March – Today, **Ermanno Pascutto**, a fellow **Probus member**, who has had a very interesting career as an international lawyer & regulator; Ermanno gave us a taste of his life's work several months ago when he shared a short profile that begged a supplement;
- April – Back by popular request: **George Takach**, a lawyer and geopolitical analyst, who will be speaking about **Taiwan**, a pressure point in geopolitics and technology; but who knows what his presentation will actually focus on given **the events in the Middle East/Persian Gulf** and the potential aftermath of the War (oops... 'USA special military initiative')???
- May – In process and nearing finalization;

- June – **Margaret Larsen**, an **Oakville senior** who has been recognized for her efforts to support the survival of the **Monarch** butterfly; Margaret will be presenting with some hands-on exhibits; bring your nets, Gentlemen; at least they don't stand in line at **US Airports** before migrating 😊;



- July – **Quantum Computing** explained...almost finalized;

- August...the big picture of **Artificial Intelligence**;



- September...**Ted Barris**, an acclaimed author and military historian, who will share the stories of **Canadian Aviators and ground crews in the Battle of Britain**. **Battle Aircraft**

Remember, Members, if you have an idea for Grant to pursue, please let him know at: gswanson@cogeco.ca. Great work, Grant!

Investment Club

Dave Patterson...Dave announced year over year returns of ~26.5%, beating the Canadian Equity markets bigly. Wowser!

We have enough **virtual money** to give every Member free Timmies until our average age is 110. **Dave & Co.** are always looking for new members to join the Team and help with the Club's public flotation to pay for our bus trips on Club outings.



Technical

Gerry... great to see you back! Gerry brought us up to date on his treatments which he said are progressing well. He is regaining energy slowly as he approaches his final chemo treatment and transitions to other diagnostic interventions. 😊

The website is current and Gerry is participating in other seniors' health-fare research memory projects at **Sheridan College** which featured in the recent Oscars nominations for animation awards.



Ever the optimist, **Gerry** made us laugh about the obstacle course he needs to navigate nightly when he needs to attend to nature's



call.

One night, he bladder alarm to the instead of to 'you-radio tried to find the out with a loud bang and caused her to knock over the keg of Guinness which Gerry mixes with his chemo cocktails.

reconnected his nightstand radio know what'; the CBC, then shorted which woke **Judy**

Well, the Guinness sprayed all over **Judy's new shoes** in the closet. She was not best pleased and bigly required Gerry to clean up the mess, with or without his attachments *mucho pronto*, or he wouldn't get his morning tea and toast for a week.

Sometimes, *it doesn't pay to get out of bed, eh, Gerry?* 😲

Activities Committee

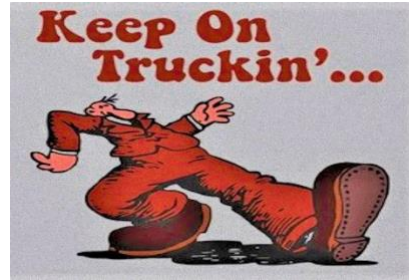
DENOTES ACTION REQUIRED

Peter McCormick brought us up to date on planned activities:

- A tentative visit to the **Amazon Facility in Brampton** is being finalized for mid May, assuming a confirmed interest. See the 'last chance' invitation circulated on our Club's g-mail last week; (update...likely date now **May 20th**)
- Attempts are being made to resuscitate the trip to **Dundurn Castle** as a result of the Castle Administration changing its group tour protocols;



- The ever-popular Pub Lunch at the Royal Windsor Pub (**April 30th...invite to follow**);
- Next month's **MC meeting** will be discussing a number of other possibilities as your Management Team seek to expand the range of in-house Clubs, or sub-sets thereof, in conjunction with the Membership Committee, to accommodate changing members' demographics and potential interests. (Example...could there be a subset of the Investment Club that focuses on, say, emerging markets such as Crypto/Bitcoin?; might we hold a bi-monthly **breakfast club** for members organized around various topics? Is there interest in a Music/Theatre Club etc., etc? All it takes is effort, Volunteers and interest. **Stay tuned!**



Keep on trucking, Guys.

If you have any follow-up questions or event suggestions, please contact Peter at: petergmccormick@hotmail.com

5.0 Profiler – Andy Vavasour

Today's Profiler, introduced by **Ray H.**, was **Andy (Andrew James) Vavasour**, a member of our Technology Team.

Andy is a proud Newfoundlander, born in St. John's, in the then-existing Dominion, before Newfoundland joined Canada as our **10th Province on March 31st, 1949**, almost in time, a half hour later, for April Fool's Day.

Andy's parents met during W.W.II in the UK; his Mum, an original English **'war-bride'**, like many others came to the Dominion after the War.

Andy's early become a **Pilot**, but intervened and then at becoming a diagnosis of ADD had by then realized was not an ideal tried his hand at **Real Bacteriology** and at those endeavours, they got in the way



aspiration was to colour blindness he tried his hand **Physician** until a intervened. He that University calling. Then, he **Estate** & while successful he discovered of his enjoying

work in the theatre... shown here in 1968 in an artist's sketch as **Andy the Scarecrow in The Wizard of Oz!**



He pursued his love of music, theatre and acting across various genres, all in between



mastering the art of riding a **'penny farthing'** bike around a stage dressed as a Wiley White Wolf chasing Little Red Riding Hood. 😬

During 1970, **Andy met Hilary** and left Nfld and the entertainment business to join **Royal Bank of Scotland** in Edinburgh in its Application Technology Division. He participated, amongst other projects, in a Payroll and HR Management System for the Bank & the formidable **Church of Scotland**. A notable achievement was working on the huge national venture of **'Decimalization'** - converting the UK currency from its ancient history of various coins (240 pennies = £1) to a more European comparison of 100 pennies = £1.



(Other Members may remember **Decimalization** well!)

Andy & Hilary returned to Newfoundland in 1976 where he joined Avalon Telephone (which became NewTel, and later through successive changes, Bell Aliant) remaining with the Company for 26 years, including the **Y2K phenomenon** which didn't affect the Company as it had been incorporated by design prior to 2000/2001. Great foresight, Andy! **Andy 'retired' in 2002** to a life of leisure.

Andy & Hilary **moved to Oakville in 2012** following grandchildren; he joined a Rock Band and, thankfully, was invited to join Probus by Gerry Pielsticker.

The *Vavasour* name is an ancient feudal name that arrived in England after the **Norman Conquest of 1066**. The Vavasour ancestors stretched from Italy to Normandy. **Vavasours were believed to be holders of feudal land and titles** in what is now the 'Aristocracy'

with a rank roughly equivalent to a 'lower level' Baron. They managed the estates of more senior Aristocrats collecting taxes and tithe duties. One infamous Vavasour ancestor was Sir Robert Vavasour the **Sheriff of Nottingham** from 1247 to 1255. Apparently, he was somewhat corrupt. I guess every family has at least one bad apple in their ancestry.

Andy & Hilary have two children, Claire (Travis Maxwell) and Peter (Raff Vavasour) and four grandchildren, 2 in Oakville and 2 in Russell Ontario. **Hilary & Andy are working on their 56th year of marriage.** It just shows that the 1970 decision to give up a career in theatre was the right one!

Great job, Andy. Many thanks for sharing.

50:50 Draw & Luncheon Count

Ray H. announced a record haul of **\$56, which was won by Aivy Reinfeld** who ran off with the loot to pay his Shell Gas bill arrears.

16 members indicated they would attend for lunch.

6.0 Guest Speaker

Grant introduced our returning speaker and fellow Member, **Ermanno Pascutto.**

Ermanno is a semi-retired former senior securities regulator and legal practitioner after having 'stumbled' into Law and not being entirely sure what to do after University.

Subsequently, he articulated and practised with Osler Hoskin & Harcourt (1977-1980) and was seconded to the TSE in 1981, somewhat **under protest** as he didn't think he was qualified; he mused that the TSE were looking for a 'fall guy' **in case he botched the assignment.** He must have done a few things well; for the next several years, he was a regulator with the TSE, OSC, and SFC **before going to the Far East.**

In 1989, he was recruited to be a founding director of the **Hong Kong Securities & Futures**



Commission, Vice-Chairman and Executive Director of the Corporate Finance Division. Ermanno described the regulatory protocols and safeguards there as something akin to the Wild West (or Wild East) where for five years he had to know, understand and regulate scenarios where certain players expected favours since 'it had always been done that way' for persons of influence from established 'families'.

Those experiences informed his personal venture into investors' rights. Ermanno was the founder and initial Executive Director of the Canadian Foundation for Advancement of Investor Rights (FAIR Canada) which is an independent, national, non-profit investor rights organization dedication to better communication amongst businesses and investors. Canada has not enjoyed a sterling reputation in the marketplace and better regulation and enforcement has been necessary.

Ermanno has also consulted to stock exchanges and securities commissions in the Middle East, and the Caribbean. He has been retained as an expert witness on securities regulation. He was part of a small team that developed the legal and regulatory infrastructure for the Dubai International Financial Center. (Hmmm...it's unlikely he would want to spend any travel points going back presently as the war US 'excursion' has rattled a hornet's nest there!

He is currently an independent director of Morgan Stanley Securities (China) and two market funds.

Great job, Ermanno. Thank you.

7.0 Adjournment

Roy adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Our next General Meeting here in the Auditorium will be April 16, 2026.

Respectfully,
Tim O'Shea,
Secretary, April 5th, 2026



2025-2026 Management Committee

President	Roy Oldfield	(905) 847-2062
Past President	Paul Nelson	(905) 631-2390
Vice President	Ray Henrickson	(905) 469-0158
Secretary	Tim O'Shea	(905) 842-5133
Treasurer	Wolfgang Hartmann	(905) 257-6811
Speakers	Grant Swanson	(905) 510-8202
Activities	Peter McCormick	(905) 827-9274
	Doug Peebles	(905) 842-1819
	Mike Tweedie	(905) 338-1281
	Ulrich Wickhardt	(905) 465-0641
Newsletter	Paul Nelson	(905) 631-2390
Membership	Jay Kell	(289) 407-3859
Website	Gerry Pielsticker	(905) 338-9829
Technical Co-ordinator	Gerry Pielsticker	(905) 338-9829

In addition, the following Key Support Positions have been filled by appointed Members.

Key Support Positions

Equipment	TBD	
Member Welfare	Mike Purcell	(905) 845-4097
Auditor	Alex Murphy	(905) 337-2924
50/50 Draw	Ray Henrickson	(905) 469-0158
Coffee Pickup	Tim O'Shea	(905) 842-5133
Investment Club	Dave Patterson	(905) 844-5894
Greeter	Mike Purcell	(905) 845-4097
Book Club	Alex Murphy	(905) 337-2924
	Cam Davreux	(905) 338-1974

