



November  
2015

# The Telescope

News for the Greater Hartford PROBUS Club

## President's Message

Dear Probus friends,

Let us not forget the good works of Probus and our mission to bring help to the special needs community around us. The next few months we will be working on that goal and I look forward to that.

Thanks for all you do.

David Hoff, President

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### **Probus Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, October 21, 2015**

Probus Meeting: 10/21/15 Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m.

**President David Hoff** welcomed the membership to our monthly meeting. Individual member introductions were made and we welcomed a guest and prospective member, Gary Jones, to our gathering.

President Hoff again encouraged members to think hard and look around their daily interactions with friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. and to invite people to attend an upcoming Probus meeting to check out our charitable organization. In particular, he said he would very much like to see younger generation folks and women invited to our meetings for 2015/2016 to learn about Probus and consider joining our ranks. David said "We can't rest on our laurels" if we want to remain viable in the future. He also said he would love to meet over coffee anytime with any member who would like to discuss Probus-related (or non Probus-related) issues with him.

**Ed Peltier** introduced our Guest Speaker for the evening, Luis Perez, LCSW and President & CEO of Mental Health Connecticut (MHC). Luis has held leadership positions both in private and public sectors with particular expertise in the areas of behavioral health outcomes-based management, strategic planning, network development and public policy. MHC operates Robinson House on South Quaker Lane in West Hartford. This place provides supportive living in a group home and scattered site apartments for adults who are deaf/hearing impaired and have a mental

illness. Luis has been with MHC for approximately 3 years. He said that potential stakeholders did not know about MHC or take advantage of their array of services. Therefore, he helped to re-design MHC's mission to insure advocacy, community education and a service component with a full continuum of residential care. MHC now has 250 employees.

Robinson House teaches daily hygiene practices to its residents (e.g. how to keep yourself and your apartment clean). Luis also talked about an upcoming concert MHC is sponsoring at Mohegan Sun in which the featured singer/songwriter/poet is bipolar and proof that recovery is possible. People with mental health issues can and do lead fruitful and productive lives! He also touched upon the fact that MHC has an in-house lobbyist to make sure that access to services, housing and funding is on track with legislators.

We learned that there are **4 components to MHC's mission.**

- 1.) Insuring safe and affordable housing.
- 2.) Helping clients to manage their health in a holistic manner.
- 3.) Encouraging people to have a purpose be it via volunteering, working a job or pursuing an education.
- 4.) Fostering a sense of community.

Many individuals with mental health issues burn bridges with self-medication and MHC strives to rebuild natural supports for them.

Luis also briefly addressed the topic of how gun violence in America is stretching the mental health industry to the limits. He also talked about the stigma/shame that has been associated with the mental health label over the years. He handed out some fliers entitled "**B4 Stage 4: Changing the Way We Think About Mental Health.**" He made the comparison of Stage 4 Cancer and how we wouldn't sit passively by and do nothing until a loved one's cancer got to such an advanced stage. He encourages a proactive approach to dealing with mental health conditions and not keeping them tucked away and hidden.

To learn more about Mental Health Connecticut please contact them at: 61 South Main Street, Suite 100, West Hartford, CT 06107. Phone: (860) 529-1970. [www.mhconn.org](http://www.mhconn.org).

They operate a referral line to guide people to appropriate mental health services.

They are a private non-profit which is 90% state funded, 9% funded through corporate partnerships and 1% funded via individual donors. MHC is a member of Connecticut Non-Profits, a trade organization which does the actual lobbying with policy makers and has direct contact with these policy makers.

**The Secretary's Report** (Minutes of the September Probus Meeting) was accepted.

Treasurer Meyer Frankel collected a number of annual dues checks tonight from members who stilled owed. If you still have not paid your dues please make an effort to mail your check to Meyer or bring it to the November meeting!

**Bob Goldberg** gave a short report on the status of the **Pumpkin Cutting Event**. It is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28th at 6:00 p.m. in East Windsor at 27 Pleasant Road. It will be a small 1 hour event involving a few group home residents and a few volunteers (e.g. Tom Donaghue, etc.) whom Bob recruited. Refreshments will be served. Thanks for brightening the day of these group home residents!

Bob also discussed some upcoming sporting events which he is currently planning for. Specifically, **University of Hartford Men's and Women's basketball games and a Wolfpack hockey game** at the XL Center in Hartford. We will bring group home residents to these events for a fun outing. Watch your email because Bob will be sending out information soon about the dates and times of these sporting events and how you can get involved in chaperoning. He also tried to gauge the interest level in how many Probus members would like to attend the inaugural Hartford Yard Goats minor league baseball game at the new Dunkin Donuts Stadium on April 7th. More details on this will be forthcoming. We will also learn more about the stadium project building delays and if this will affect the Yard Goats schedule for this spring. Additionally, Bob announced that **the Yard Goats on air announcer will be our November Probus Meeting guest speaker**.

**Michael Croll** gave a brief talk on our annual raffle. His goal is to have us all start selling raffle tickets very early, beginning in January, 2016. He is asking members to email him with any leads on restaurants they may know (e.g. have an inside connection to) so that he can approach the restaurant early seeking a donation/gift card to be raffled off. Please take a moment to simply come up with some ideas of places that you think might want to participate in our annual raffle and Michael can help jumpstart the process!

**June 8th (Mark your calendars) will be our Probus Installation Dinner and Raffle drawing.**

**Mark Goldberg** spoke about the **Probus Candy Machines** ongoing fundraiser. Our sincere thanks to Hal Levy and Tom Donohue who volunteered to assist Mark with restocking the candy machines in Greater Hartford and collecting the money inside of them to be given to our Treasurer Meyer Frankel. Some of our current locations where we have Probus candy machines installed are: Antonio's Restaurant/Sports Bar in Simsbury, Harvey's Wines and Liquors in West Hartford, Concetta's, Harry's Pizza, Benders, Insane Irving's in Bristol. Mark explained the process for collection/restocking which involves going to B.J.'s or Costco and buying the candy in bulk. He then makes the rounds (drives the circuit) to the various installations every other Saturday and reports that it only takes about 6 minutes per locale to empty and restock. If any member has an idea for new locales (e.g. restaurants, drycleaners, retail shops, etc.) please drop Mark a line to suggest this to him.

**Bob Goldberg** provided his wrap-up report on our very successful Annual Picnic. We served 287 people and only incurred \$200 worth of expenses. Our hats off to Bob for all his hard work in securing various food and beverage donations. Some of these donation commitments did not come in until the last minute so thank you Bob for your persistence and dealing with the stress that went along with all of this. Bob circulated letters and emails which he received from many of the group homes who attended our picnic expressing their gratitude and echoing the sentiments that their residents look forward every year to the great Probus Picnic! One group home wrote that maybe someday they will host a picnic and invite the Probus members to attend! We thank Bob also for securing the Disc Jockey which added a nice element to the festive occasion.

A brief discussion about our **Special Educator Awards Project** ensued. Unfortunately, David Maslin who heads up this project was not in attendance tonight. President David Hoff reported that David has not gotten back to him with an update on the status of the project. President Hoff suggested that Mark Goldberg, Syd Elkin and Ed Peltier reach out to David Maslin to see where things stand and how the committee can help him right now. President Hoff also suggested that he (David Hoff) receive weekly status updates (e.g. brief paragraph) from Mark, Syd, Ed and Steve Blotner. The consensus was that David Maslin has put a lot of work into formulating this great project and he should be delegating different aspects of it (tasks) to the committee to keep the momentum going!

**Bob Goldberg** emphasized that he needs **head counts to call in to ASD's** Sodexo food service contacts. He reiterated that he needs commitments from Probus members on the Friday before our scheduled meeting dates as to whether you plan to attend the meeting or not so that an appropriate amount of food can be purchased and prepared. The food is bought on the Monday of meeting week and then prepared on Tuesday of meeting week so that we are good to go.

It was discussed and agreed to that we should send tonight's guest speaker Luis Perez a check for **\$100 as a donation to his organization Mental Health Connecticut** as a token of our appreciation for his educational talk to us.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.  
Respectfully Submitted, Charlie Dobrow, Secretary

**Thank You notes to the Probus Club:  
Probus Club's Annual Client Picnic:**

Everyone at 310 Beelzebub Rd. South Windsor Group Home - Dianne Montalvo SDSW

The guys at the 1021 Maple Street - Terry Lewis

Residents and staff from 67 Mountain Road Group Home – Jim Foley SDSW

Mohsen Rajee Ridgewood SDSW

Goodwin Street –Sheila Banks

Spring Street Group Home – Christine Nunes

242 Mountain Road, Newington – AnnMarie Gugliotti

1069 Maple Street, Rocky Hill – Georgia Davis SDSW

521 Maple Hill Ave – Mark Quesnet

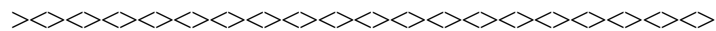
Brown Street – Brian C. Johnson

Kiev J. Federowicz DDS, Storrs, CT

Carolyn Simmons, SDSW

87 Mountain Road – Patricia Kirk SDSW

Great Pond Group Home – Clayton Marshall SDSW

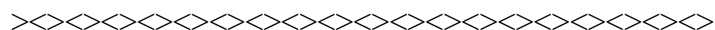


Probus Club:

Thank you for your recent gift of \$50 in memory of Terry Marcus. We have notified her family of your thoughtful donation.

Madelene Francese,

Hebrew Health Care



**Reminder:**      **Next Probus Meeting (Speaker):**  
*(Please note the time and location at ASD's  
"Cogswell Hall")*

**Date:** Wednesday November 18, 2015

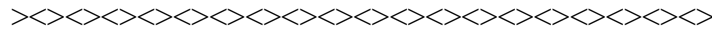
**Time:** 6:00 PM

**Location:** American School for the Deaf  
139 N Main St, West Hartford, CT 06107  
(860) 570-2300

**Speaker:** The Yard Goats on air announcer will be our November 2015 guest speaker

Because we are having this wonderful speaker, this is the perfect opportunity to invite potential members. As always, spouses/significant others, are always welcome.

**Please remember** our meetings will always be in **Cogswell Hall** this year. This is the same building we have held our Installation Dinner.



**The following is a schedule of the Probus Club's 2015-2016 dinner meetings:**

**Note:** All dinner meetings below are at the American School for the Deaf.

November 18, 2015	Wednesday at 6:00 PM:	Speaker
December 2015	No Meeting Scheduled	
January 20, 2016	Wednesday at 6:00 PM:	Speaker
February 17, 2016	Wednesday at 6:00 PM:	Business Meeting, No Speaker
March 16, 2016	Wednesday at 6:00 PM:	Speaker
April 20, 2016	Wednesday at 6:00 PM:	Speaker
May 2016	No Meeting Scheduled	

**June 8, 2016 Installation Dinner Wednesday at 6:00 PM: Speaker:**

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**Probus Club's 2015-2016 officers:**

**President – David Hoff**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – David Maslin**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Michael Croll**

**Secretary – Charles Dobrow**

**Treasurer – Meyer Frankel**

**Probus National Rep - Steve Blotner**

## **An Easy Fund Raiser**

### **Occasion Cards**

As you know, the Probus Club is 100% committed to helping those that, for no fault of their own, cannot help themselves. One of our fund raising events that we sponsor is the ability for us to be able to accept contributions to honor, praise, memorialize or make a special acknowledgement to someone who is either in our presence or in our memory.

By you making a contribution to the Probus Club, our very own Bruce Stanger will process your contribution; inform the donee that a contribution was made to Probus to recognize him or her and for the event that is being recognized. Also, an acknowledgement will be sent to you, the donor, to thank you for your charitable contribution to the Probus Club. As always, 100% of donations to the Probus Club are used exclusively for charitable purposes.

Consider the Probus Club when honoring or remembering someone special.

Bruce Stanger can be reached at:  
Attorney Bruce Stanger  
433 South Main Street  
Suite 112  
West Hartford, CT 06110

The check should be made payable to The Probus Club and forwarded to Bruce along with the information necessary for a proper acknowledgement. Thank you for supporting The Probus Club.

Meyer Frankel, Editor

The "Telescope" is the monthly newsletter of the Probus Club of Greater Hartford.