

Message from The Chair of the Member Recruitment Committee

What Will Strengthen Us?

Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, once wrote: "When something bad happens you have three choices. You can let it define you, let it destroy you, or you can let it strengthen you."

The Guelph Wellington Men's Club was doing well, meeting regularly at the Italian Canadian Club with somewhere approaching 200 attending every Tuesday morning. Then, in early March, "something bad" happened—the Covid-19 pandemic—and it threw us off stride. Our last in-person meeting was on March 10.

But the Board refused to let the virus define us. Our Club regrouped and, beginning on May 26, we started meeting on Zoom. Since then the weekly attendance has been good. The high, I believe, was 141. The average is around 112.

Yes, there have been changes, but what hasn't changed is (1) the over-all feeling of togetherness and (2) the quality of the weekly speakers. Interestingly enough, having to hold meetings by virtual means has opened up brand new possibilities for speakers—they no longer have to live in the Guelph area...they can be from anywhere in the world. Two recent speakers have been from South Africa. That would have been totally impossible had we been meeting in person.

So we haven't let the "something bad" define us, nor have we let it destroy us. We met the challenge.

Now for the third leg of the quote: What will strengthen us?

What will strengthen us the most, going forward, is new members. For that, we need both an internal and external push. The internal push is the more promising, and it's something in which we can all play a part. So, here's an invitation for all members to consider:

- You have friends and neighbours. Invite somebody, or two or three somebodies, to join as a guest at one of our Zoom meetings. Expose them to our amazing speakers. They will come to value the Club the same as all of us do.
- Here's a thought: 25 of us get one new member each between now and the end of the year—that's only 6 new members per month. Maybe we should take that on as a goal.

There's another aspect to this. We not only need to get new members, we need to maintain our existing membership. This past year has seen an erosion of around 50 members. The reasons vary, I'm sure. The point is that we need to do what we can to retain the membership we now have.

My sense is that the reason people join and stay with the Guelph Wellington Men's Club is based largely on relationships formed. So here are some thoughts in that regard:

- When you haven't seen a member online for a bit, call and check and see how he's doing.
- You know several members. So you are in a position to know when they're going through a rough patch. Call and tell him we're thinking about him.
- Offer words of encouragement. A word of praise carries a fella a country mile.
- Find ways to show, on a very personal level, that we value each other, and care about each other.

It takes all of us to make this Club work. We can do it. I'm convinced we can!

Tom Watson