

General Membership Meeting and Luncheon

Royal Canadian Naval Association Sarnia

February 15, 2017

Present -

President - Gloria Cayea

Director of Membership - Bill Mason

Outreach Coordinator - Pat Mason

Health Benefits Officer - Earnie MacDougall

Secretary - Vice-President - Bob Jackson

Member at Large - Georgina MacIssac

Member at Large - Murray Lester

Absent -

Treasurer - Diane Kerr

IT and Web Site Coordinator - Doug Kerr

Program Coordinator - Mary Ann Burgess

Member at Large - Diana Wright

Gloria opened the meeting at noon, leading with a moment of silence for departed members. Lunch was then served.

Following lunch Gloria called on Dave Cayea to introduce the guest speaker, his son David Cayea, Chief Operating Officer of PlantForm Corporation.

David Cayea gave an interesting overview of PlantForm Corporation's work and research using tobacco plants to produce low-cost therapeutic protein drugs. These low-cost drugs, which can be produced for as little as one-tenth the cost of existing drugs, can potentially be used in the treatment of various cancers, HIV/AIDS, and other diseases such as Ebola.

While the choice of bioengineering tobacco plants may seem ironic, tobacco has been well studied and its genome mapped so it is well suited to genetic manipulation.

PlantForm Corporation has been conducting its research in conjunction with the University of Guelph and has received funding from the Gates Foundation as well as the American and Canadian governments. PlantForm Corporation eventually intends to partner with investor companies and commercial manufacturing interests to bring these cheaper drugs to market. In the meantime, research and the need for research funding continues.

David was asked why governments and others haven't provided more research funding for such a promising initiative, and when potential investors could expect to see a return on investment. David referred to the 2008 financial crises as a factor in the current climate of investor risk aversion, and stated that the timing of any future public investment opportunities is still under consideration.

Gloria followed the guest speaker with the President's report. She noted that while Bill C-27, an Act to amend the Pension Standards Act, doesn't directly affect pensioners at this time, the potential that it could remains. Therefore our National Office intends to meet with the responsible Parliamentary Committee to express NAFR's concerns. National Office also prepared two generic letters, one to be used to write to our local MPs, one for the Minister Of Finance which members can use if they wish to express their dissatisfaction with Bill C-27.

Gloria noted that a petition opposing the taxation of member health and dental insurance plan benefits was being circulated at the meeting. Although it is reported that the government is no longer considering the taxation of these benefits, the petition will be submitted to reinforce our continued opposition to such measures.

On a somewhat related note, Gloria informed the meeting that the new Public Service Health Plan rate increases will be communicated to the membership within the next two weeks or so.

Finally, Gloria reminded the meeting of the planned Rum Runners Tour Branch event. Members are to contact Pat Mason if they wish to take part, and were told that the cut-off date for

purchasing tickets is May 24, 2017. A minimum of 40 persons are required if the the event is to proceed.

Pat thanked the callers and reminded them to keep her informed of any changes to the people on their list (i.e. people moving, longterm illnesses, members passing away, etc). Callers were reminded to let Pat know if they can't make their calls.

As well, anyone wishing to be notified via e-mail, and anyone interested in becoming a caller were invited to contact Pat directly.

Bill informed the meeting there are currently 594 members in the Branch. While we gained 15 new members in 2016, we also lost a number so that we are down 18 members from year ago.

Gloria gave a summary of the Branch's 10 pin Fun Bowling Tournament, held on January 31, 2017. She thanked Pat for organizing the event and noted 28 people attended. Gloria hi-lited that events such as the tournament give the membership opportunities for social mingling and the chance to strike new friendships.

Earnie also emphasized the social aspect of the Bluewater Branch's activities by noting Bluewater Branch is one of the few Branches that has multiple General Meetings in multiple locations; and social/fun events such as the Golf and Bowling tournaments and an annual day trip/tour. Earnie pointed out members should be proud of the level of involvement of the membership in these gatherings, and of the frequent opportunities provided for members to participate.

Gloria reminded the membership that the Branch is always looking for additional volunteers and invited everyone to participate. Our next meeting, the Annual General Meeting, will be held in Wallaceburg on April 12, 2017. Following the 50/50 draw and the awarding of door prizes, the meeting concluded at 1:20 pm.

