



2005 CPC NATIONAL CONVENTION REPORT

September 14-18, 2005
Radisson Hotel, Saskatoon, SK

Wednesday, September 14

Golf Tournament: Despite chilly breezes and a rain storm toward the end, the Golf Tournament was a great event, and spirits were high. Played at the Dakota Dunes Golf Course – top notch course, especially since it's only about 2 or 3 years old; if you're ever in Saskatoon, I recommend it.

Some highlights of the tournament: as my foursome approached the 15th green we were confronted by two young white-tail bucks – no more than two or three years old; four-pointers each. We were no more than 10 or 12 feet away from them and they didn't flinch. Amazing!

The rain started just after that (last three holes), but was accompanied by two of the brightest rainbows I've ever seen in my life! (Double rainbows, both completed arches, and with the setting sun low on the horizon it was truly a magnificent site to behold!) Yep, nothin' like double rainbows to accompany all those double-bogeys!

CPCF Chair Janey Davies explained that despite wet pants (???), she "got lucky" and made the Closest to the Pin shot. Jennifer Hameluck from CPC Calgary City Centre was so inspired she actually bought the set of rentals she was using (\$3500 set of matching Calloways – left handed) She paid \$1200. I had the same set (except mine were men's, right handed) and played so good with them I was tempted to buy mine too except for the fact that a) I don't play enough to justify that kind of expense, and b) Juanita would have killed me with them, and then used them herself!

All in all, a great start to Convention.

Wednesday evening we were all bussed to the Great Western Brewery for a barbecue and free product. They were a major sponsor of the convention, in addition to Gold medal winners for three of their beers two out of the last three years in international competition. From there we were bussed to the Octane Restaurant & Bar for the Hospitality Suite. Part-owned by Jim Rhode from Saskatoon, the bar was pretty neat – gas-pump history at its finest. (The décor, not the beer)

Thursday, September 15

The day got off to a start with "breakfast" – croissant, fruit, juice & coffee (how do they expect Progressions to function without grease???), followed by the Central Region meeting. Good round-table type discussion led by National Veep John Holman. And while there was an agenda it pretty much went out the window as the usual gang of suspects got down to the nitty-gritty of how do we increase membership and indeed, attendance at the National Conventions each year. On that note, ours was the only region in Canada to decline in membership. Two clubs from this region couldn't even be bothered to send a representative, and four had only one member in attendance. Truly a proud moment at the AGM, I don't mind saying.

Anyway, we **WILL** have much better representation in St. John's next year, especially if I have any say in it. Speaking of which, I'm already signed up for next year, but more on that later.

Following the Central Region meeting, I attended the session on the revised Blue Book which Juanita has spent the last year and a half updating. I'm pleased to say it is now completed and up on the National site. There are already some additions to be made, as well as a .pdf version which will be added in the next month. Some clubs wanted to know if a new "hard-copy" version would be sent to all the club presidents. It was decided that with the expense



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(\$2500) and the portability, it's not justifiable to do this, especially when one can go to the national site and print any or all of the information available – including updates as they happen. You can even tailor it to meet your individual club's needs. Good job Juanita.

Lunch followed with a guest speaker, local radio personality Vic Dubois. He was quite humorous and was especially touched by our members' fundraising efforts across the country. He graciously donated his honorarium to CPCF. We also had a group of about forty second- and third-graders lead us in Oh Canada in both French and English, followed by the Saskatchewan Pirate song. Cute as the dickens!

Afternoon sessions followed. I attended the one on "Managing an Event: Going from Good to Great" by Rosalie Courage of Halifax-Cornwallis.

After the afternoon sessions we were bussed about 40 miles out of town to "Champêtre Country", a theme ranch for a great western dinner and entertainment. The owner is French-Canadian and operates it along with his son-in-law and their families. I got a chance to speak with him and discovered he was a grain farmer until 1990 when he was completely wiped out by hail. He had to reinvent himself and his family's operation, and thus came up with this concept. He told me he's busier than ever he was as a farmer, and much more prosperous. His determination was truly an inspiration to those of us whose clubs have to reinvent ourselves a bit. And I got a special treat when he asked if I'd help him hitch the Belgian horse team to the wagon for the hayride. Haven't done that in over thirty years! I must admit I got a little misty out there on the prairie, what with the crisp air, the good food, the western theme, the scotch...

The entertainment hi-lite was an Australian bullwhip champion demonstrating his talents with the help of some rather dubious volunteers from CPC members. I have never heard CJ McMullin's knees knock so loud – well not since Edmonton last year when we were both outside in our kilts freezing our cojonés!

Afterward we were bussed back to the hotel for the hospitality suite hosted by Great Plains Region. St. Albert's Dave Cameron was selling tickets for their "Great Golf Ball Drop". Apparently they're dropping 5,000 golf balls from a helicopter and if yours is closest to the pin you win \$5,000. (I can still hear WKRP Station Manager Arthur Carlson: "As God is my witness, I thought turkeys could fly!"). Second and third place prizes of \$2,000 and \$1,000 are also up for grabs.

Friday, September 16

Again with the melon and croissants??? Two words: BAY-CON!!!! I swear if anybody ever again comes at me with a slice of cantaloupe and a croissant and tells me it's breakfast, we're gonna go round & round!

Followed that up with the "Business of Progress" session hosted by incoming National President Bob Lockhart. Everyone in attendance got a "New Officers" handbook – sort of a streamlined Blue Book excerpt, which I think we ought to call the Gold Book. Excellent resource we can all use, with overviews of board positions at the National, Regional, Zone and Club levels, as well as templates for doing financial reports, minutes, etc.

President Bob announced one of his mandates for the coming year is to get Central Region in general (and he confided to me in person later on, CPC Toronto Downtown in particular) up to snuff. Works for me.



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The second morning session I attended was the "You Are Not Alone" session – in my opinion the best of all the sessions I attended. It was basically brainstorming on ideas to get club strength up. It did run a tad long, but some very good ideas.

Speaking of getting club strength up, everyone in the country should pick Quidi Vidi's Crystal Eagan apart and find out how to clone her. She went from being the only person left in her club at last year's convention to bringing in 13 dynamic women to give rebirth to the Quidi Vidi club, and she did it basically by herself! Way-ta-go Crystal!!!

The CPCF luncheon was truly an event for the ages. We came into this year's convention \$55,000 shy of realizing our million dollar mark. Bruce Mansour of Halifax announced an initiative he and the CPCF board have been planning all year: "Sprint to the Finish". Gentlemen, I can tell you - it was no sprint; it was a freakin' lightning-bolt cakewalk! In the span of about twelve minutes, we not only hit the million, but got another \$1,000 to kick off the next million! I pledged the \$200 the club budgeted for me to spend on the auction, and then ponied up \$1,000 of my own money. Pledges were going fast & furious from both clubs and individuals, with CPC Halifax topping up the last \$1,500 to get us to the million.

Speaking of the auction, just to digress for a moment, I was able to purchase two wonderful prints of Saskatchewan rural scenery – the usual: train, wheat field, grain elevator, combine – for \$45.00 each. With taxes they came to \$102 & change – I've got the receipts. Last I saw in the auction they were at \$65 each and counting – not sure what the final tally was.

Back to the luncheon: the guest speaker was the Head of Special Olympics in Saskatchewan (can't recall his name); special guest Special Olympian Lisa Brianna "Bree" Phillips – she was named Saskatchewan Special Olympics Female Athlete of the Year in September 2003, and is an honorary member of CPC Saskatoon Meewasin.

CPC Toronto Downtown received a Diamond Award for our club's contribution of \$100 per member – I have the crest and will bring it to our meeting in October. Other awards included Gary Haynes of CPC St. John's and Ron Lloyd of CPC Greater Vancouver becoming only the second and third recipients in CPC history of the \$10,000 Premiere Circle. They each received a gold ring.

Finally, a photo of six fellow Progressions (they know who they are) "painting the prairie" as it were, was auctioned off and raised \$1,600. CPC Calgary Downtown bought it and promptly "donated" it to Rosalie Courage! Proud moment, there boys! Not too easy to tell who's actually in the shot, but rumour has it the negatives are already up on the internet!

Friday afternoon had more sessions, one which I attended called "Humour in Your Life". I stayed as long as I could take it – not very long, in other words. Though she tried, the guest speaker just wasn't that humorous – the Newfs are a LOT funnier, believe me.

Dinner was a fairly low-key affair with a come-as-you-are kinda deal, followed by a dance with a band called the Capitals.

CPC St. John's hosted the hospitality suite, and for some reason I don't remember any of it.



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Saturday, September 17

Finally! Grease for breakfast! Yahoo! The AGM followed, and I don't mind saying it was the best-run AGM anybody could remember. Juanita should give a seminar on how to run a meeting!

Numbers to consider:

- 35 clubs across the country, 29 in attendance.
- 646 active members, 161 in attendance at this year's convention.
- Over \$2.5 million raised in charitable funds, country-wide! Gawd, I love this organisation!

Three votes taken:

- A resolution to change the National By-laws was passed – notes to be included in our next club meeting, but basically it was to include the CPCF Chair as a full voting member of the National Board.
- Three directors were chosen: Brenda Mahoney, Calgary City Centre voted in as National Education Director; Darlene Brunskill, Regina Wascana named National Publicity/PR Director by acclamation; Jean Scott volunteered to stand as National Communications Director.

Convention reports from CPC St. John's – "We've Been Away Too Long" (gawd, my ribs are still aching from the laughter!) and CPC Brampton (great presentation, gonna be a greater convention).

- Final vote held to determine host city for 2008 National Convention – clubs submitting bids to host included Calgary Downtown (promised the greasiest breakfasts known to man), Regina Wascana (some of the prettiest Progressions known to man), and Greater Moncton Men; congratulations to Greater Moncton Men as host club for the 2008 National Convention.

CPC Halifax submitted intention to submit a bid for 2010 National Convention.

Outgoing President's remarks, followed by brief remarks from incoming President-elect Terry Clarke, and a motion of thanks for service to the outgoing National officers. And with all that, the AGM was done in just over two hours! Again, Juanita should give a seminar...

The National Awards luncheon followed, with the following awards being handed out:

- National Attendance Award – Calgary City Centre
- National Communications Award – Greater Moncton Men
- National Community Service Award – Greater Moncton Men
- National Fellowship Award – Halifax
- National Membership Award – none
- National Ways & Means Award – Calgary Downtown
- National Publicity & Public Relations Award – Halifax Cornwallis
- Pride in Progress Award – Crystal Eagan, Quidi Vidi (13 new members), plus 2 others
- Outstanding Zone Governor Award – John Holman, Brampton

Installation of new National board and Zone Governors, followed by incoming National President's remarks from Bob Lockhart.

Following the luncheon I went back to my room and slept for a couple of hours.



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The President's Ball began promptly at 6:00 pm – okay not quite promptly. Apparently a few people had trouble waking up from their afternoon naps.

Final awards were handed out as usual:

- The Hall of Fame Award was presented to someone near and dear to our hearts, Trillium's own Mary Kutarna. Personally I think it was long overdue; being married to Alan ought to have earned her automatic Hall of Fame status years ago!
- National Progressian of the Year – Grant Blakely, Calgary Bow River
- National President's Award (Club of the Year) – Calgary Bow River

Bow River's Tom Kohl and seven other members of Bow River had a special reserved table that he bid on and won at last year's convention. Separate menu, their own wine, their own service – very special. Same kinda deal was auctioned off for next year's convention, raising yet another \$6,000 for CPCF. All told, not only did this year's convention pass the million dollar mark, we've also raised almost \$25,000 into the second million! Uh... that's over \$80,000 we raised at this convention alone if you're keeping score!

The entertainment for the evening was a young man named Colby Nargang who was born with Williams Syndrome. Williams Syndrome is a rare, congenital disorder which occurs in 1 in 20,000 live births. There is no cure for Williams Syndrome. Treatment is symptomatic and supportive. Individuals with Williams Syndrome need regular monitoring for potential medical problems by a physician familiar with the disorder, as well as specialized services to maximize their potential.

Anyway, the upshot of it was, this young man was not only blind, but probably the best Elvis and Roy Orbison impersonator I've ever heard. What a voice! I saw Roy Orbison live once, and I'm tellin' ya, this kid nutted it! The St. John's boys were so impressed (and they know a thing or two about music on the rock) that they're flying him out to Convention next year at their expense, which, given the entourage this young man needs to help him in his chosen profession, is no small nickel! Word round the campfire is it's gonna run 'da boys' around five grand!

Colby hung around and performed again at the hospitality suite. Hosted by Calgary City Centre, the theme was "Jammin' in Your Jammies". Now I'm of the opinion that everyone there was either lying about their jammies or was seriously over-dressed! And the guy in the silk nightie and pantyhose was one thing, but that thong was really, shall we say, stretching things a bit. And he was stone cold sober too -- doesn't drink, apparently! But that's all right; after seein' that the rest of us more than made up for it!

Finally, I promised some detail about next year's convention. It's \$395 if you register early (\$420 after June 30, 2006), but Gary Haynes in a bit of Newf largesse knocked it down to \$350 if you registered Saturday. There's also a golf tournament of course (\$75), and the registration form has golf shirts listed at \$45, and a polar fleece at \$60. Bruce Lyle commented he wants to see what a \$60 fleece looks like. I told him if he paid \$60 for the golf shirt, he got fleeced.

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