

LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

OUR PENSION SURPLUS MONEY IS COMING! NOW WHAT?

BY ONTARIO REGION VP TALIN VARTANIAN



Illustration by Scott Galley

In a few weeks, our share of the CBC pension surplus will be landing in our bank accounts. The PNA played a key role in making this happen. It took hard work, money to pay for legal fees, and a fierce determination to fight for our rights.

This victory is the most urgent, important reason we need every CBC pensioner to join the PNA. It's also why each one of us needs to make it our mission to recruit new members.

Continued...

CHEQUES ARE COMING, NOW WHAT? CONT'D...

It's critical to strengthen the PNA's ability to stand up for us in the future because there are more surpluses to come. The CBC took a pension holiday in 2023 because our plan is doing so well (see "By the Numbers" on page 9) and all indications are that there will be a surplus in 2024, too. Once again, the Corporation will be required to distribute an equivalent share with us.

This victory is the most urgent, important reason we need every CBC pensioner to join the PNA.

We don't know what hurdles our Association might face next time, however one thing is certain. The PNA is the only organization specifically created to defend our pensions. Each one of us can make sure it's recognized as our collective voice at the table by helping to increase membership to at least two-thirds of all CBC pensioners.

We currently stand at 53%, and the financial regulator clearly was not convinced that membership in the Association was high enough to consider it representative of all

Continued...

Livewire is the Ontario Region newsletter of the PNA

**The CBC Pensioners
National Association**

Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past

**L'Association nationale
des retraités de la SRC**

Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé

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Feedback and ideas are welcome.

Please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

CHEQUES ARE COMING, NOW WHAT? CONT'D...

pensioners. That led to the multiple hurdles and delays we faced.

More than 5,000 of our former colleagues have not joined the PNA, and it's up to us to convince them to become members. Make a list of all the people you worked with. If you don't know whether they've joined, ask them. If they aren't members, send them the link to our new recruitment video (*see box story on next page*) that explains why it matters.

Shatter some myths while you're at it: No, you're not automatically a member when you begin to collect your pension. And no, the PNA is not just a social club. It's the only organization we have that protects the rights of all CBC pensioners.

We depend entirely on word of mouth and personal connections to identify potential new members.

We all know former colleagues who left the CBC to work elsewhere, deferring their pensions for a later time. Many of them wrongly assume PNA membership is automatic when they begin to collect their pension. Without your help, we have no way of knowing who they are, so we can

invite them to hop on board. It's the same for spouses of our late colleagues. They may think they're members when their partner dies. They aren't. We need to invite surviving spouses to sign up.

The CBC will not share information with us, citing privacy concerns. That means we depend entirely on word of mouth and personal connections to identify potential new members. We depend on you. If you don't want to do the recruiting yourself, please write to ontario@cbcpcensioners.ca with the names and email addresses of former colleagues, and we'll be sure someone follows up. But a call from an acquaintance is best. We would much prefer that you take up this challenge yourself.

Make it a personal goal to recruit at least one new person. If we all do that, we'll double our numbers. You won't just be helping the PNA. You'll be helping yourself.

A-TEAM CREATES A PROFESSIONAL PNA RECRUITMENT VIDEO



A small but mighty group of former CBC pros created a powerful new tool to help each one of us recruit new members. It's a short video and is now available on the PNA website:

<https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/>

Click on the red "Join Us" button to watch it.

Credits and kudos to host Kelly Crowe, producers Lynn Burgess and Paul Harrington, video editor Sheldon Beldick, and videographer Ted Hackborn. The Ontario Region Communications Committee commissioned them for this project, and premièred their work at the PNA convention in Ottawa in May, to rave reviews.

Please watch the video, post it to your social media pages, and send it to anyone you know who has yet to join the PNA. The message is concise, compelling, and convincing.

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THE INSIDE WIRE: A SOOTHING MUSICAL GEM FROM THE '60S

BY JOE SOLWAY

We all have our desert island disc, and this is mine. (Of course, I'd have to be stranded with a record player too.)

Mimi Fariña was best known as the younger sister of the great Joan Baez. Mimi was a singer of Mexican-American background who founded an organization that brought free live music to audiences with limited access to it. At the age of 18, she married Richard Fariña, a Cuban-American; a close friend of Bob Dylan; a poet and novelist; and a composer and singer.



Continued...

THE INSIDE WIRE, CONT'D...

Richard and Mimi's lives were linked with those of Dylan and Baez

Fariña, by David Hajdu. It's a fascinating glimpse into the folk culture of the 1960s on university campuses, in Greenwich Village, and more.

Mimi and Richard's music is varied and sublime, from satirical commentaries about wannabe hipsters and American politics, to love songs, to sea-shanty-inspired ballads. They accompany themselves on dulcimer and guitar, which gives their music a soothing and velvety texture, especially on the instrumentals. (I bought a dulcimer so I could play their tunes, but I wasn't very good.)

Continued...

ABOUT JOE SOLWAY

Joe Solway spent nearly two decades at CBC Radio in Toronto, often as the early morning chase producer on the Toronto program *Metro Morning*. He was the surprise wake-up caller for politicians and police chiefs, CEOs and climatologists. Solway's career also included stints as a producer in private radio and TV; film editing (when it was still real film); and in 1985, he wrote a baseball book called *Blue Jays Win - a Souvenir Edition*, which they didn't. The manuscript is still in his basement.

Since his retirement, Joe has been active in Rotary International, at the local regional and national levels. His seventh annual Concert to Feed the Need in Durham, a fundraiser for food security is scheduled for December, at the Biltmore Theatre in Oshawa.



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THE INSIDE WIRE, CONT'D...

The instruments intertwine—kind of like the musicians themselves—sometimes one playing off the other, sometimes in perfect harmony. Vocally, it's a true partnership—with neither taking the lead on most numbers, singing both verses and choruses together. Their songs are original, save for the odd sample riff in the instrumentals. Their studio musicians were some of the leading artists of the day: guitarist Bruce Langhorne, who also played with Dylan; bassist Felix Pappalardi of the group Mountain, also producer of Cream and the Canadian band, Kensington Market; and the great harmonica player and blues artist, John Hammond.

Richard was 29 when he died in 1966 after a party celebrating Mimi's 21st birthday, when he was a passenger on a motorcycle that careened off a road in Carmel Valley, California. It was just two days after his first novel was published, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up to Me*. Mimi died of cancer in 2001, at age 56.

The Best of Mimi and Richard Fariña is a compilation of their only two albums: *Celebrations for a Grey Day* and *Reflections in a Crystal Wind*. Hope you discover and enjoy it.

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know that when you move, it's critical to share your new address not only with the PNA, but with the CBC's Pension Payroll division?

By telling the PNA, you'll continue to receive all its emails, newsletters, and other communications. And updating your information with Pension Payroll will ensure your tax slips and other critical documents will arrive at the right address. Payroll will inform the Pension Administration Centre on your behalf, so you'll receive information such as the recent pension surplus package.

Let both know with one email. Send it to info@cbcpensioners.ca and pension@cbc.ca.

Continued...

THE DOMINO EFFECT IN THE ONTARIO REGION OF THE PNA

BY ONTARIO PRESIDENT BARBARA SAXBERG

When I agreed to stand as vice president for the Ontario PNA, I suppose it was always possible I might move into the president's chair, but I must admit I fully expected to serve out the term as Gail Carducci's second in command.

Gail has moved on and up to take over as our National VP (Anglophone), so here I am. She served the Region exceptionally well and we have much to thank her for. Under her leadership, among other things, our membership numbers have increased significantly. We also have this revitalized newsletter, edited by Talin Vartanian, and a nifty new recruitment video that is the envy of the other Regions within the PNA. *(See page 4 of this newsletter for more details about that.)*

Gail's move has created a domino effect. Talin left the position of Region secretary to become VP (and she'll continue to produce Livewire, thank goodness!), and Mike Darley has moved from Toronto director to secretary. Ben Daube remains as treasurer. I



know we'll make an excellent executive team, and I'm looking forward to working more closely with them.

Clearly, recruitment continues to be a priority for the PNA and for Ontario in particular. Our efforts in that regard won't slow down and we'll continue to put a big emphasis on the Toronto area, where the largest number of Ontario CBC retirees reside. I also hope more of you will be involved in the activities of the PNA. You've all heard the phrase, "many hands make light work." We can use all the hands we can get. If you're interested, we have lots of options: join a committee, work on a project, help plan an event, and more. We have a lot

Continued...

DOMINO EFFECT, CONT'D

of talented people in our ranks, and we need you.

At the National level, I will continue to represent the Region on the National Board and will chair the standing committees on Bylaws & Governance, and Advocacy. I'm pleased to report we have some new members joining Advocacy, and we're beginning our work preparing for Canada's next federal election. Watch for backgrounders, talking points, and questions for your local candidates, on issues we believe are of concern to older adults in Canada. We also welcome suggestions you might have for topics you'd like us to tackle.

Finally, I hope you all enjoy a happy and healthy summer before we roll up our sleeves and get back to business in the fall.

**BY THE NUMBERS: STATUS OF THE CBC PENSION PLAN,
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023**

Amount of pension surplus - \$2.462 billion

Number of new active contributors in the fourth quarter of 2023 - 139

Number of newly retired members in the fourth quarter of 2023 - 78

Number of pensions being paid - 10,283

Number of pension plan contributors - 7,641

Total paid to pensioners in 2023 - \$328 million

Total contributions from employees in 2023 - \$59 million

Total contributions from the CBC in 2023 - Zero*

* Due to the surplus in our pension plan, the CBC is required to suspend contributions.

* Source: CBC Pension Board of Trustees Communiqué,
March 2024

LEGACY INTERVIEWS: PRESERVING, HONOURING, AND SHARING OUR PAST

BY SUSAN HELWIG

Over the past few months, Legacy Interviews has recorded nine interviews with PNA members who spent their careers working for the CBC.

This marks the first step in a project run by volunteers, retired CBCers who are supporting an oral history project launched by the Ontario Region of the PNA. Our mission is to record, share and preserve some of the behind-the-scenes recollections from our careers, as a contribution to the history of Canadian public broadcasting.



Former CBC Radio documentary producer Karin Wells interviewed Mark Starowicz (Photo by Ira Basen)

Here are some highlights from our recordings:

- Whit Fraser, CBC Radio and Television reporter, interviewed by former Ideas host Paul Kennedy, looking back at historic broadcasts from the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry;
- Don Chapman, CBC technician, recalling his work during the early days of television;
- Barbara Smith, Radio host, a teenager when she started in television, remembers notable achievements, including interviews with Prime Minister Diefenbaker and U.S. President Jimmy Carter;
- It took several interviews with Mark Starowicz to gather memories from a distinguished career in broadcast journalism, from *As It Happens*, to creating *Sunday Morning* and *The Journal*. In one interview, the making of *Canada: A People's History*.

Continued...

LEGACY INTERVIEWS, CONTINUED...

Legacy Interviews looks forward to finding ways to share these audio interviews online, whole or in part, with members of the PNA. In addition, we are seeking a home for this collection with a government or university archive. Also to be considered: video recordings. So far, this has been audio only.

This project is meaningful, and it fulfills an essential part of the PNA's commitment to "sharing our past."

Please consider joining our team of interviewers and producers. We're taking a break for the summer, and will resume in the fall.

THE LEGACY INTERVIEWS TEAM (SO FAR!)

Chair - Susan Helwig

Interviewers - Ira Basen, Heather Evans, Paul Kennedy, Karen Levine, Christopher Thomas, Steve Wadhams, Karin Wells

Producers - Ira Basen, Bill Loucks, Joan Melanson

Data Management - Joe Lawlor

Advisory group - Marlene Murphy, Talin Vartanian, Bob Waller

Please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com to say you'd like to join us.

FACEBOOK FOLLOW!

If you're on Facebook, be sure to sign up for the Ontario PNA page: "Ontario CBC PNA." It's not to be confused with a former page "Ontario Region CBC PNA," which was hacked.

You'll get the most current news about our pension surplus payments, photos of PNA events, and more.



Ontario CBC PNA

55 likes • 203 followers



With chapters in South Western Ontario, Golden Horseshoe, North-Central, Durham-Trent and Toronto

FLASHPOINTS AND SNAPSHOTS OF THE PNA CONVENTION

STORY BY TALIN VARTANIAN, ALL PHOTOS BY TED HACKBORN



PNA national convention and AGM in Ottawa, in May

A motley crew of CBC pensioners from across Canada gathered in Ottawa in May for the PNA's triennial convention and Annual General Meeting (AGM). There were long-standing volunteers and office holders from across the country, along with many "newbies."

The objective of the convention changed. In the past, delegates selected a new slate of executives to sit on the national Board, which meant that only those eligible to vote and present in the room were able to cast a vote. This year, an election committee was poised to hold a national electronic vote, enfranchising every dues-paying member. However, the board executives were confirmed by acclamation. They are President Dan Oldfield, Vice President (Anglophone) Gail Carducci, Vice President (Francophone) Pierre-Léon Lafrance, and returning Treasurer Réjean Labrie. They will serve for three years.

A redefinition of this year's convention was a well-intentioned, last-minute effort. Three half-day workshops dealt with PNA priorities: recruitment, member engagement, and communications.

Continued...

PNA CONVENTION, CONT'D...

The response to them was mixed. Most people thought they were informative and beneficial; others, not so much. Ontario member Lise Lareau proposed a resolution to gather feedback, and the national board promptly sent a survey to all participants. The results of that questionnaire will help guide the Board's decision on the future of PNA conventions, what their purpose might be, and whether to hold them at all, given the expense.



The Ontario delegation, left to right: Mike Darley, Marie Clarke-Davies, Bob Waller, Lise Lareau, Gail Carducci, Talin Vartanian, Randy Creighton, Effy Terry, and Gino Piazza, with PNA President Dan Oldfield

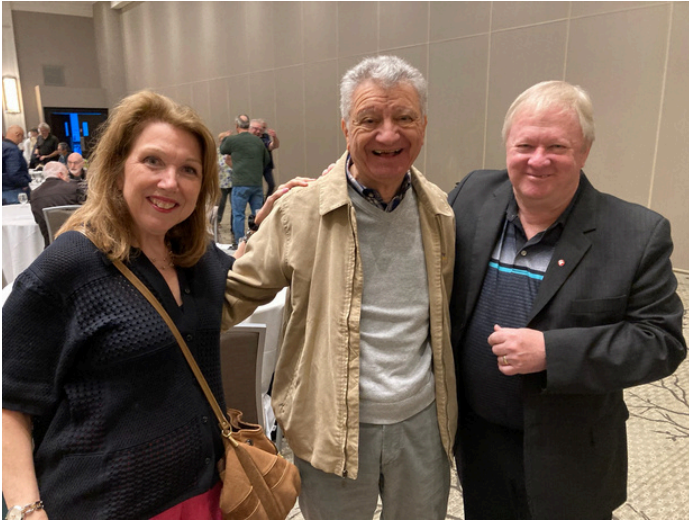
In addition to Ontario president Gail Carducci and VP Barbara Saxberg (who was unable to attend because she was in Thunder Bay, performing in a play!), Ontario is entitled to send five voting delegates. Board members selected them with a democratic vote: Golden Horseshoe Chapter President Bob Waller, Board Secretary Talin Vartanian, Toronto Directors Lise Lareau and Mike Darley, and Durham-Trent Chapter President Effy Terry. Ontario also sent three non-voting alternates: Marie Clarke-Davies (Golden Horseshoe Chapter), Randy Creighton (who lives in Thunder Bay), and Southwestern Ontario Chapter President Gino Piazza.

In Ottawa, Piazza proposed a second resolution: that at future conventions, Chapter presidents be guaranteed standing as voting delegates (not as alternates), with full funding by the National Board of the PNA. As Carducci noted at the time, the idea was fundamentally undemocratic. It would mandate that 80 per cent of Ontario's delegates (four of our five) would represent the 42 per cent of Ontario PNA members who live outside Toronto. National Capital Region President Marc-Philippe Laurin spoke in favour, noting that Chapter presidents ought to be at the convention as representatives of their membership.

Continued...

PNA CONVENTION, CONT'D...

The resolution passed, and it's now in the hands of the national PNA Board. It applies only to PNA conventions, which may or may not be held in the future. It does not apply to the national AGM because any dues-paying member may attend, and vote, at the PNA's Annual General Meeting.



Lise Lareau, former CBC President
Tony Manera and PNA President Dan Oldfield



Bob Waller and Gail Carducci with new
Francophone VP Pierre-Léon Lafrance



Above, Quebec Region VP Micheline Provost and
PNA President Dan Oldfield

Left, Teddy Katz, Mike Darley and Talin Vartanian with
Alberta/Sask./NWT VP Lutz Walsh

MIA AT THE AGM

Ontario Region President Barbara Saxberg wished she could be in two places at once. She was unable to attend the PNA's convention and AGM because she was on stage in Thunder Bay. Saxberg had a starring role in the play *Liars at a Funeral*, a farce written by Canadian playwright Sophia Fabiilli. It was staged at the Magnus Theatre, the only professional theatre between Barrie and Winnipeg. Saxberg played the matriarch Mavis, who decided the best way to unite her dysfunctional family was to fake her own funeral.



Barbara Saxberg performing at the Magnus Theatre in Thunder Bay (Photo by Keegan Richard)

MEET A MEMBER: ANNE MERCER

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

Anne Mercer witnessed the gradual evolution of the CBC Reference Library over more than three decades, from 1983 until she left in 2017.

On her first day, she reported to work at 365 Church Street where a small team of librarians scoured through stacks of newspapers, with grease pencils in hand, marking articles for the library's extensive clipping files. They might have been about subjects, such as "Canadian economy" or "mafia"; about notable people, such as B.C. Premier "Bill Bennett" or singer "Anne Murray"; or about events, such as "space shuttle" or "Olympics." Others were responsible for clipping the articles, and pasting them onto paper, for preservation in the library's extensive bank of filing cabinets.

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...

There was also a card catalogue for the book collection, and a binder of subject headings for the clippings. Microfiche files held back issues of magazines and newspapers.

When researchers or producers called to ask for background material, a librarian would photocopy the articles they needed, then summon the in-house courier to deliver them to one of 26 different buildings scattered across Toronto. Eventually, the CBC adopted



Anne Mercer in the Reference Library in 2002
(Photo courtesy of Leone Earls)

an exciting new technology called the fax machine, allowing librarians to send information through the ether.

“The library was not deemed worthy of such a machine, so we had to run to the mailroom every time we had to fax something. That ended when someone told me that one of the mailroom guys thought I had a crush on him, since I was there so often. He called me the girl with the cowboy boots,” Mercer recalls. “I refused to go to the mailroom again, and we finally managed to get our own fax machine.”

“We had to fight for everything we got,” she says. Despite being in extremely high demand, the

Reference Library had only one photocopier for many years, then one fax machine, then just one computer.

“It was in another room, and whenever we had a question that required using it, we’d shout ‘Computer!’ and go to that room,” Mercer remembers. “It meant we’d be out of circulation for a while, and not available to pick up calls that came in.”

She also remembers that, in the early days, computer paper didn’t come in sheets. It was fed through a dot-matrix printer in one long paper stream, held in place with

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...

sprockets. When the printing went off-track, the sound would be a tell-tale sign, and a librarian would have to race over to straighten things out. The librarians had to rip the holes off the sides of the printed pages, fold them along tear lines, then send them off.

"In September 1992, we moved into the new building on Front Street, and Leone [Leone Earls, library manager] advised us just before the move that we would each have our own individual computers." Mercer says. "I can still remember how amazed we were to hear this!"

Despite being in extremely high demand, the Reference Library had only one photocopier for many years, then one fax machine, then just one computer.

Computers spelled the end of an era. Most of the books, clipping files and filing cabinets disappeared, then the microfiche, too. But the library still offered hard copies of newspapers from across the country, and an extensive collection of magazines.

Until it didn't.

Eventually, upper management decided there was no need for reading materials, and the library shifted from a manual to a digital operation, with databases such as the full text of the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star. Today's CBC Reference Library looks like any other office in the building.

"Fortunately, I was about to leave at that point," Mercer says. We had to get rid of a lot of books, and we called other librarians from across the city who came in and took them."

It was a sad memory, but Mercer has grown to prefer the instant availability of e-books to paper books. And, although she loved her work, she thought of it as an interesting

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...

job more than as a calling. After graduating from the University of Toronto with a bachelor's degree, she briefly contemplated teaching or going to law school, until her father (a lawyer) advised her not to take that path. She chose to go to the University of Western Ontario for a Master of Library Science, a degree that was essential for CBC librarians.

Initially, Mercer worked in the libraries of some private companies. After travelling to Italy for five months, she spotted a notice from the CBC at the U of T library school, and got the job.

Although CBC employees have instant access to information through their computers, the library remains essential.

"We paid a lot of money for databases that gave us resources no one else had," Mercer says. "When everyone had Google, I began to wonder, 'What are we going to do?' because people won't need us so much. But the questions changed, and we got different types of databases. For example, we could do property searches or home ownership history for investigative stories."



Anne Mercer delivers food to those in need for the Scarborough non-profit Share 365 (Photo by Muriel Bull)

Some CBC clients were more demanding or difficult than others. Mercer recalls feeling dread when the acclaimed producer and director John Reeves was on the other end of the phone. Inevitably, she'd have trouble instantly finding a piece of information he needed, and she'd ask, "Can I get back to you on that?" Reeves would reply with, "No." He needed it, and he needed it "Now!"

The other big headache the librarians faced was in dealing with inter-library loans. Often, they would borrow books from other libraries on behalf of CBC producers and researchers. The problem

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER, CONT'D...

was that many people didn't return them, and the fines could be hefty. For a few years, one librarian's job was devoted to chasing down delinquents.

Mercer leads an easy post-CBC life of reading (mostly mysteries) and volunteering for an organization called Share 365, near her home in Scarborough. They maintain a food bank for local residents to pick up what they need, but some people can't go there.

"I deliver to immigrants, pensioners, and disabled people, who aren't able to pick up what they need," Mercer says, "I talk to them, and get to know them, and they're all so friendly and grateful."

HOW MUCH MONEY WILL I GET FROM THE PENSION SURPLUS?



The answer to that critical question will be available in advance of the payments in just one place: the Pension Administration Centre (PAC) website. Here's a follow-up question we should be asking ourselves: Do I know how to log into PAC, and open my personal page?

As soon as our individual pension surplus calculations are ready, we'll be notified by email if PAC has an email address for you. But that "how-much" number will not be coming to us in the mail. If PAC doesn't have an email address for you, you will receive an information package by Canada Post, but it may arrive after the payments have been made.

The office of the PNA (our pensioners' association) will not have your personal payout information.

If you don't have a PAC account, if you don't remember whether you have one, or if you haven't logged on in a long time, the time to take care of that is now. As in today. When hundreds of people realize they're stumped, they'll be calling for help at the same time.

Continued...

HOW MUCH MONEY WILL I GET?, CONT'D...

Simple instructions on how to log into PAC are on [this page](#) of the PNA website:

To provide PAC with your e-mail address, please email pension@cbc.ca along with your CBC ID.

The price of procrastinating now is panicking later.

CRITICAL DATES

JULY 8 – *If PAC has your email address, you will be able to log onto your personal page and learn how much money you'll receive from the surplus.*

JULY 17 – *If PAC does not have your email address, it will inform you of the amount you'll receive via Canada Post, on or about this date.*

JULY 30 – We will receive our pension surplus payments.

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL



PNA gathering in June at Noonan's pub in Toronto (Photo by Ian Cooper)

More than a hundred PNA members from across southern Ontario gathered at Noonan's pub on June 18th, to share food, drinks, and memories. Members traveled from communities such as Hamilton, St. Catharines, and Burlington to schmooze with "the family."

A 50/50 draw raised \$275 to support Second Harvest, a non-profit that rescues perfectly good food from grocery stores, restaurants, and other suppliers, and delivers it in refrigerated trucks to agencies that feed the hungry.

Continued...

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...



Joan Melanson, Dianne Buckner and Sophia Hadzipetros
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)



Background: Joe Coté, Wayne Glover and Linda Bayliffe; foreground: Jim Curran
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)



Newly recruited PNA member Michael Hughes and Talin Vartanian
(Photo by Ted Hackborn)

Continued...

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...

Ted Hackborn, Ian Cooper, Frank Quinn and Alex Sutton
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)



Geoffrey Hopkinson
and Sharon Easby
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)

Jade Mah and Mike Darley
selling 50/50 tickets
(Photo by Ted Hackborn)



Continued...

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...



New member Tracie Tighe, who won the 50/50 draw, and Megan Beeckmans (Photo by Neith MacDonald)

Diana Richter, Bernard Joosten, Barb Farquharson, Gail Carducci and Dianne Coles (Photo by Ted Hackborn)



Chris Germanakos, James Hay and Geraldine Connolly (Photo by Ted Hackborn)

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...

Linda Bayliffe, newly appointed Toronto Director Nazat Lilley and Carole Field
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)



Clockwise from foreground left: Susan Kawidjaja-Cheung, Cindy Beatty, Sarah Yee, Margaret Hall and Anne Quan
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)

Neith MacDonald, David Wilson and Phil Kawasoe
(Photo by Ted Hackborn)



Continued...

AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...



Vince Carlin, Lise Lareau and Fred Langan
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)

Paula Neilson and Pat Goodland
(Photo by Ted Hackborn)



Alan Lawrence and Pat Onysko
(Photo by Ian Cooper)



AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD, CONT'D...



Tony Germin, Marcel Leblond,
and Joe Lawlor
(Photo by Neith MacDonald)



Jill Burns, James Hay, Talin Vartanian
and Neil Avey
(Photo by Ted Hackborn)

FIVE HOT TIPS FOR NAVIGATING CALL-CENTRE HELL

BY TALIN VARTANIAN (AKA CITIZEN TALIN)

When you need to phone a big organization for help, it's luck of the draw: You may connect with a helpful, kind, patient person or with someone who's curt, difficult, and evasive. It could happen with Canada Life, Bell, Rogers, Air Canada, Ticketmaster or Revenue Canada.

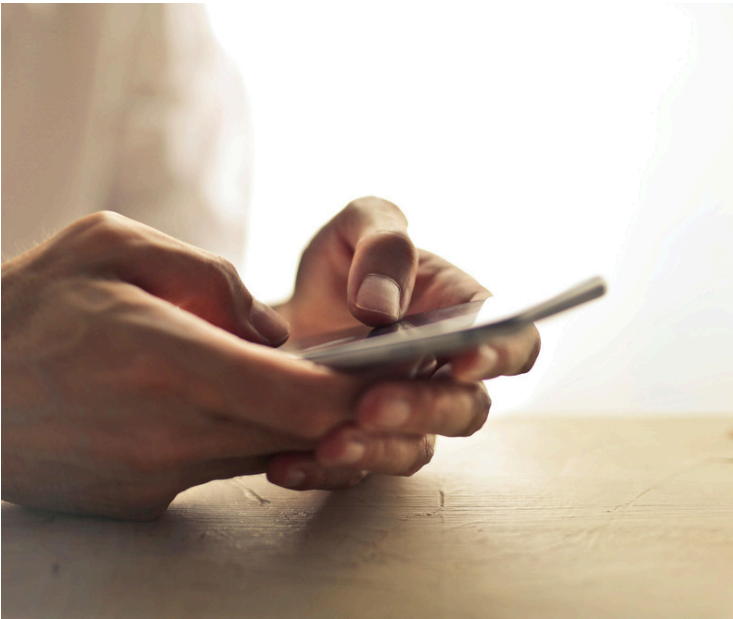


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NAVIGATING CALL CENTRES, CONTINUED...

Here are some tips to help make it a better experience.

- If you can, record the call. They often do, why shouldn't you? Use "speaker phone" mode, and open "Voice memos" on another device (I use my iPad). If all goes well, and you don't need the recording, just delete it later.
- Have a pen and paper in hand. At the beginning of the call, ask for the person's name (they often will give first name only) and their employee number. That number is critical. If the person speaks too fast, mumbles, or you're simply not sure what you heard, stop them, and ask them to repeat their name and number... slowly. Write it down. Instantly, this puts them on alert that you can identify them if things go off the rails. The likelihood of having a positive experience just shot up.



- Even if you're upset, stay calm, be polite, and use the person's name during the call. (They're trained to use yours.)
 - Ensure you're both on the same page about what happens next. Is the employee authorizing a refund? Are you going away to think about an offer? Is there a deadline? Will the person on the phone be escalating your complaint? To whom?
- At the end of the call, ask for a reference number for the conversation. This is particularly important if you were quoted a better rate or given a promise for service. If you need to phone back, chances are slim you'll be speaking with the same person. The reference number will allow the next employee to find the earlier commitment.

WRITTEN ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?

OUR MEMBERS WRITE BOOKS, AND WE'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THEM



One of the PNA's newest members is an investigative journalist, and former host of CBC Radio's *As It Happens*. Carol Off is also a prolific author.

Here's a rundown of her books, beginning with a provocative one that was just published.

At a Loss for Words: Conversation in an Age of Rage

Non-fiction, published in 2024

An in-depth look at six words that have been distorted and weaponized in recent years—including "democracy," "freedom," and "truth"—and how we might reclaim them.

The Ghosts of Medak Pocket: The Story of Canada's Secret War

Non-fiction, published in 2010

Canadian peacekeepers in Medak Pocket, Croatia, were haunted by the atrocities they witnessed, then they were silenced. This is their story.

The Lion, the Fox and the Eagle: A Story of Generals and Justice in Rwanda and Yugoslavia

Non-fiction, published in 2010

The failures of peacekeeping missions in Sarajevo and Rwanda were two great international tragedies in the 1990s. This book offers a riveting and disturbing picture of three Canadians at the centre of those events: Romeo Dallaire (the lion), Lewis MacKenzie (the fox) and Louise Arbour (the eagle).

WRITTEN ANY GOOD BOOKS, CONT'D...

All We Leave Behind: A Reporter's Journey into the Lives of Others

Non-fiction, published in 2018

How the author broke all her own rules to help an Afghan family escape from a murderous warlord and reach safety. Winner of four major book prizes, including the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-fiction.

Bitter Chocolate: Investigating the Dark Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet

Non-fiction, published in 2007

The history of exploitation, colonization, slavery, and greed that feeds the world's insatiable desire for all things chocolate, and a multi-billion-dollar industry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks so much to everyone involved in putting this together! It's so useful and informative.

Sad to see the names of those who have passed, a few whom I worked with in my post-production editing career at the Corp.

Peter Ovens

Retired post-production editor

I spent part of yesterday reading *Livewire*. GREAT and congratulations to you!

I enjoyed every minute reading Dan's introduction. I now am convinced we have one of the best presidents ever! I was as well impressed by your interview with Pierre-Léon Lafrance. I do not know him personally, and have never worked with him, but I loved his approach. Every Franco member of our Association should read that interview.

Micheline Savoie

Former spokesperson, Radio-Canada

Thanks for the kind words about *Livewire*. Feedback is welcome pnalivewire@gmail.com.

THE MAGIC OF LIFT LOCKS ON A SCENIC BOAT CRUISE

The Durham-Trent Chapter of the PNA invited Ontario members to a riverboat cruise last month, departing from Peterborough. It was through a small section of the Trent-Severn Waterway: 386 kilometers of rivers, channels and lakes spanning Central Ontario, joining the Bay of Quinte with Georgian Bay.



Entering the first lock (Photo by Talin Vartanian)

PNA members Evelyn Bannister, Effy Terry, Talin Vartanian, Bette Laderoute, and John Lewis with his wife Nancy Lewis (Photo by Georgia Nicopolous)



The Peterborough Lift Lock opened in 1904. It's the highest hydraulic lift lock in the world, and is designated as a national historic site. It can lift boats 19.8 meters (almost 65 feet). (Photo by Effy Terry)



Rick Cluff died on July 2, at the age of 74. He was a national sports journalist in Toronto for many years, then became host of *The Early Edition*, the CBC Radio morning show in Vancouver for two decades.

Frederick (Knobby) Knott died on March 29. He had a long career as a maintenance technician at the CBC in Toronto.

Gregory (Greg) Sinclair died on April 7. He was an executive producer at CBC Radio, where he developed, produced, and directed many acclaimed audio series and specials, including *Afghanada*.

Audrey Homewood died on April 9. She was a news producer for CBC TV.

Lou Cooper died on April 10, at the age of 83. He was as a news production manager in the 70s, and later returned to the CBC as a foreign news editor, producer and resources manager. He ended his career as vice-president of Newsworld International.

Gauranga Gupta died on May 14, at the age of 79. He was the surviving spouse of the late Tanusri Gupta who worked in Creative Services.

Jean Robertson died on May 14, at the age of 94. She was the surviving spouse of TV technician Samuel Robertson.

Continued...

IN MEMORIAM, CONT'D...

David Burt died on June 19, at the age of 75. He worked as a reporter for *The National* and *Newsmagazine*, was a foreign assignment editor, producer of the weekend *National*, and ended his career at *Newsworld* and *Newsworld International*.

Fred Dutka died on June 18, at the age of 82. He had a long career in the CBC's film library.

Edith Helm died. She was the surviving spouse of Bob Helm, who was coordinating producer for CBC TV programs such as *Cross-Canada New Year*, the 1969 year-end show.

WORDS WITH NO ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS

- **akihi** – (Hawaiian) the forgetfulness felt immediately after being given directions
- **tsundoku** (Japanese) – acquiring books and letting them pile up without reading them
- **iktsuarpok** – (Inuit) the feeling of anticipation or frustration while waiting for someone to turn up
- **dépaysement** – (French) a feeling of disorientation, such as one you might feel when you arrive in a new country
- **sobremesa** – (Spanish) the time spent at the dinner table after the meal has ended, and it can last for hours
- **abbiocco** – (Italian) the sleepy, contented feeling that follows a big meal
- **hiraeth** – (Welsh) a type of homesickness, but for a home you can't return to, or one that never existed

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Visit the Ontario page of the PNA website for information about upcoming events, and to read our bylaws, and minutes of our Annual General Meeting.

<https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/regions/ontario/>



**The CBC Pensioners
National Association**

Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past

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All personal information provided to the Association by you or by the CBC is held in strict confidence.

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