

# LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

## NEW YEAR, NEW PENSION SURPLUS PAYOUT...WE HOPE

BY DAN OLDFIELD



Left to right, Toronto Director Nazat Lilley, Ontario Treasurer Ben Daube, National President, Dan Oldfield, Ontario President Barbara Saxberg, Ontario VP Talin Vartanian, National VP Gail Carducci, Toronto Director Lise Lareau, Ontario Secretary Mike Darley. More PNA holiday photos begin on page 5 (Photo by Neith MacDonald)

The headline says “we hope” because we’re about 4,500 votes short of the 8,500 we need for another pension surplus payment. Two-thirds of all CBC pensioners must vote “yes,” whether or not they are members of the PNA. Included in the count are deferred pensioners, meaning those who are not yet collecting their pensions.

Thank you to all who have made the effort to vote. The Pension Administration Centre (PAC) has received and counted about 4,000 ballots so far, which is encouraging. If

*Continued...*

## PENSION PAYOUT, CONT'D...

you haven't submitted yours yet, please vote "yes" and mail it as soon as possible. And if you know anyone who has yet to act, give them a nudge. And if you voted online and did not receive confirmation, vote

again by regular mail. Any duplication will be sorted out through the counting process.

The Canada Post strike complicated matters. Paper ballots finally were mailed just before Christmas, and completed forms have just started to arrive in the PAC office. There is no new deadline for receipt, and none will be established. However, this vote is a critical hurdle we must jump. A delay in responding will mean a delay in payment.

About 6,000 CBC pensioners and spouses are members of the Pensioners National Association, but 4,000 retirees are not, and may not be getting timely information. If you know anyone who hasn't joined us yet, please remind them to vote for the surplus payment, and urge them to join the PNA.

*If you voted online and did not receive confirmation, vote again by regular mail.*

## **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](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com).**



## INDEX

Page 4	Karen Levine named to the Order of Canada
Page 5	Photo gallery: Holiday parties across Ontario
Page 13	Meet a Member: Cathy Alex
Page 18	Who ya gonna call: A guide to PNA staffers
Page 20	Mastering the art of zipper merging
Page 21	Opinion: Loss of the staff announcer
Page 24	A useful estate planning tip
Page 25	The Inside Wire: <i>Shrinking</i>
Page 26	Letter to the editor
Page 27	From the vault
Page 28	Ask Dan: Q & A with PNA President Dan Oldfield
Page 29	Peek behind the curtain
Page 30	My most memorable moment at the CBC
Page 31	New members in 2024, the roll call
Page 38	In Memoriam
Page 39	Your Board of Directors
Page 40	PNA enrolment form

## KAREN LEVINE NAMED TO THE ORDER OF CANADA

Governor-General Mary Simon recently named PNA member Karen Levine to the Order of Canada.

As the author of *Hana's Suitcase*, the internationally acclaimed Holocaust book for young readers, she has touched millions of people around the world. As a radio producer for more than four decades, Levine brought her keen intellect and journalistic instincts to some of CBC

Radio's best-loved programs, including *As It Happens*, and *The Sunday Edition*. She is also the only Canadian to have won two Peabody Awards, the first for an episode in the series "Lost Innocence: The Children of World War Two;" the other for her documentary "A Murder in the Neighbourhood," about an unsuccessful attempt by neighbours to rescue an abused wife from her violent husband. A lifelong feminist, Levine made it her mission to ensure that women's stories were told and their perspectives heard, both on and off the air.



### GIFT WRAPPING 101



A true story: Two twenty-somethings were shopping in a dollar store. One, holding a long roll of gift wrap, asked her friend, "But *how* do you actually wrap a present?"

Without batting an eye, the friend replied, "Easy. Google."

# PHOTO GALLERY: HOLIDAY PARTIES ACROSS ONTARIO

ONTARIO REGION PARTY IN TORONTO, PHOTOS BY NEITH MACDONALD



Mario Artale and Jeevan Pragasam



Paula Neilson, Catherine Mallia, Judy Dine,  
and Carol Moore Ede



New PNA member Brenda Percy, Gail Chang, Peter Arciuch, and Michael Nash

Continued...

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D....

Cindy Beatty, Susan Kawidjaja-Cheung, new member Sheyfali Saujani, and James Seabrook



Ronda Clanfield, Neith MacDonal, and Gail Carducci.



Ted Hackborn, Lise Lareau, and David Wilson

Continued...

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D....



Tracie Tighe, Lynn Burgess, Patsy Pehleman, and Dianne Buckner



New member Franca Purificati and Phil Kawasoe



PNA National President Dan Oldfield with a framed caricature created by Kevin Sylvester: Dan fishing for our pension surplus treasure

Continued...

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D....



Barry Mean,  
Bernie Lucht,  
Ted Fairhurst,  
Kevin Cheu, and  
John Lewis



Geraldine Connelly,  
James Hay, new  
member Connie Daye,  
Peter Arciuch, and  
Neil Avey



PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D...

DURHAM-TRENT HOLIDAY PARTY IN OSHAWA



Durham-Trent Chapter Board members Bette Laderoute, Barrie Burhoe, Effy Terry, Glenn Gray, and Randy Blyth (Joe Solway not present for photo)

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO PARTY IN WINDSOR

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL FITZSIMMONS



Continued...

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D...



Jackie Kervoelen-Cheslea and  
Liz Pettapiece-Phillips



Gerald Head, Pat Ryan,  
and Phil Peck



GOLDEN HORSESHOE  
HOLIDAY PARTY IN BURLINGTON

Photo by Mark Punga

Continued...

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D...



Clockwise from left, Lorri Interisano, Joe Interisano, Wanda Punga, Mark Punga, Jacinda Simpson, Brenda Simpson, Scott Sones, and Rose Maycock  
*(Photo by Bob Waller)*



From foreground left, Dana Heddle, Donna Spevako, Sandy McKean, Havoc Franklin, Brigitte Hoffer, Ken Myron, Sue Heddle, and Neil Avey  
*(Photo by Talin Vartanian)*

PHOTO GALLERY, CONT'D...

HOLIDAY PARTY IN THUNDER BAY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BARBARA SAXBERG



Clockwise from far left, Shawn Carney, Maureen Judge, Shane Judge, Don Edwards, Fred Jones, Dan Oldfield, Barbara Saxberg, and Cathy Alex.



From left, Brad Laco, Gene Balec, Joan Howrigan, Bob Seed, Joan's sister Mary, Donna Morrow, and Randy Creighton

## MEET A MEMBER: CATHY ALEX

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

Cathy Alex was lucky when, as a fresh-out-of-university graduate in Ottawa, she landed a job with the federal Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Over coffee one day, a colleague gave her some unsolicited life advice: She was too young and had too many adventures ahead to settle in as a government bureaucrat. Alex took that to heart.

While she was on leave, ill with bronchitis, she wrote to every CBC Radio station and affiliate across Canada. In her letter, she said she loved to tell stories, she had a science degree—and felt the media did not explain science well—and she had a passion for radio, a medium that reaches a lot of people but speaks to one person at a time.

CBC Corner Brook took the bait.



Cathy Alex with Katherine Blaire at CBC Corner Brook, circa 1988 to 1990  
(Photo Courtesy of Cathy Alex)

*Continued...*

## MEET A MEMBER: CATHY ALEX, CONT'D...

That's where Alex launched what would be a 33-year, tumultuous CBC career. Although she had short stints on contract in Toronto, most of her time was in smaller locations, including Windsor, Iqaluit, Corner Brook, and Thunder Bay, often camping out in friends' apartments as she moved from place to place.

"People depend on the CBC in small centres in ways that politicians like Pierre Poilievre don't understand at all," she says. "That's where the CBC provides independent journalism that's not ad-driven. People depend on it to reflect local stories to local people. If the government won't fund it, you can't have a good democracy, and local newspapers aren't doing this work."

*"People depend on the CBC in small centres in ways that politicians like Pierre Poilievre don't understand at all."*

Alex's CBC career became tumultuous because lockouts, strikes, closures, and budget cuts were a constant threat...

"There was only one actual pink slip, but six or seven times I lost my job, then clawed my way back in. Often, it was a case of one door closes, then a window opens. Sometimes the cuts benefited

me, and sometimes they were really hard," she says. "I have some bitter feelings toward capital-T-capital-C, The Corporation, but the CBC is wonderful."

One of the biggest shocks came in 1990 when she was working in Windsor. During a live broadcast, a producer handed the local supper-hour TV news anchors a breaking news alert. They heard the news themselves as they read it: The CBC had decided to close the television station due to budget cuts. Many reporters and producers bumped into radio, and Alex lost her position as the writer/broadcaster on the Windsor noon program.

But fate smiled on her when a six-week contract as host of the afternoon show in Iqaluit turned into a two-and-a-half-year stint, primarily hosting the morning program.

*Continued...*

**MEET A MEMBER: CATHY ALEX, CONT'D...**

"There was a patronizing, prejudiced attitude about Iqaluit," she recalls, "thinking the work can't be as hard, and the journalism can't be as good. Friends in the Arctic had trouble getting jobs in southern Canada because the bigger stations didn't appreciate their experience. Iqaluit is a bilingual, bicultural station, broadcasting in English and Inuktitut. You learned a lot about Canada, its relationship to Indigenous people, and the reality of truth and reconciliation, before the term even existed, because you were living it every day."

Much as she loved the Arctic, it was difficult to live there as a single person, so Alex decided to move south again to be close to her family. That's what brought her to Thunder Bay. (As we all know, "south" is a matter of perspective in Canada.)

That gig was not as advertised. She was told she would be co-host of the Thunder Bay morning show but was assigned instead as the morning news reader. Eighteen months later, the CBC eliminated that position, too. She shifted gears to work as a reporter and serve as the occasional fill-in host on all the local programs. When a position opened as host of the noon program, it was hers, but that didn't last long either. Management, "in its infinite wisdom," eliminated all the noon programs across Ontario and replaced them with *Ontario Today*. Alex returned to reporting and became one of the show's regular contributors, but that role ended in 2009 when they cut *Ontario Today* from two hours to one.

*Throughout her career, Alex was disheartened by the central Canadian bias about the regions.*

Throughout her career, Alex was disheartened by the central Canadian bias about the regions: "When I worked in Newfoundland, the only stories they wanted were about the decline of the cod fishery or something funny about accents. In Windsor, it was just stories about the auto industry. And in Thunder Bay, if it was a story involving an Indigenous person, they just wanted to hear about victims, not people who had triumphed or had a powerful, successful story to share. It was disrespectful."

*Continued...*

**MEET A MEMBER: CATHY ALEX, CONT'D...**

She persisted in telling stories she believed were meaningful and important, such as one about the increasing prevalence of testicular cancer in young men. It was long before there were public awareness campaigns about men's health issues, such as Movember. Her story was about the importance of seeing a doctor if a young man found a lump in his testicle. Four or five years later, a listener phoned to tell her that not only had that story saved his life, it had also prompted him to write a play. He was in his 20s when a testicular lump he'd been ignoring turned out to be cancer. His play, which premiered in Toronto, detailed his diagnosis and successful treatment. It was called *My Left Nut*.

Then there was a story from Dryden, where educators wanted to do something to address the low high school graduation rates among Indigenous students. The reasons were many and varied, including transportation, money and family issues, or intergenerational trauma. After consulting with the surrounding First Nations, and speaking with elders, a new Four Directions First Nations, Metis and Inuit Indigenous Graduation Coach program was launched to help mentor these students. The graduation rate increased dramatically. The local Board of Education fielded calls from across Ontario. Now the program is running in schools throughout the province.

Alex also takes special pride in her coverage of a memory box project at the hospital in Thunder Bay. It's for parents who have experienced a late-term miscarriage, or whose baby was stillborn, or died shortly after birth.

"One mother's description of knowing something was wrong is still one of the most powerful, emotional stories I've ever heard," Alex recalls. "We got so many letters and emails from across the province after my series aired. The death of a baby or the loss



Cathy Alex selfie, in June 2021, just before she left the CBC.

*Continued...*



**MEET A MEMBER: CATHY ALEX, CONT'D...**

of a much-wanted pregnancy is a subject we still rarely talk about. It's so fraught with emotion and politics. People in every part of Ontario seemed grateful to have their child, and their grief, acknowledged."

Thunder Bay is where Alex met her husband and gave birth to her own daughters, who are now in their 20s. It's also where her CBC career ended. She had been hosting the afternoon radio program *Voyage North* for four years when managers in Toronto decided in 2014 that Thunder Bay and Sudbury were similar enough to be served by one program. *Up North*, hosted and produced in Sudbury, now broadcasts to all Northern Ontario.

"It was so stupid because there are 1,000 kilometres of geography between us, and Northern Ontario is as heterogenous as any city. No two communities are the same. Thunder Bay and Sudbury have some things in common, but they're very different, too. For instance, Sudbury is not a transient hub in the same way Thunder Bay is," Alex says.

Alex retired from the CBC in the summer of 2021. Two years later, doctors diagnosed her with multiple myeloma, an incurable, but treatable cancer of the blood and bones. She's endured radiation, chemotherapy, and a stem cell transplant in Ottawa.

"Now, I'm regaining strength, stamina, and my hair too," she says. "My tresses are coming back as thick, tightly wound chemo curls! My disease is currently stable, and I plan on it being that way for a long time. I'm looking forward to many more adventures with my husband Alisdair and my daughters Abby and Rachael."

As for that career shift decision after graduation? "I loved working at the CBC, and would never have wanted to go back to the bureaucracy."

## THERE'S A WORD FOR THAT

**gawlix** — characters that are used to convey profanity in a comic strip, such as @#%\$\*!

## WHO YA GONNA CALL? A GUIDE TO PNA STAFFERS

BY BARBARA SAXBERG

The PNA has a small but mighty staff who take care of a myriad of details on our behalf. Whether you phone or email the national office, your inquiry will be directed to the person best able to respond. And who are you likely to connect with? Here's a quick look at PNA staff and what they do.



### **Adrien Cassie, Co-ordinator**

We hired Adrien last year to fill the very big shoes of Dianne St-Germain, who had been with the PNA since its beginning. He focuses primarily on responding to members' questions about benefits and to other general inquiries. On the administrative side, Adrien helps keep the National Board of Directors organized, a big task in itself: organizing meetings, keeping minutes, document translation, and helping to keep everything running seamlessly behind the scenes.

Originally from New Brunswick, he spent more than 35 years at CBC/Radio-Canada in Moncton as a television broadcast technician, primarily in Master Control, and as a video editor. Adrien also was active in Syndicat des Technicien(ne)s et Artisan(ne)s du Réseau Français, one of the French unions at the CBC, and served as its Moncton Chapter President, National Secretary-Treasurer, and National Vice President, until he retired in 2017.

### **Alain Couture, Assistant and Webmaster**

The PNA also hired Alain last year. He was to replace Suzie Bougie who, it turns out, couldn't stay away. (See below.) Like Adrien, Alain supports members with their inquiries. In addition, he plays a key role in helping the Association stay current with its online technologies, and provides logistical support for board meetings and events.



*Continued...*

**GUIDE TO PNA STAFFERS, CONT'D...**

Alain maintains the Association's website and looks after membership materials, such as welcome letters and ID cards. He also maintains our membership database, and ensures our data security.

He worked in Information Technology at CBC/Radio-Canada for more than three decades, where he was responsible for managing best-practice management processes in technology, particularly in incident management and technological-change management.

**Suzie Bougie, SAF Coordinator**

After 11 years, Suzie announced her retirement from the PNA last year, but found she missed us so much that she had to come back. The PNA is lucky to have her. Suzie brings a wealth of knowledge and organizational memory to her work, and uses that to stickhandle your claims with the Special Assistance Fund (SAF). It's a complex task and many members have benefitted from her diligence and experience. Suzie also helps with various tasks at the PNA office, as needed.

She dedicated 36 years to CBC/Radio-Canada, where she held various positions in the Planning Department. Later, she transitioned to Information Technologies, where she worked for 25 years. Suzie retired in 2009.

**PNA OFFICE**

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## MASTERING THE ART OF ZIPPER MERGING

BY TALIN VARTANIAN (AKA CITIZEN TALIN)

You're driving, and notice your lane is about to end. It might be due to highway construction or a fire truck parked on a city road. Do you (A) hang back and—in polite Canadian style—find a spot near the end of the line where you can move into the next lane? or (B) move ahead as far as you can, and merge into the next lane at the last minute?

Most people think (B) is obnoxious behaviour behind the wheel. Well, It's time for a rethink.

Traffic experts, driving schools, and police endorse what is called the “zipper merge” where, like the teeth of a zipper, cars alternate by merging at the end point where a lane disappears, letting one driver at a time into the open lane. Because we're using all the available road space for as long as possible, it means traffic moves more efficiently. Merging early causes a bottleneck.



However, for the “zipper merge” to work, we all need to be on the same page. If you're driving in the lane that stays open, keep moving at a consistent speed and leave room between your car and the one ahead. As the neighbouring lane ends, prepare to allow a driver to slip in ahead of you. What's obnoxious is to block or shun them at that point because they're doing the right thing.

If you're driving in the lane that's about to disappear, there's no need to rush ahead and slam on your brakes. Drive consistently. As you near the end of your lane, signal to let other drivers know you want to slide into their line, then merge.

People who are stuck in a slow-moving lane because they merged too early may feel road rage setting in, as another driver passes them in the lane that's about to end. In fact, that other driver is in the right.

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## ZIPPER MERGING, CONT'D...



In British Columbia, the government is trying to educate drivers with "Merge like a zipper" signs, although one wonders how many people know what that means.

In Ontario, Sgt. Nicola Morris of the OPP's highway safety division says, "The zipper technique enhances not only road safety, but efficiency. It can decrease traffic congestion."

Time for us all to get with the program.

## OPINION: LOSS OF THE STAFF ANNOUNCER

BY ALLAN BONNER

One day I arrived about 5:30 to host the morning radio program *Saskatchewan Today* and found Gordon Pinsent sleeping on the couch. I surmised that he found it easier to pop in after his evening entertainment than to go to his hotel, but I'm guessing. In the interview, I noted that the great actor and writer had spent a few years knocking his head against walls in Hollywood. I asked him if that's the big time. Without hesitation, Mr. Pinsent ping ponged back "No...the big time is where you are."

And so it was for me and the CBC for many years. The big time was where I was and where CBC had a signal or station. But I was a young man in a hurry and didn't understand or heed Mr. Pinsent's advice, so moved on to Vancouver. There I briefly hosted the 6 o'clock TV news with Bill Goode Jr. doing sports, and the great talk show host Jack Webster, who did a few items a week.

That experience wasn't big enough, so I moved on to Toronto, probably the youngest staff announcer transferred to the big time at age 26. I couldn't believe my good fortune to be shooting the breeze in the announce office with Jan Tennant, Allan McFee, Barbara Smith, Bob Oxley, Judy Maddren, Ken Haslam, Rex Loring, Bill Hawes, and my wife-to-be Lorna Jackson. I could aspire to read *The National* with 1.4 million

*Continued...*

## LOSS OF THE STAFF ANNOUNCER, CONT'D...

viewers, or perhaps *The Saturday Evening News* or *Marketplace*, with about the same viewership.

Being a young man in a hurry, I left the CBC after a little more than four years in Toronto. My "retirement" party was also the retirement party for Bruce Rogers, George McLean, Harry Mannis, and Warren Davis. What a group. Gentleman Lloyd Robertson always came back for an announce party, and he was there for mine (or the others, or both).

In the decades that followed, I've often wondered what happened to the big time. What if Harris Sullivan and Rex Murphy were still at CBC Halifax; or Harry Brown were hosting *Metro Morning* in Toronto; Bill Guest and John Harvard were kicking ass in Winnipeg; Sherv Shragge and Drake McHugh were talking and writing in Regina; or Terry Campbell were still in Edmonton, and so on.

Sure, journalism has changed with social media, fragmentation, and such. But it's as if CBC didn't even try to replace the great people named above. Where is today's version of *Front Page Challenge* with younger panelists, or *The Watson Report* with a younger host?

When Gzowski or Harron were doing *Morning-side* and it became known that an author

would be a guest, bookstores stocked up on the books. Who has that reach and power now? Who are the comparable big names locally and nationally? Where did the 1.2 million viewers of *The National* go, and why did they stop viewing?

To be fair there were "renewal" attempts and some succeeded. But moving *The National* to 9 and back again, and turning *The Journal* and its documentaries into a panel gab fest may have been easy and cheaper, but that wasn't renewal.

We have aphorisms in broadcasting, echoed by the various Royal Commissions and



*Continued...*

## LOSS OF THE STAFF ANNOUNCER, CONT'D...

studies done about CBC. The business of broadcasting is programming—all else is housekeeping. It's what's on the screen that counts. There's a thing called "broadcast quality." We all know it when we see and hear it.

Finally, the interface between customer and broadcaster is the host, face, voice, reader (yes, and script). For the viewer, all else is administrative and irrelevant.

*There's a thing called "broadcast quality." We all know it when we see and hear it.*

Why did managers and programmers assume that an author, writer, reporter, or someone famous for some other skill could and should host a program? Artist Bill

Ronald was apparently a serviceable first host of *As It Happens*. Barbara Frum was great. So was staff announcer Harry Brown, her co-host. Actor Bruno Gerussi broke ground on what became *This Country in the Morning*, before Gzowski. But the trend to taking great presenters (as the Brits call them) off the air in favour of actors, reporters, managers, and others was a mistake. There's a big difference between writing copy and reading it, between managing a newsroom and anchoring the newscast, between doing a 30-second stand-up and reading the whole newscast, between pulling clips and conducting an interview/conversation. All of us who have done all these jobs know what we're good at, and what we're not. CBC managers didn't and don't. Some couldn't resist the pull of reading a newscast, having been deluded into thinking it's easy—it's just talking after all.

Writer Margaret Atwood was reportedly at a gathering in which a physician said to her that he'd like to write when he retires. Ms. Atwood uncharitably retorted that she'd like to be a brain surgeon. Rude, but in my time on air I never thought I'd make a good unit manager, HR executive, or technical producer. We on-air types often have been accused of being ego-driven. But consider the uncontrolled ego of executives and others who think they can slide on air seamlessly. I've not met an on-air person with that big an ego.

*Continued...*

## LOSS OF THE STAFF ANNOUNCER, CONT'D...

The on-air usurpers had their fun, had their way, and had their day. Today's result is lower ratings, poorer quality, muddy audio, and miles and miles from the mandatory viewing of the great broadcasts named above.

## SHARE YOUR VIEWS...

**Want to share your opinion about this column or anything else in *Livewire*? Send a letter to the editor by writing to [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com).**

## A USEFUL ESTATE PLANNING TIP

BY TALIN VARTANIAN (AKA CITIZEN TALIN)

Do you have money in a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), a Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF), or a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)? These are all registered investment accounts to which the government has granted tax-sheltered or tax-deferred status.

If you take the time to designate a beneficiary on your RRSP, RRIF or TFSA, you'll make life easier for those you leave behind. Simply sign the relevant forms at the institution that is holding these accounts.

There are three potential advantages. First, the funds can be transferred directly to your beneficiary, without waiting for your estate to be settled. Second, the money would not be subject to probate fees. And third, if your surviving spouse is your beneficiary, these assets can be rolled into his or her account, allowing the deferral of income tax to continue.

It's smart to review your beneficiary designations from time to time, especially when you experience a major life event, such as marriage, divorce, or a death in the family. If in doubt about how to proceed, consult an estate planner, a lawyer, or a tax advisor.



## THE INSIDE WIRE: A COMEDY-DRAMA (AND FREE THERAPY) FROM THE WRITERS OF TED LASSO

BY HAVOC FRANKLIN



“Don’t call me Junior!” Indiana Jones yelled in angst at his father, while they were roped together back-to-back. Now, 35 years later, it’s a different kind of angst for Harrison Ford, as his character handles a dysfunctional relationship with his daughter in the Apple TV+ series *Shrinking*.

He plays the head psychiatrist of a triumvirate of shrinks, who are all dealing with their own issues, as well as their clients’.

Jason Segel, who plays one of the other troubled therapists, also faces father-daughter troubles. His wife died in a car crash, which sent Segel into a tailspin, and a perpetual struggle with everyone around him.

Sounds like a series that’s too heavy. It is not. Created and written by the writers of *Ted Lasso*, it’s funny and poignant. It touches on retirement, coming of age, race relations, even domestic violence. As in *Ted Lasso*, we witness how the characters grow and change, and by the end we’re sad to see them go.

If you’re looking for free therapy or a humorous jaunt through the kinds of things that affect our lives and relationships, this is a great series to take in. There are 20 episodes of *Shrinking*, and they recently announced a third season is coming.



...Continued

## THE INSIDE WIRE, CONT'D....

I enjoyed the series with my wife, and we're still talking to each other. My advice is to watch one or two episodes at a time.

### ABOUT HAVOC FRANKLIN

Havoc Franklin's CBC career began in 1978 as a producer and spanned more than four decades. He worked at CBC locations across the country, with longer stints in New Brunswick, Halifax, Winnipeg, and Toronto. For the last 25 years, he worked in content and program development, until he was laid off in 2024.



### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I enjoyed reading Gail Carducci's take on intergenerational friendships [*Livewire*, October 2024]. I have read a number of studies that support your thesis of the tangible health benefits of socializing, and how it can delay the onset of "Get off my lawn!" syndrome as we age.

The story resonated with me as we have had significant turnover in our neighbourhood, as a number of young couples have moved in to replace long-time neighbours looking to downsize in the hinterland. Two proven East York icebreaker topics with the new neighbours have been, "Will the construction on O'Connor never end?" and "I see the coyotes crapped on your driveway last night, too!"

David Wilson  
TV Production Manager

**Write to [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com) to share your views about anything you read in *Livewire*.**

## FROM THE VAULT

BY RHODA GRYFE

Recently, *Livewire* was contacted by Scott Dermody, grandson of the late Henk van Hassel, regarding Henk's old CBC photo albums and scrapbooks. A TV crew chief in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, Henk had taken or collected many location shots, which he organized in his albums along with relevant newspaper and magazine clippings. The albums are an entertaining production record of CBC shows, including *The Great Detective*, *The National Dream*, *Bethune*, *Front Page Challenge* and *Jalna*, among others. We are sharing two of the images in this issue of *Livewire*, with more to come.



Santa visited *Country Hoedown* in Studio 4, in 1962. Joining him are Tommy Hunter, Gordon Lightfoot, Gordie Tapp, Tommy Common, the Singing Swinging Eight, and the Hames Sisters. (CBC staff photo)

CBC Toronto crew members, photographed in 1958. Front row, left to right: Stu Cuppage (staging), Bernie Fritzsche (staging), Wally Schotcho (staging), Rex Loring. Second row: Tom Kelly (lights), Richard Outram (staging), Rudi Nicoletti (designer), Fred Hat (staging), Bob Izet (staging), Willy Carey (staging). Third row: John Grozelle (lighting director), Joe Carrol (staging), and...can you identify the "mystery man" on the top right? Is it Keith Molstead? (CBC staff photo)



## ASK DAN: Q & A WITH NATIONAL PRESIDENT DAN OLDFIELD

Earlier this month, Dan Oldfield met with Ontario PNA members over Zoom and answered a range of questions about what's on the horizon for the CBC and the PNA. Here are just a few highlights:

**Question** – *If I didn't receive confirmation recently that I'd submitted an online ballot in favour of the pension surplus, should I vote again with my paper ballot?*

**Dan** – Yes. There's no harm in sending it in again, to be sure your vote is counted. Duplication will be sorted out by the Pension Administration Centre.

**Question** – *If the Conservatives win the federal election this year, will the CBC pension plan survive?*



**Dan** – The short answer is yes. But how it survives will depend on what happens to the future of the CBC. If, as the Conservative leader has claimed, French services will be preserved, there would be a smaller number of contributors. The CBC Pension Board likely would make changes to its investment strategy, but the plan would continue in its present form. If the CBC/SRC was shut down entirely, the plan would be wound down as there would be no more employee/employer contributions. It would be managed in a different way although the goal would still be to provide the

pensions as promised. We would no longer enjoy the benefit of pension surplus payments because that money would be reinvested, but the plan would continue. Pensions will be paid until the last CBC pensioner dies. Pierre Poilievre has talked about getting rid of the defined benefit pension plan for public servants and moving to defined contribution. That's like declaring war.

**Question** – *What can you tell us about how the CBC is planning for a Conservative government?*

**Dan** – They're preparing some broad discussion papers, but I don't know what the plan is for distribution. The fact is that the CBC is fighting for its life and it needs to start

## Q&A WITH DAN OLDFIELD, CONT'D...

defending itself. I understand the concern about appearing self-interested, but who isn't? When Poilievre talks about killing the CBC, but saving SRC, that tells me he doesn't know how the Corporation works. He's grossly uninformed and should be educated. And we all need to be educating people and getting ready to put questions to politicians because there is not broad support for getting rid of the CBC.

**A postscript:** Current CBC employees would be treated like retirees, in that any contributions they've made to the pension plan would be preserved, and they'd have various options. Those closer to retirement could take a reduced pension immediately. Others further from retirement would be given a variety of options for use of the funds. The financial regulator, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, sets out a very detailed process for this.

## PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Come and join us at a PNA board meeting. It will give you an idea of what the Association is doing on your behalf.

We have an official [observer policy](#) that allows any member to sit in. It applies to meetings at every level: the National Board; your Ontario Board; and the meetings that are conducted in the various Chapters. Almost all of them are held online. Of course, some conversations will be more interesting than others. You might hear about what our Advocacy Committee is doing to prepare for the upcoming federal election campaign. There may be a brainstorming session on how to attract more members. A Chapter may be planning some social activities. And there will be "housekeeping," too. If you've ever wondered what your PNA representatives are up to, ask to sit in on a meeting, and see for yourself.



## MY MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AT THE CBC

BY STEPHEN ISAACS

I remember a phone call from someone in the national newsroom in the wee small hours of the night. I was working in the Network Control Centre (NCC) in Toronto, and there was no manager on duty.

The caller said he'd just read a newswire report that Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had been assassinated. He asked me if this event was newsworthy enough to update the

edition of *The National*, that had not yet been seen in Western Canada. I said yes, and that got the ball rolling. A radio news announcer came to the TV building and read a script about Gandhi for the TV feed to the Mountain Time zone. Then, *The National's* anchor at the time, Knowlton Nash, returned in time for an on-camera update to B.C.

I'm still surprised I was given the decision-making power to call for the update. After all, I was only a technician.

*Stephen Isaacs began his CBC career in 1973 as a Group 1 Technical Assistant and left in 2005, as an Automated Control Facilities Technician, assigned to the Toronto NCC.*



Stephen Isaacs in 1991 (Screengrab from video by Steve Meikle, courtesy of Stephen Isaacs)

**Share your most memorable moment at the CBC.**

**Write to [pnalivewire@gmail.com](mailto:pnalivewire@gmail.com).**

## RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER OF NEW MEMBERS IN 2024

In 2024, we signed up 157 new PNA members, an Ontario record.

In 2025, we aim to do better, with your help. If there's even one former CBC colleague you can recruit, please convince them to join. There are many benefits, but none is more important than strengthening our voice to protect our pension, and our rights as pensioners. There's a short, powerful video on the "Join Us" page of the PNA website that outlines all the advantages of membership with a concise and compelling message. Please share it with any CBC pensioners who have yet to join the PNA.



The video is available on the PNA website. Go to [this URL](https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/) and click on the red "Join Us" button to watch it. <https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/>

*Credits: Host Kelly Crowe, producers Lynn Burgess and Paul Harrington, video editor Sheldon Beldick, and videographer Ted Hackborn.*

### Our victory roll call of new members in 2024. A warm welcome to all!

**David Alexander** – Senior Customs and Logistics Coordinator, 2024

**Brian Amesbury** – Supervising Technician, TV Program Production, 2006

**Stephen Max Allen** – Producer, *Ideas*, 2012

**Deborah (DJ) Anderson** – Assistant Director, CBC TV, 1989

**Kemp Archibald** – Producer, *The Nature of Things*, 2009

**Marilyn Bamford** – Contract Officer, Acquisitions, 2020

**Susan Baker** – Manager, Business and Rights, Unscripted, 2020

**Marva Baptiste** – information not available

**Megan Beeckmans** – Resource Specialist, 2023

**Marion Blair** – information not available

**Sonia Boisvert** – Senior Manager, Content, French Services, 2023

**Doreen Bonnell** – Supervisor of Credit and Collection, 2001

*Continued...*

## NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

**Allan Bonner** – spouse of the late Lorna Jackson, former Anchor of *The World This Weekend*, who died in 2023

**Caroline Bourdua** – Producer, *Morning North*, Sudbury, 2022

**Allan Boye** – Production Cameraman, 2023

**Janet Bridel** – Unit Manager, News, 2023

**Doug Broadfoot** – Senior Director of Production Services, Media Operations, 2020

**Gail Brownell** – Production Assistant, *Ideas*, 1996

**David Bruce** – Producer, News, 2023

**Greg Bruce** – Videographer, 2024

**Philip Brunette** – Broadcast Services, Technical Supervisor, 1997

**Lynn Burgess** – TV Documentary Producer, 2021

**Diana Burns** – spouse of the late Trevor Burns, Radio Engineering Technician, who died in 2023

**David R. Burt** – Senior Producer, CBC Newsworld International, 2005



**Antonina Cacciatore** – Office Manager, CBC News, 2012

**Doug Caldwell** – Senior Editor, TV News, 2009

**Paulette Catalano** – spouse of the late Bill Catalano, Senior News Editor in Sudbury, who died in 2021

**David Cayley** – Writer/Broadcaster, *Ideas*, 2012

**Catherine Clark** – Senior Producer, Video, *The National*, 2023

**Ilona Crabbe** – Senior Production Editor, 2011

**Mark Crawley** – Radio Producer, *Quirks and Quarks*, 2023

**Donna Cressman** – Radio Producer, *Dispatches*, 2009

**Pauline Cross** – Departmental Assistant, Distribution, 2019

**Linda Cunningham** – worked in TV Ops Graphics, 2006

**Margaret Daly** – Senior Features Editor, National Radio News, 2009

**Connie Daye** – Editing Supervisor, *The National*, 2023

*Continued...*



NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

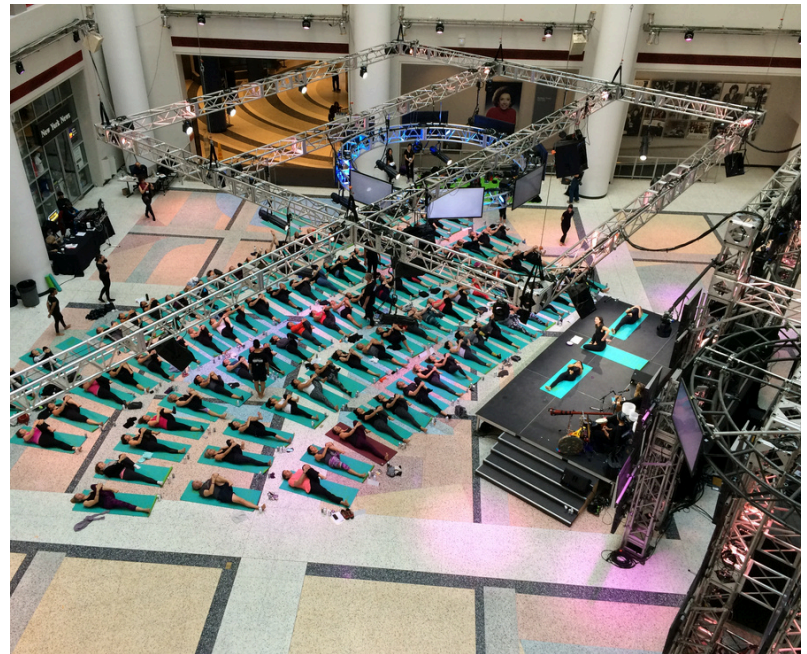
**Maria De Jong** – spouse of Alexander Taylor, Technical Supervisor, CBC Radio, 1995

**Martin Devenyi** – Broadcast Technician, 2020

**Judy Dine** – Executive Producer, TV Sports, Olympics, 2024

**Simon Dingley** – Reporter/Producer, CBC TV, 2024

**Doris Dyson** – spouse of the late Granville “Dys” Dyson, Maintenance Supervisor for Northwestern Ontario, who died in 2019



**Gary Ennett** – Editor/Announcer, CBC London, Ontario, 2023

**Heather Evans** – Senior Producer, *The Fifth Estate*, 2020

**Barbara Farquharson** – Manager, Toronto Design Office, 2024

**Andrew Ferguson** – Executive Producer, CBC News, 2021

**Marcelle Forestier** – Spouse of the late Lionel Forestier, Manager of Radio and Television Production for Radio-Canada in Toronto, who died in 1999

**Lynette Fortune** – Research Producer, *The Fifth Estate*, 2023

**Claude Gagnon** – Journalist, 2017

**Hana Gartner** – Host, *The Fifth Estate*, 2011

**Rachel Gaulin** – Radio and TV Reporter, Ottawa, 2019

**Tony Germin** – Satellite and Microwave Technologist, 2019

**Vickie Gilchrist** – Unit Manager, Documentary Unit, 2012

**Bernard Graham** – Executive Producer, CBC London, Ontario station, 2019

**Trevor Grant** – Unit Production Manager, TV News, 2020

**Stuart Green** – Co-ordinator, Facilities Management Systems, 1997 (then Director of CBC IT, working under SNC Lavalin)

**Mary Hallam** – Marketing Manager Assistant, 1999

**Monica Hannus-Hills** – Resource Specialist, CBC Sports, 2014

**Michael Happy** – Senior Special Effects Person, 2006

**Darlene Hebert** – Communications Officer, 2016

Continued...

NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

**Karen Heifa** - Director of Finance and Operations, English Communications, 2009

**Keith Horner** - Radio Host/Producer, *Music Around Us*, 2007

**Ilona Hornok** - Media Librarian, 2022

**Alison Howard** - Producer, CBC Music, 2022

**Michael Hughes** - Lawyer, 2013

**Liliane Hunkeler** - Media Librarian, 2024

**Nigel Hunt** - Producer, Education Unit, 2022

**Claudette Hurtubise** - spouse of Claude Hurtubise, former Regional Director, Radio Canada Ontario, 1994

**Mary Hynes** - Radio Host, *Tapestry*, 2023

**Carole Ito** - Radio Technician/Associate Producer, 2016



**Stanley Iwanski** - Post-Production Editor, 2023

**Elke Jacobi** - spouse of the later Walter Jacobi, Scenic Carpenter, Toronto, who died in 2021

**Daphne James** - Admin. Assistant, Finance and Administration, 2014

**Monika Jedliscek** - spouse of the late Frank Jedliscek, Cameraman, who died in 2022

**Victor Johnston** - Associate Producer/Technician, National Radio News, 2013

**Shane Judge** - Video Journalist/Municipal Affairs Reporter, 2010

**Chuck Jutras** - Director of Production, CBC Radio, 2024

**Jeff Keay** - Senior Director of Regions/Local Services, 2018

**Ruth Keene** - spouse of the late John Keene, Set Processor, who died in 2012

**Maureen Kennedy** - Media Librarian, 2024

**Bill Knott** - Operations Manager, Network News and Radio Canada Ont. Region, 2024

**David Kovacs** - Resource Coordinator, News, 2017

**Martha Mary Kreuk** - Executive Director, Sales, Marketing and Olympics, 2021

*Continued...*

NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

**Grazyna Krupa** - Executive in Charge of Production, CBC Unscripted, 2024

**Jan Lakes** - Radio Producer, *Morning North*, Sudbury, 2023

**Sylvia Lange** - Scenic Artist, 2020

**Ken LeClair** - Director of Research, 2006

**Jeannie Lee** - Host, CBC TV News, 2024

**Marcella Lewis** - Administrative Assistant, 2018

**Rudolf Lingohr** - Director of Broadcast Engineering, 2009

**Edward Lyons** - Transmitter Technician, Sudbury, 2023

**Juli Lyons** - Chief of Staff, 2012

**Linden MacIntyre** - Host, *The Fifth Estate*, 2014

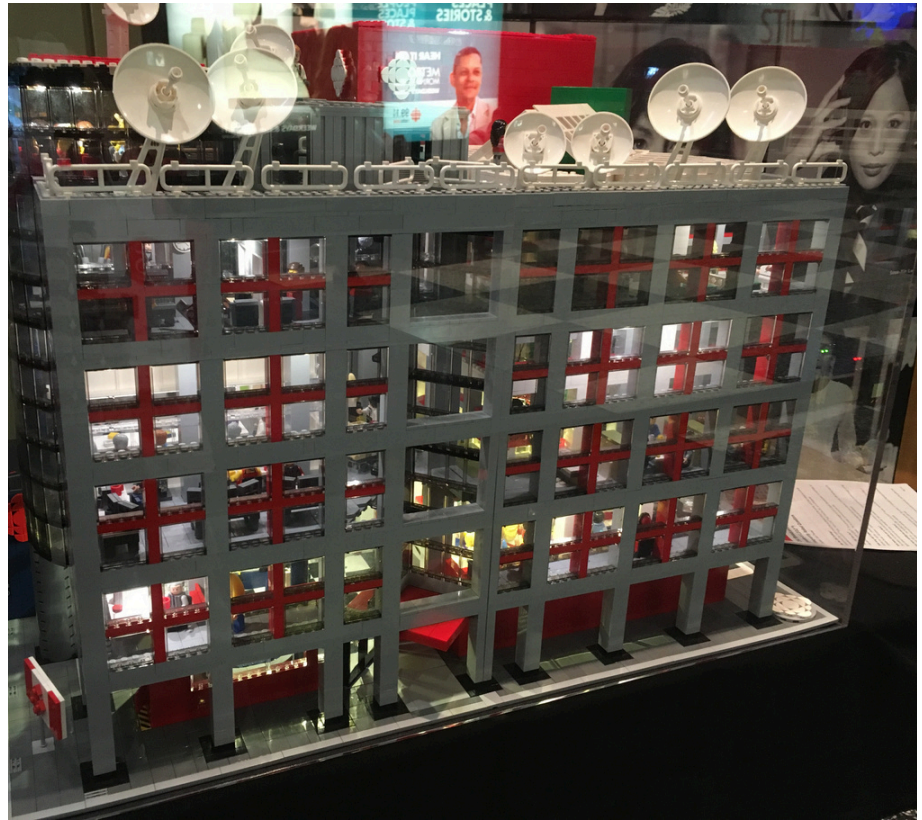
**Joan MacKinnon** - Film Production Editor, 2004

**Helen Madsen** - spouse of Ernest Madsen, Coordinator, Carpentry, 1995

**Rose Maycock** - Coordinating Associate Director, 2018

**Ron McKeen** - Producer, CBC Radio, 2020

**Bradford Meadows** - info not available



**Anne Megas** - Trainer, Media Support, News and Digital, 2024

**Paule Mercier** - Producer, Radio Canada, 2007

**Marieke Meyer** - Producer, CBC Radio, 2016

**Alice Mifsud** - Administrative Representative, Sales, 2008

**Brendan Moore** - Manager, Royalties and Revenue Shares, Department of Business and Rights, 2024

**Heather Moyer** - Coordinating Associate Director, 2024

**Marlene Murphy** - Producer, News Stream, 2024

**Peter Nagy** - Supervising Technician, News Network, 2023

**Michael Nash** - Media Librarian, 2024

Continued...

## NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

**Robert Nicholson** - Lighting Director, 2011

**Kerry O'Donnell** - Video Specialist, 2022

**Carol Off** - Host, *As It Happens*, 2022

**Kathleen Pemberton** - Executive Assistant, CBC News, 2016

**Brenda Percy** - Senior Media Librarian, 2018

**Carla Petruccelli** - Project Manager, Media Production Services, 2017

**Antonia Piccioni** - spouse of the late Antonio Piccioni, Set Designer, 2019

**Don Pittis** - Senior Producer/Business Columnist, 2023

**Hélène Plante** - Record Librarian, 1997

**Sandra Porteous** - Director of Engagement and Inclusion, 2019

**Sue Prestedge** - Radio Host, *Ontario Morning*, 1995

**Anne Quan** - Unit Manager, *The Fifth Estate/Marketplace*, 2016

**Tracy Rideout** - Executive Producer, CBC Radio, Comedy, 2023

**Dianne Ricci-Welbourn** - spouse of Rick Welbourn, National Reporter, who died in 2002

**Peggy Ross** - Program Ingest Operator, Broadcast Services, 2011

**James Roy** - Area Executive Producer, Radio A&E, 2012

**Michael Sakura** - ENG Editor, 2000

**Sheyfali Saujani** - Producer, Radio, 2019

**Ronald Scott Scantlebury** - Reporter/Video Journalist, CBC Windsor, 2005

**Carrie Schipper** - Senior Producer, TV News, 2018

**Nigel Schuster** - Senior Graphic Designer, 2000

**Lani Selick** - Documentary Producer, 2010

**Emmett Shane** - Digital Producer/Copy Editor, 2023

**Ferdinand Sison** - Procurement Officer, 2024

**Dennis Sitar** - Camera Operator, 2003



Continued...

## NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2024, CONT'D...

**Lori Solmes** – Supervising Technician, News Production, 2024

**Kim Steffler** – Producer, National Radio News, 2022

**April Stevens** – Producer, News, 2011

**Brian Stewart** – Senior Correspondent, TV News, 2009

**Alan Stiles** – Supervisor, Atlantic Transmission Department, 2015

**Sheelagh Strang** – Business Manager, TV Program Broadcast Services, 2002

**Diana Swain** – Executive Producer, *The Fifth Estate*, 2023

**Brigitte Thompson** – Coordinating TV Associate Director, 2023



**Joel Thompson** – Art Director, Graphic Design, Post-Production Services, 2014

**March Thompson** – Media Librarian, 2024

**Denis Threndyle** – Sales Manager, SBS Olympic Marketing and Sales

**Tracie Tighe** – Executive Producer, *Dragon's Den*, 2024

**Julie Tirone** – Senior Admin. Assistant, 2018

**Tyrone Trotman** – Lighting Technician, 2010

**Lori Tureski** – Manager, Library & Archives, 2014

**Michael Turschic** – Senior Show Producer, News Network, 2019

**Andre Van Kesteren** – Senior Systems Engineer, Media Operations & Technology, 2016

**Carole Warren** – Radio Producer, CBC Music, 2020

**Keith Whelan** – Video Producer, 2024

**Sheila Whyte** – Video Producer, [cbc.ca/News](http://cbc.ca/News), 2023

**Mary Wiens** – Writer-Broadcaster, Radio, 2024

**Gisela Wilhelm** – Spouse of the late Dieter Wilhelm, TV Studio Technician, who died in 2024

**David Wilson** – Production Manager, Documentary Unit, 2015

**Johnny Young** – Senior Network Analyst, 2024

**Fred Youngs** – Director of Strategic Resources Management, 2019

...plus one new member who wishes to remain anonymous

## IN MEMORIAM



**Jeffrey Allan Davis** died on August 17th at the age of 84. He was a CBC broadcaster for two years in the National Radio News booth in Toronto, and finished his 27-year career with CBQ in Thunder Bay.

**Ron Garant** died on September 9th at the age of 88. He worked as a film editor for more than 45 years.

**Robert Fulford** died on October 15th at the age of 92. He worked for more than 70 years as a reporter, author, broadcaster, and editor. During the late 60s and early 70s, Fulford hosted *The Arts This Weekend* and *This is Robert Fulford* on CBC Radio. He was a regular panelist on *Morningside* and, in 1999, he delivered the *Ideas* Massey Lecture, "The Triumph of Narrative Storytelling in the Age of Mass Culture."

**Doreen Brulé** died on October 17th at the age of 92. She was a producer for Radio Current Affairs for many years, based in Ottawa, and for *Ideas*.

**Vera Kurnitzki-West** died on October 24, at age 63. She was a PNA member, but we don't have information about her work at the CBC.

**Joe Fuller** died on November 15th at the age of 74. He was a VTR broadcast technician for 35 years, first in Windsor, then in Toronto for *The National*.

**Nada Harcourt** died in December, in Toronto. Her distinguished career in Television began in 1960 as a script assistant and concluded as Creative Head of Dramatic Series. She was 87.

**Edward Etheridge** died recently, at age 87. He was a PNA member, but we don't have information about his role at the CBC or the date of his death.

## YOUR ONTARIO REGION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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*

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

*Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé*

**ENROLMENT FORM – RETIREE**

**Clear data**

**Please print**

Name			
Street	City	Prov.	Postal Code
Telephone	Email		

**I wish to join now** (please fill in the remaining sections of this form).

I am uncertain about joining at this time. I understand that, with the information given above, a representative of Association may contact me and, upon request, provide assistance with the enrolment process.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish to join the CBC Pensioners National Association and hereby authorize the CBC to deduct monthly membership dues from my pension cheque and remit them to the Association. I also authorize the CBC to provide the Association with such personal information relating to me as the Association may require to facilitate the administration of dues and other services related to the welfare of pensioners.

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

**Membership dues are 0.32% of a member's gross pension payment. For every \$1,000 of monthly pension, a member would contribute \$3.20.**

CBC ID (See Notification of deposit, above your name)	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Gender (optional)
<b>Civil Status</b> <input type="radio"/> Single <input type="radio"/> Married <input type="radio"/> Widow/er <input type="radio"/> Divorced <input type="radio"/> Separated <input type="radio"/> Common-Law		
<b>Preferred language</b> <input type="radio"/> English <input type="radio"/> French	Date of retirement (dd/mm/yyyy)	

**Spousal information**

Name			
Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Gender (optional)	CBC Employee <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	CBC Retiree <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Required

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This form can be mailed to:  
**The CBC Pensioners National Association**  
 P.O. Box 8570  
 Ottawa, ON K1G 3H9  
 or press the submit button to send via  
 email to [info@cbcpensioners.ca](mailto:info@cbcpensioners.ca)

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