

LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

TIME TO STEP UP AND BE HEARD

BY ONTARIO REGION PRESIDENT BARBARA SAXBERG

The PNA's National Advocacy Committee is gearing up for the coming federal election. We'll be sending you a series of discussion papers, one at a time, to provide you with carefully researched background on a number of issues near and dear to the hearts of our members. They'll include a summary of where each federal party stands on the issues, and questions you might wish to pose to your local candidates, either at an all-candidates meeting or when they knock on your door looking for your vote.



The papers will arrive in your inbox in the following order:

1. Preserving CBC/Radio-Canada
2. Access to quality health care
3. Keeping the Canada Pension Plan whole
4. In defence of defined benefit pension plans
5. Making ends meet
6. The CBC, public broadcasting, and democracy

Continued...

BE HEARD, CONT'D...

They'll also be posted on the PNA website and shared on our social media pages. We'll be setting up regional zoom meetings to answer any questions you might have about the papers, the topics, and how you can help.

Also watch for more CBC-specific content. Keeping the CBC alive is in all our interests and we'll do our best to keep you in touch with other campaigns aimed at doing just that. Recent polls indicate that older Canadians care the most about the CBC and maintaining a strong Canadian voice. We're counting on you to make your voice heard.

LOOK FOR THESE RELATED ARTICLES INSIDE LIVEWIRE

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Save the CBC: A national campaign - Page 34

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.



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ONE STEP CLOSER TO OUR SURPLUS PAYMENTS

BY NATIONAL PRESIDENT DAN OLDFIELD

It took longer than expected and it was a challenge, but thanks to the efforts of many we have achieved the required two-thirds support for surplus distribution. The process is set to move to the next required steps.

The payments cover the surplus in the CBC pension plan generated during 2023, plus interest, estimated to be around \$60 million in total.

All pension plan contributors (pensioners, survivors, employees, and deferred



pensioners) will receive another notice advising that the necessary voting threshold has been met. Once that notice is mailed, the application to release the funds will be submitted to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions for its approval.

Then an additional 40-day waiting period will begin, the beginning of what is referred to as the “Second Notice Period,” when plan contributors can raise any questions or concerns. If there are no issues at the conclusion of the 40 days, the CBC’s Pension Administration Centre will be permitted to make the payments to pensioners.

At this time, we cannot confirm precisely when the payments will be made. We’ll keep you informed as details become available.

TAPPING THEIR INNER TALENTS: PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS

BY JUDY MADDREN

Do you remember, as a child, the excitement of a blank piece of paper and many colours of crayons or pencils or markers to work with? We didn't give a thought to how well we would draw a cat, or our family, or a house and a tree. We just did it. We started. We created a picture. We found joy in the drawing.

As we grow older, we become more critical of our artistic ability and many of us abandon making art because it might be criticized.

The three artists I spoke with said they know that when they begin creating a piece, it will likely not turn out the way they first had envisioned it. But that is the pleasure and the discovery of art.



John Bainbridge in his art studio in Hamilton
(Photo courtesy of John Bainbridge)

Continued...

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

John Bainbridge lives in Hamilton, and he began taking art courses 25 years ago. He says art runs in his family – grandfather, sister, cousins, his daughter. He was always interested, but never pursued art because he had to make a living. As a young person, his view was that an artist was always a poor person.

Bainbridge thrived at CBC as a Senior Director of Production Services in the news department, which comprised more than 200 people. During that time, he decided to take a beginner's course, after work on Monday evenings. He was hooked.

“It’s almost like a Zen practice.”

“What I find is that you can’t do it when you are thinking about other things. So, your mind gets cleared. It is almost a Zen-like practice,” he says. He never told anyone at work, because his department had several graphic artists, and it was a little intimidating.

Since his retirement in 2015, Bainbridge has continued to take classes, and he’s particularly proud of his involvement at the Dundas Valley School of Art (DVSA) where he is a board member. He says his big accomplishment was helping to register the school to offer diploma programs to full-time students.

Working mostly with acrylics now, he most enjoys painting landscapes: “The beauty of acrylic paint is that you can fix it at any time. But there are always new subjects and new ideas to get you going again.”

Bainbridge sells his work—some commissioned and some works “out the front door.” Every year he offers two or three of paintings to a fundraising auction for the DVSA.

“The learning, doing, and completing is always being refreshed. It’s never boring. It is a journey,” he says.

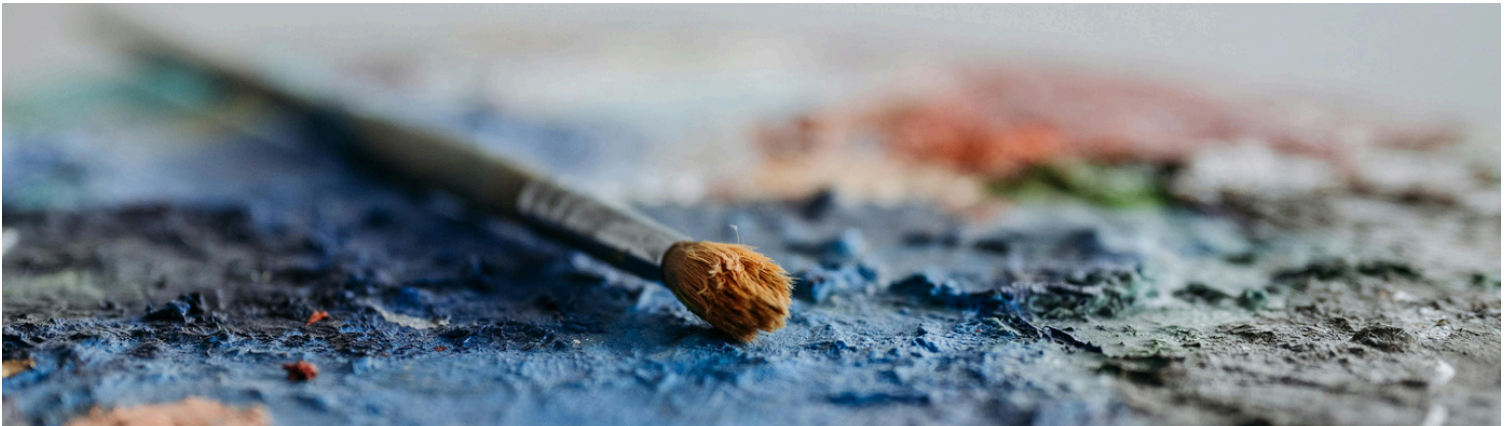
His advice for anyone who is intrigued, is to find a proper instructor. Many community centres, libraries and colleges all have night courses. DVSA offers the creatively named “Drawing for the Petrified” and “Painting for the Petrified”!

Continued...

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

Bainbridge recommends that it's smart for anyone who's retiring to find something they can do alone, like art or pottery, and something they can do with other people.

And if art classes are in the mix? "The biggest challenge is the white piece of board you start with," Bainbridge says. "It's in front of you and you think, OK, well I guess I have to start!"



For almost four decades, Jim Curran's voice was familiar to thousands of commuters trying to get to work or home as efficiently as possible. He was on air at CBC Radio in Toronto on *Metro Morning* and *Here and Now* until 2012, providing helpful information to drivers navigating the Gardiner Expressway, the Don Valley Parkway, the 401, and all the roadways in between.

Earlier in his career, Curran's workday began at 6 a.m. with calls to the TTC, OPP, and Metro Police. Later, most of the information was available online. But no matter how he gathered the information, his voice was a calm presence for anxious commuters.

There were particularly memorable days—such as the afternoon an armoured truck's rear door sprang open, releasing hundreds of bills to the wind. Drivers on the Gardiner jumped out of their cars to try to retrieve some of the loot blowing around.

Early in the 2000s Curran decided to take a night school course in Scarborough about stained glass art. Why stained glass? "I think it could go back to a trip to Europe and

Continued...

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

the cathedral in Chartres. I was awestruck by the towering stained-glass windows; the fact you could put pieces of glass together to make a picture. To tell a story. To capture a moment in time."

Working with glass has its challenges: safety glasses are mandatory; it's not a good idea to stack glass pieces because with a bump to the table, they are on the floor; you can get slivers in your elbows or the palm of your hands; and certain cuts don't always turn out. It's very easy for a fault line to travel.

When asked if there is any kind of glass that takes particular care, Curran replied, "Yes, the expensive stuff!"

His joy in creating stained glass art comes from other people, when they admire and appreciate a piece he has completed. For many years, Curran donated works to the annual "Sounds of the Season" celebration at the Broadcast Centre in Toronto.

As with painting, Curran says you do your best to make a piece that fulfills your vision, but it doesn't always work out: "You are pretty careful in picking the glass, but until you put it all together and hold it up to the light, you never really know what it's going to look like." But he says that is one of the delightful discoveries in making stained glass. There are always surprises.



Stained glass artist Jim Curran (Photo courtesy of Jim Curran)

He suggests that anyone interested in making stained glass projects, check night schools and colleges, or ask at stores that sell stained glass.

Continued...

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

In 2018, Richard Storms left his CBC job as a graphic artist and moved from Toronto to Windsor. In the late 1990s, newly trained in HRDC desktop publishing, he landed a job in television as a news graphic designer on *The National*. But, as he describes it, that was a side gig. His real calling and passion is painting.



Richard Storms says painting has always been a passion. Working at the CBC was his side gig. (Photo courtesy of Richard Storms)

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

Storms completed his MFA in 1983, with a specialty in painting, and his work has been exhibited widely in public and private galleries, internationally. In Canada, he has had shows at the Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Power Plant, and the Kamloops Art Gallery, and his work has been displayed at the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art. Storms' most current exhibition opened on February 20th in Toronto at the United Contemporary Gallery on Tecumseth St. and runs until March 22nd.

Last spring, Storms was part of Tao Hua Tan, an artists' residency program in Anhui province in China, and he's delighted that he's been asked back again this year.

In his childhood in the U.S., he never imagined life as an artist. "I thought being an artist was like being a commercial artist. I always drew as a kid. I never thought about making art, but always knew I wanted to do something creative."

After a stint in the U.S. Air Force, Storms moved to Regina and took an interior design course. It included a mandatory painting class. "Artists were always portrayed as crazy, eccentric people. But when my professor spoke about being an artist, a light went on. From then on, I had a painting practice the whole time."

Continued...

MORE ABOUT THESE PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS

John Bainbridge is on the Board of Governors of the Dundas Valley School of Art in Hamilton.

Jim Curran regularly contributed his work to the annual CBC fundraising event "Sounds of the Season."

View Richard Storms' art on his website.

PNA MEMBERS WHO ARE ARTISTS, CONT'D...

Described as a post-war contemporary artist, Storms' subject matter has changed over the years, focusing now on plant forms and architecture. "I let the paint do what it's going to do. I don't try to get too clever with it."

The biggest challenge in making a piece? "Probably just making the first mark. I'll think about a work for a month, or something. Then, as soon as you make the first mark, you're on Plan B. If it's just going to turn out the way you think it will, well, what's the point? It's freeing. You're into it. You're really looking and you're trying to find your image in there. It's not a perfect process. Paint is messy."

And for someone who is just beginning to learn how to paint, Storms says, "There are no rules. Don't be self-conscious. There is no right or wrong. You know it's not going where you think. But it will take you to the next place."

The best advice from all three of these artists? Just start!

WE NEED TO KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU

Have you moved?

Do you have a new email address?

Changed your phone number?

The PNA needs to know.

We want to share news about your pension, remind you of the benefits you have as a CBC pensioner, and tell you about PNA events.

Please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com with any changes in your coordinates.

And write to pension@cbc.ca to make sure the Pension Administration Centre knows where to find you, too.

FROM THE VAULT

BY RHODA GRYFE

The Great Detective was a TV drama series that ran from 1979 to 1982 starring Douglas Campbell. Set in the Victorian era, it was inspired by the exploits of John Wilson Murray, Canada's first government-appointed detective. These photos are courtesy of Scott Dermody, grandson of the late Henk van Hassel, a CBC crew chief from the 1970s to the '90s. This cast and crew photo was found in van Hassel's scrapbooks. Unfortunately, he was absent from the shot, but was included as a stick figure along with a couple of other missing crew members.



Front row, left to right: Sandra Petelko, Tony Botelho, George Clements, Alan Hausegger, Torquil Campbell, John Delmage, Bobby, Henk, Pat, Harry, Beatrice Campbell, Milt Parcher. **Second row:** Geoff Cheesbrough, F. Harvey Frost, Jack Nixon-Browne, Sandy Webster, Moira Wylie, Douglas Campbell, Barry Cranstoun, Hilary Corbett, D. Stuart Doherty. **Third row:** David Owen, Ken Lamb, Aylmer Wright, Ruth Secord, Bruce Cordier, Jeanne Stromberg, Harley Walker, Ed Vincent, Mike Wall, Barry Mean, Mario Cacioppo, Merv Curley, Bernie Fritzsche, Sandy Smith, John Maynard, Susan Skinner. **Back row:** Marsha Chesley, Peter Ivanic, Michael Harris, Muriel Sampson, Kim Murton, Gary Sullivan, Paul Ames, Bob Helm, Michael Culham, Tim Koblak, Ross Menzies, Brian Redford, Alan MacPherson, Fred Brown, Frank Peets.

Continued...

FROM THE VAULT, CONT'D...



Henk van Hassel surveys one of the 20-plus locations between Ontario and BC for *The National Dream: Building the Impossible Railway*. Broadcast in 1974 to an audience of more than three million, the eight-part docudrama was based on Pierre Berton's books. The series chronicled the building of the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway and the political fortunes of those who shaped its course, and the destiny of Canada between 1871 and 1885.

ERRATUM

In the January edition of *Livewire*, we shared the names of 157 new members, who joined the PNA Ontario Region in 2024, listing each person's job title and the year they left the CBC. We published incorrect information for two people. Their listings should have read as follows:

Caroline Bourdua - Producer, *Le Matin du Nord*, Sudbury, 2022

Joan MacKinnon - Executive Producer, *Land and Sea*, 2012

We regret the errors.

OPINION: STAYING CONNECTED AND STANDING UP FOR THE CBC

BY SUSAN HELWIG

It almost goes without saying that to be a pensioner means having a strong connection to the CBC. Yet that connection has played out in different ways throughout my lifetime, and it's never been so important.

In the beginning, I listened to the radio in my home, with Max Ferguson's eccentricity playing in my ears, after the morning news. Then life brought me as a reporter-editor to the national radio newsroom on Jarvis Street, with eccentricities of its own.

I recall timidly asking Earl Cameron—who recorded *Viewpoint*, then became co-host of *The World at Six*—the following question: “Earl, why do you sign your name on the first page before you read the news?” He replied, “Welllll Sue, I've learned that it's always a good thing to write down what you're going to say.”

And that's what I was learning to do: writing it down, and making sure it was correct, before it went to air.



There was another important lesson that came on the day I was summoned for an interview for a staff job, having been on contract. On my way out of the newsroom, a colleague offered this advice: “If they ask if you're willing to work anywhere in Canada, you must say ‘Yes.’”

I don't recall whether that question was asked. What I do remember is reporting to an HR office on Carlton St. with a portrait of HM the Queen on the wall, where I promised to serve our listeners. That oath was in my heart: I would always do my best to get things right: every name, every location, every detail, and always with correct grammar.

Continued...

STANDING UP FOR THE CBC, CONT'D...

Thirty years later, I retired, taking with me a lifetime of extraordinary experiences. As a junior reporter, they sent me to the Stratford Festival where I nabbed an interview with novelist and publisher Robertson Davies, who had clever things to say on opening night. They sent me to Whitehorse for a few months in winter because that newsroom was short of staff. Who couldn't love a job like this?

Later, I worked in the Parliamentary bureau in Ottawa at *The House*, as an assignment editor at *The National*, and as Senior Producer of *The World at Six*.

That oath was in my heart: I would always do my best to get things right: every name, every location, every detail, and always with correct grammar.

We didn't always get it right. I regret the day when we mixed up the names in reporting the news to Atlantic Canada, what we called our "fish edition" on W6. The first four Canadian soldiers had died in Afghanistan, and we got one or two of the names wrong. Their families would have been

listening. Many years later we would learn that they died by friendly fire from American guns, another bitter memory for the loved ones they left behind. But, on this, and any time when our news fell short, I knew we were letting down our listeners.

A lifetime of CBC connections continues year after year. Our house is hard-wired for radio, our television set upstairs, ready to be tuned to *The National* every night. Recently, I added digital links, scrolling on my iPad for CBC News at any hour of the day; subscribing to GEM; most recently watching the series *A Gentleman in Moscow*.

Last month, on a holiday to visit a dear friend South Beach, Miami, my digital connection to Canada kept me sane. I listened to David Common on CBL in the morning. I watched the Ontario leadership debate. I saw Canadians celebrate a necessary miracle in hockey. And yes, I can tune in to *The National* from anywhere, to

Continued...

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

see Paul Hunter tell it the way it is in Washington, as Trump upends order in our world.

(I recall sitting in an edit booth when a young Paul Hunter delivered his shoot tapes. The editor said she loved working with him because Paul's script and the shoot tapes were perfectly aligned every time. It took her just a few minutes to put the story together for broadcast.)

What came to mind in recent days was an interview done many years ago in Ottawa for *The House*. I was speaking with Max Saltsman, MP for Waterloo-Cambridge and NDP critic for finance. Referring to the economic power of the United States, Saltsman said something I've never forgotten: "How could they fail? With all the vast resources available across the North American continent, how could the USA possibly fail?"

I think of that statement now because, for the first time, the United States is failing. It is no longer the nation that once believed in a democracy created from the fresh green breast of the New World. It is no longer a people imbued with exceptionalism, destined to lead and to succeed. It is no longer the country where Martin Luther King could say that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.

It is now, when an American president has Canada in his crosshairs, that I need my public broadcaster. Now, more than ever.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LIVEWIRE?

Let us know what you like, and don't like, about our Ontario Region newsletter. Care to suggest someone for our "Meet a member" feature? Have any other story ideas for us?

Please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

BEYOND THE BOOK CLUB

BY BRIDGET COUGHLIN



Bridget Coughlin on the left, with members of her media group: Marnie Turnbull, Rosemary Detje, and Karen Harrington. (Photo by Karen Harrington)

At the height of the pandemic, a group of friends and I morphed our book club into a media group. Before COVID-19, we'd regularly attended films together and hosted viewing parties for media events and award shows. As lockdowns disrupted our routines, many of us struggled to focus more on reading, but we needed a new way to stay connected while continuing to enjoy great storytelling.

That's how our media group was born. We choose a film, a series, a documentary, or a podcast, then meet to discuss it. However, instead of analyzing only the author, storyline and characters, we delve into all aspects of production—cinematography, set design, acting, music, and more. What makes our group unique is that we exclusively watch and listen to content available for free on CBC Gem and CBC Listen. That ensures accessibility for everyone. Some of our members don't want to pay for costly streaming services to be part of the group.

Our first series was *Normal People*, based on Sally Rooney's novel. It was an interesting choice since many of us had already read the book for our club. Going from novel to

Continued...

BEYOND THE BOOK CLUB, CONT'D....

series sparked lively discussions. We loved the writing. Would we love the series? Did the sexy passion come through? Were the characters as we'd imagined? How did the visual experience compare to the literary one? Yes, yes, yes, and it compared well. These kinds of conversations make our group engaging, as we explore how different forms of media shape our understanding of a story.

In the beginning, we met virtually via Zoom. As restrictions eased, we transitioned to socially distanced gatherings: gardens, porches, driveways, and even open garages. Over time, our viewing habits expanded beyond films to include outstanding documentaries, and compelling audio storytelling. CBC's high-quality programming and original productions provided us with an incredible range of topics to explore, from travel, history and politics to arts and culture.

We don't just discuss a show, we bring it to life through themed gatherings.

One of the highlights is how we celebrate what we watch. We don't just discuss a show, we bring it to life through themed gatherings. For *The Murders at White House Farm*, we transformed our space into an English country pub. *Belgravia* inspired an elegant high tea, complete with scones and fine china. When we explored *My Life as a*

Rolling Stone, we dressed in vintage rocker attire and listened to their music. These interactive experiences make our meetings even more memorable and add an element of fun.

Beyond entertainment, our media group has become a meaningful way to stay connected. The pandemic reminded us how vital it is to engage with others, and these regular gatherings provide a sense of community. Unlike a book club, where reading is often a solitary activity, our media group fosters a shared experience—watching, reacting, and then coming together to discuss the shows.

A media group isn't just about watching—it's about connecting, learning, and

Continued...

BEYOND THE BOOK CLUB, CONT'D....

celebrating great stories together. We've found a way to keep storytelling at the heart of our friendships, and the conversations keep getting better.

We're not stopping anytime soon! Coming up soon: we're diving into *Saint-Pierre* starring Allan Hawco, and the fascinating documentary *Summer of Soul*. It's going to be another incredible season of storytelling and conversation.

LIKE YOUR PENSION SURPLUS MONEY?**APPRECIATING WHAT THE PNA DOES FOR YOU?****IT'S A GOOD TIME TO STEP UP AND HELP FIND NEW MEMBERS**

"Stronger Together" is the name of our new campaign to round up new members for the PNA. Convince a new member to join and you could win one of three \$100 gift cards. The name of the new person you welcome to our Association will be entered in another draw, awarding three more \$100 gift cards.

Boosting our membership will help strengthen our voice in negotiations to protect our pensions.

- Make a list of all your former colleagues and ask whether they're PNA members. If not, urge them to join us.
- If you know a PNA member who has died, invite his or her spouse to join us. There are benefits for them, too.
- Perhaps you have a partner who is a former CBCer, but only one of you has joined the PNA. Bring your wife or husband on board, you'll have an entry in both draws, and you'll help the Association.

The sad truth is that because we are aging, PNA members die at a higher rate than members of other groups. The onus is on all of us to help offset that loss.

You'll find more details about our campaign on the following page.

PNA Ontario Region Recruitment Campaign

STRONGER TOGETHER

A chance to win a \$100 gift card for yourself and for each new member you recruit into the PNA

Three prizes for PNA members who recruit

Three prizes for new members who join



MORE MEMBERS STRENGTHEN OUR VOICE

The PNA is the only organization that represents the interests of *all* CBC pensioners. About 4,000 of our former colleagues are benefiting, without joining.

Growing our membership means the Association can better protect our pensions and our interests

How to enter the draw:

- Recruit a former colleague
- Recruit a spouse who is a CBC pensioner
- Receive one draw ballot for each person you bring into the PNA
- The person you recruit will have a chance to win, too!

Who to notify:

Email ontario@cbcpensioners.ca with your name and the name of the person you recruited.

Deadline:

December 5, 2025 at 5 p.m. ET

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE

BY TEDDY KATZ

When Nancy Lee sits in the stands at a sold-out Professional Women's Hockey League game in Toronto, she has a huge smile on her face.

"It's fantastic. It's so nice to see this has happened in our lifetime," Lee says, and it was far from a sure thing when she started her career in the 1980s.



Logo of the Professional Women's Hockey League

Before, during, and long after her two-decade career at CBC, Lee has been fighting for equality in sport in Canada. But it wasn't something she ever set out to do.

It began innocently enough, when Lee was a member of the varsity swim team while she was pursuing a French degree at the University of Toronto. Her team won four straight national championships,

but the student newspaper *The Varsity* sent their only sports reporter to cover the men, who were not matching the women's record wins. It was the same story with Toronto radio station CFRB.

"They would report on the men's results and not the women's. That taught me an important lesson that I still tell everybody to this day. If you don't like what you hear or what you read, literally pick up the phone," Lee says. "I've come to realize this, it's awareness. The media didn't make the effort to find out about the women, but when I called and gave them the results, they put it in the paper and on the air."

Her first job at CBC was due to serendipity. Her mother had met someone who said the CBC was searching for a bilingual summer student who could work on the switchboard. A week later, Lee was in the job.

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D....

She spoke to people in Radio News and Sports about her long-term goal: She wanted to be a journalist. One of them, Bob Wilson, advised her to go back to school, and she did, earning her master's in journalism from Carleton University.

Lee worked briefly in news in Thunder Bay and Toronto, then was hired full-time at CBC Radio in Quebec City as the morning news editor. A year later, Bob Wilson called. He was then working as a manager in Radio Sports, and it was a call that changed Lee's life.

CBC Radio Sports wanted to hire a woman in Toronto for a six-month internship at Radio Sports.

"They were trying to find a woman to do the internship because every time a job opening came up, if a woman applied for it, she didn't have the experience," Lee says.

She won the internship, then made history in 1987, as the first full-time female reporter on CBC Radio Sports.

"It was odd, certainly, being female. I wasn't the beat reporter, but when someone couldn't do it, I went to report on Maple Leaf games in the old Maple Leaf Gardens. Harold Ballard was the owner at that time. and he had barred women reporters from the dressing room."



Lee didn't really like to get quotes from the dressing room, preferring more

From the left, name unknown, producer March Thompson, reporter Mark Lee, Nancy Lee, and reporter Brian Dance, Grey Cup game in Ottawa, 1988. (Photo courtesy of Nancy Lee)

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D....

thoughtful answers from players after they had a chance to dress and to reflect on the game.

An incident with the Blue Jays changed that. Third baseman Kelly Gruber, who was newly married, said he didn't want female reporters in the dressing room, and he spoke to all the other male reporters before coming out to be interviewed in the hallway by Lee. She took issue with that.

"I said, 'You know, next time there's really no point in my boss sending me because I can't get in there to interview you, whereas if he sends one of my male colleagues, he can. You might say something in the dressing room that I missed, but my male colleague wouldn't,'" Lee recalls. "Gruber didn't change his mind, but I wasn't going to sit back and just let it go."

As a reporter, Lee says she sometimes felt she needed to be three times as good as the male sports reporters to make a mark.

As a reporter, Lee says she sometimes felt she needed to be three times as good as the male sports reporters to make a mark.

Later, she became producer of the award-winning sports documentary program, *The Inside Track*, then was named head of CBC Radio Sports.

The department was going through a massive transition. Lee put more emphasis on sports journalism and coverage of men's and women's amateur sport, while managing challenging budget cuts and layoffs.

She continued to trailblaze when she left Radio Sports to become deputy head of CBC Television Sports from 1996 to 1999, working alongside her predecessor at Radio Sports, Alan Clark. Eventually, she was named to the top role, as Executive Director of CBC TV Sports from 1999 until 2006.

"Early on, there was a town hall with the staff and there were about 50 people in the room. Alan was going over the programming, what we were going to do that year. We

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D....

opened it up to questions and one of the senior producers asked me, 'Why do you think you got the job?' At that moment, I didn't realize how unprofessional the question was or just how rude. I just said to him, 'I guess I'm the most qualified for it.'"

There were a lot of aspects to the job, but among Lee's biggest successes was wheeling and dealing with the top brass of the NHL and the International Olympic Committee for long-term television deals for the CBC.



Preparing to to cover the 1988 Grey Cup in Ottawa between BC and Winnipeg. Reporter Mark Lee holding the football, Back row, producer March Thompson, producer Eileen Thomas Nancy Lee and name unknown. (Photo courtesy of Nancy Lee)

Lee also wanted to open doors for more women in sport, including on *Hockey Night in Canada*.

"When I arrived in the department, I remember talking to one of the hockey producers and saying, 'Wouldn't it be great if in our lifetime there would be a woman announcing on *Hockey Night in Canada*?' and he quite honestly said, 'Well why?'" Lee says.

She adds, "I was stupefied thinking, well, you know it's half the population; we have a viewership that's out there; and women play hockey. But it made me realize the way I think about things is not the way other people think about them. You must make them aware and point out why it is so important."

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D....

Then the moment she dreamed of actually happened.

"There was one Saturday when weather prevented Harry Neale, the analyst, from getting to the game. Cassie Campbell, who was the sideline reporter, and Bob Cole were already there. There was a mad scramble. But the director at the time, Sherali Najak, said, 'We don't need anyone. Cassie can do it.' Bob had a ritual and went over everything with Cassie to make her as comfortable as possible, and that night she did her first commentary as an analyst on *Hockey Night in Canada*."

Lee was ecstatic, even though she didn't really have a hand in it.

"It was great, but you know what was even better is that it wasn't me asking Sherali. It was his idea."

During her time at Television Sports, she promoted equality in sports coverage in other ways. She was approached by a promoter of a World Cup beach volleyball tournament who wanted to put it on CBC's airwaves.

"I told him we'll do it, but with certain conditions. I said the women must play on Sunday, not Saturday, because there was a greater audience available at that time, when more people were home. I also said there had to be equal prize money and the women didn't have to wear those bikini outfits, if the guys were given the option to wear whatever they want," Lee remembers.

"...and the women didn't have to wear those bikini outfits, if the guys were given the option to wear what they want."

"I wanted the women to stop being seen as the opening act for the men, and to put the games on Sunday was purposeful on my part because I just knew there were more people available to tune in."

Later, she tried to do the same thing with another big sport, curling. Lee wanted to air the biggest women's national championship, known as "the Scotties," on prime time on

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D....

Sunday afternoon instead of Saturday afternoon.

But the female players didn't want that because they had their gala dinner on Sunday night. "So, sometimes," Lee says, "positive change doesn't come without its challenges." Lee has seen that in her post-CBC career, too, as a consultant for the International Olympic Committee. Starting in 2015, she's helped the IOC with gender equality, examining the biggest gaps and potential solutions.



Teddy Katz interviewing Nancy Lee for the Legacy Project and *Livewire*. (Photo by Ira Basen)

Part of her role was trying to help sport leaders understand why women's events don't get the same coverage as men's. While many thought it was due to sexism, she put it another way to the heads of International Sport Federations and National Olympic Committees.

"I said, 'You're a big part of the problem because you set up events where it isn't even, it isn't balanced, and it isn't equal.' I went over examples and said the easiest one to look at is the competition schedule. I'd looked at the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics, and told them to consider flipping events and putting more women's events in primetime slots. I said Vancouver and Sochi didn't have any events for women on the final Sunday, so they couldn't blame the media for not covering the women," says Lee.

She highlighted how on the final Sunday of the Rio 2016 Olympics, there were 27 hours of competition for men and a mere two hours for women.

Changes started to be made to the Games' schedule. Now at the Olympics, it's getting closer to an equal balance, with more of the women's events on the final day, when they get prime-time viewing.

Continued...

MEET A MEMBER: NANCY LEE, CONT'D...

When asked how she feels to be a pioneer, going from being the switchboard operator to that six-month internship, to all those years at CBC, to now helping change the way women's sport is viewed globally, Lee struggles to answer.

"Thank you for asking. I don't know. I really need others to put that into perspective." She laughs about how things all turned out.

"That six-month internship, I don't know what happened, I guess I just refused to leave."

PNA member Teddy Katz spent 20 years as a journalist at CBC Radio Sports and Radio News. His first CBC assignment was a freelance documentary for The Inside Track, when Nancy Lee was producer. He interviewed Nancy Lee for the PNA Ontario Legacy Project.

THE LEGACY PROJECT

Legacy Interviews is a PNA Ontario oral history project, which is building a collection of conversations about what it was like to work at the CBC. Initially, we plan to post our recordings, so they can be shared with PNA members. Later, the collection will be preserved at a government archives.

Taken as a whole, these interviews tell the history of broadcasting, as we lived it, in an era of constant technological change.

Bring us your ideas for people you'd like to feature. Of particular interest is work in television that highlights the launch of the digital age. And bring us your skills: as interviewers, producers, and engineers.

Please contact Susan Helwig to join this team. Write to her at pnalivewire@gmail.com.

A GUIDE TO BUYING CANADIAN

BY TALIN VARTANIAN, AKA CITIZEN TALIN



The U.S. government's decision to impose tariffs on our products has prompted Canadians to unite as never before. Many stores are highlighting homegrown and homemade products because shoppers are seeking them out. However, buying Canadian can be tricky and, as with most things, the fine print matters.

The Competition Bureau has labelling guidelines that clarify the difference between "Product of Canada" and "Made in Canada." Counterintuitively, the former is better.

"Product of Canada" means the item is 98% Canadian: "...all or virtually all of the direct costs of producing or manufacturing the good have been incurred in Canada."

"Made in Canada" means "at least 51% of the total direct costs of producing or manufacturing the good have been in incurred in Canada." The Bureau says it's best to qualify "Made in Canada" with more details, such as "Made in Canada with domestic and imported parts" or "Made in Canada with 60% Canadian content and 40% imported content."

Here are some useful tools to help with buying Canadian:

Canadian-made products

Plug in a search word or phrase (such as orange juice) and your location, and the site will suggest a Canadian option.

Made in Canada Directory

It offers the same search method as above.

Made in Canada

This site has a drop-down menu listing various products. For example, search "toilet paper" and discover the choices.

Continued...

GUIDE TO BUYING CANADIAN, CONT'D...

There are at least three different apps you can download to your smartphone. Use them to scan a product's barcode, to help determine whether a product is Canadian.

[Shop Canadian](#)



[Maple Scan](#)



[Buy Beaver](#)



LOCAL MATTERS: A CMG CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT THE CBC

 **LocalMatters**

FR



**It's time to stand up
for Canadian News!**

The Canadian Media Guild's campaign "[Local Matters](#)" is focusing on the importance of local news and information and the dangers of defunding public broadcasting: "Now more than ever, to counter the rise of misinformation, Canadians need access to local news, fact-based journalism, and public broadcasting that shine a light on the truth, amplify the voices of Canadians."

Go to the web page to sign their petition.

MY MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AT THE CBC

BY KEEBLE MCFARLANE

In 1978, on the day when the Simpsons merchandising empire came crashing down, I was on reporting duty and had the task of pulling the story together.

Along with Eaton's, Simpsons was one of the giants in the Canadian department store and mail-order business for most of the 20th century. Now, it was on the way out, and was going to be rescued by another, even older retailing giant, Hudson's Bay.

I called The Bay, was referred to one of the vice-presidents and hustled over to his office a few blocks from the CBC's old Jarvis Street building, with my miniature cassette. Not wanting anything to go wrong, I decided not to rely on batteries (even though they were fresh) but to plug the thing into the wall to make sure it worked.

I asked the vice-president to direct me to a socket and he began searching around. Finally, he found one behind a filing cabinet to the rear of his chair, got down on his hands and knees, and plugged in the little transformer device.

In the interview, he outlined the problems facing Simpson's and what The Bay could do to save the situation. As we wrapped up, he pulled the plug from the wall and remarked that this was one of several interviews he had done that morning. And it was the most professional one of them all.

Keeble McFarlane joined CBC Radio News in 1970, shortly after migrating from Jamaica, where he had been a newspaper and broadcast journalist for a decade. He spent the next quarter-century with the CBC, as an editor, writer, producer and reporter.



Keeble McFarlane covering the International AIDS Conference in Florence, 1991 (Photo courtesy of Keeble McFarlane)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Just wanted to drop a line to say how much I appreciate and enjoyed reading Talin Vartanian's "Meet a Member" profile of Cathy Alex, and Allan Bonner's opinion piece in *Livewire*.

Cathy: "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."

Allan: "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."

GOLD!



It is so exhilarating, and somewhat personally vindicating, to finally see someone other than a technician speak, eloquently I might add, about some of the bad decisions made by various levels of self-serving CBC managers in the face of relentless budget cuts. I've always felt top heaviness has been a leading contributor to

our downfall, sadly playing into the hands of Poilievre and all who preceded him.

Sorry if that might offend any current CBC pensioners. I only hope they might have a greater appreciation for the product rather than the corporation, now that the wolves are at the door. Thank you, *Livewire*.

Jeff Allen

I was a video tape (and later digital ingest) tech in Toronto assigned to The National for most of my 31 years, retired early in 2009.

Continued...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, CONT'D...

A shout-out to all those who contributed to the latest edition of *Livewire*.

A footnote to your estate planning article. Coincidentally, I was reviewing our registered accounts with an eye on confirming primary and secondary beneficiaries. During the process I stumbled upon the "successor holder" designation for TFSAs. In short, the benefit of declaring your spouse or common-law partner as successor holder versus a beneficiary is that it allows the transfer of all the funds in the TFSA to remain tax-free, whether there is contribution room in the receiving partner's TFSA account or not. Here is an excerpt from a Rob Carrick article in *The Globe and Mail* (italics mine):

"If you name a beneficiary, your spouse gets the value of the account on the date of death tax-free, and the money can go into his or her TFSA regardless of whether there is contribution room. Any growth in the account between the date of death and the payout date is taxable to the spouse. Also, there must be contribution room in the TFSA to accommodate the growth in the account after death.



...and this is from the Canada Revenue Agency site:

"Except in cases where an excess TFSA amount remained in the deceased holder's TFSA at the time of their death, the successor holder's unused TFSA contribution room is unaffected by their having assumed ownership of the deceased holder's account.

"The successor holder, after taking ownership of the deceased holder's TFSA, can make tax-free withdrawals from that account. The successor holder can also make new contributions to that account, depending on their own unused TFSA contribution room."

Disclaimer: As your article suggests, I would run all this by a second source such as a financial adviser or tax consultant, if you're inclined to ask, "Okay, what's the bad part?"

Cheers,
David Wilson

Continued...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, CONT'D...

Just read the January *Livewire* and I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed it. Each issue is better and more interesting. I really appreciate all your hard work. What a great job from everyone!

All the best,
Liz Jenner

Livewire is certainly an impressive publication. Interesting articles and terrific photographs. It's nice to see so many familiar faces, old friends and acquaintances. Thanks to you, the Association and Board for all of the hard work on behalf of all CBC pensioners. The resulting surplus payout is extraordinary, and the increasing membership is a testament to that effort.

Richard Rogers
New PNA Member in Toronto

Share your feedback about anything you read in *Livewire*. Write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

BY THE NUMBERS: CPP AND OAS

Here's an overview of the increases in Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) payments in the past year:

Maximum CPP benefit January 2024	\$ 1,364.60
Maximum CPP benefit January 2025	1,433.00
Maximum OAS benefit (age 65 to 74) January 2024	713.34
Maximum OAS benefit (age 65 to 74) January 2025	727.67
Maximum OAS benefit (age 75 and over) January 2024	784.67
Maximum OAS benefit (age 75 and over) January 2025	800.44

Source: Government of Canada

[CPP and OAS for 2024](#)

[CPP and OAS for 2025](#)

SAVE THE CBC: A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN



A group of experienced fundraisers and activists has launched a campaign called Save the CBC focused on public broadcasting as a wedge issue in the coming federal election. (A wedge issue is one that may cause a split within a political party.)

According to the Centre for Media and Democracy, 78% of Canadians want to see the CBC continue and that number includes Conservative voters.

The campaign's goal is to focus on swing ridings to ensure Pierre Poilievre is not elected. The Conservative leader has vowed to defund the CBC and said he wants to give public dollars to right-wing independent media outlets.

Although the group welcomes donations, registering on the Save the CBC website will not spark fundraising emails. It will keep you informed and offer you tools for the federal election campaign.



TELL US YOU'RE COMING AND SAVE THE DATES!

The McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg generously has agreed to offer us a private tour of highlights from their collection, led by Chief Curator Sarah Milroy (the sister of a PNA member in Toronto). Afterwards, we'll have lunch at Cabin, the Gallery's restaurant. We can accommodate a maximum of 40 people, so sign up soon to avoid disappointment.

Also, back by popular demand: a pub afternoon at Noonan's. More than a hundred attended our last event and we were almost over-capacity. As we're obligated to follow fire code regulations, numbers will be limited.



Thursday May 8 at 10 a.m.

Special PNA tour of the McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg, led by Chief Curator Sarah Milroy, and followed by lunch, courtesy of the PNA. (Alcoholic beverages not included.)

Cost \$10 per person

Wednesday, June 18 at 12 noon

An afternoon of schmoozing and snacks at Noonan's Pub, 141 Danforth Avenue, just east of Broadview.

- * trivia quiz with prizes
- * 50/50 draw for charity
- * food on us, drinks on you



If you'd like to attend either or both these PNA events, please let us know by writing to cbcpensionerstoronto@gmail.com. First come, and all that jazz.

TRIBUTE TO A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER

BY LEONE EARLS

Irene Robinson was of the most tireless volunteers at the CBC and later as a member of the PNA. Her many friends and I were saddened to hear of her death.

Robinson was born in Liverpool, emigrated to Canada in 1964, and began to work at CBC Toronto shortly after. She was an executive assistant for most of her career, and her final position was with English Radio VP Harold Redekopp.

I'll remember her as a woman of style, who was spirited, fun, and had a bright smile.

Robinson worked in the Staff Association Shop, assisted with charity book sales held in the Atrium, and participated in CBC Open Houses at the Broadcast Centre. In the PNA, she became a Director of the Ontario Region in 2002 and held that position for well over a decade, organizing social activities, including our holiday parties.

She will be missed.



Ruth Neily died on March 16, 2024, at the age of 98. She was married to Ron Neily, host of the CBC Television program *Country Canada*. Later, he worked as an agricultural commentator at CBE Radio in Windsor, and retired as executive producer of the station.

William Boyd died on December 7, 2024, at the age of 87. He worked in many CBC locations as a journalist, including Toronto.

Continued...

IN MEMORIAM, CONT'D...

Rosaline Clark died on December 21, 2024, at the age of 98. She was the spouse of Rod Clark, who was chief engineer at CBE Radio in Windsor.

Edith Braun died on December 31, 2024, at the age of 88. She was a member of the Golden Horseshoe Chapter. We have no information on her role with the CBC.

Mona Quesnel died in mid-January. She was a record librarian at CBEF in Windsor, the French radio station.

Glen Scullion died on January 4, in his 90th year. He worked in many CBC locations during his career, as a film editor and in film management.

Rosalind (Roz) Farber died on January 22, at the age of 92. She worked for CBC Television in Toronto for 35 years, finishing as a producer of current affairs programs.

Robert (Rob) Miller died on January 27, at the age of 71. He was a reporter for CBC Windsor for more than 35 years, ending his career as an executive producer.

John Griffin died on February 1, at the age of 86. He was a CBC cameraman who also worked as a cinematographer, journalist, and documentary filmmaker.

Catherine Pennell died in February, at the age of 100. We have no information about her role at the CBC.

Yette Vandendam died on February 25, at the age of 55. Yette began as an associate director in Toronto, which led to her career in Network Television sports. This included work on nine Olympic Games in eight different nations.

Irene Robinson died on March 5, at the age of 89. She spent most of her career as an executive assistant, her last position working under Executive VP Harold Redekopp. From 2002, Irene actively was involved in the Ontario Region of the pensioners' association, and held the position of director for many years.

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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

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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.

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